

## ***Canadian Orthodox Messenger Report*** **to the 2007 Assembly of the Archdiocese of Canada, OCA**

Since our last report to the Archdiocesan Assembly in 2004 in Saskatoon, we have compiled articles and photographs, edited them, and typeset (using a “desktop publishing” computer programme) twelve quarterly issues of the *Canadian Orthodox Messenger*. Each issue is read (and usually proof-read!) by Archbishop Seraphim before he gives his blessing to the final draft.

As we have always done since the beginning of my tenure as *Messenger* editor in July 1990, we have continued to adhere to a strict quarterly publication schedule, with issues in the parish churches by mid-September (Autumn), mid-December (Winter), mid-March (Spring), and mid-June (Summer). [Just as a reminder, the deadlines for these issues continue to be as follows: July 15 for Autumn, October 15 for Winter, January 15 for Spring, and April 15 for Summer. There is often a little flexibility with these deadlines, but we tend to stick to them fairly closely.]

From 1990, we have envisioned two primary goals for the *Canadian Orthodox Messenger*:

- To be a medium of communication among and for all of us in the Archdiocese, and
- To be a means of presentation of what we are to a wider readership beyond our own diocese.

To these ends we strive always for balance of regional content as well as variety of subject matter: news of parishes, monastic communities, and institutions east and west; information about our missionary history as a diocese; articles about notable servants of our diocese, especially on the occasion of significant anniversaries, etc.; occasional pan-Orthodox and ecumenical news, especially as related to the Canadian scene; and feature articles and book reviews, from time to time, which address practical, moral, and/or spiritual concerns which affect our daily lives as Canadian Orthodox Christians.

As of late May 2007, most of the *Messenger* issues from the past six years are now online, at <http://www.archdiocese.ca/news/com.htm>. For this we have **Mr Alex Ovodov** of Vancouver to thank, as well as **Fr Justin Hewlett** of Langley before him. Over the last few years we have received many requests for this service, and it is good that we can present our diocesan newspaper in this popular format. Eventually the digital format should save some money on mailing costs.

Since 1990 we have had the much-appreciated help of **Ms Helene Culhane** of our Ottawa Cathedral as the *Messenger* Circulation Manager. She directs the distribution of 1700 printed copies of each issue. The majority of the copies are mailed in bulk directly to the diocesan parishes and institutions by our printer through Canada Post, but about 250 copies are mailed individually by Helene to the USA and Canada, Ukraine, Poland, Finland, Norway, France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Latvia, Romania, Denmark,

Macedonia (the Slavic country, not the ancient province of Greece), The UK, Uganda, Ghana, India, New Zealand, and Egypt.

Over the past three years Helene has received several queries about the availability of *COM* on the Internet, as has the editor. It is hoped that as people find that the issues are now on the Internet, the expenses involved in the mailing of individual issues can be lowered. It may be also that since the issues online are in permanent (non-changeable) format, fewer copies will need to be sent to parishes, since extra copies can be printed directly from the computer (but only in single-page format) if needed. We hope that the Archdiocesan Council will be discussing this possibility in the coming year. At this point it does not seem possible to produce the *Messenger* exclusively online, because many people in our diocese, as well as elsewhere, still do not have easy computer access, or even access at all.

For about a decade and a half, we have greatly appreciated the work of our printer, **Mr Doug Gander** of Westport ON, a parishioner of the Ottawa Cathedral. Although he earns his livelihood as a professional printer, he does all the work for us on a volunteer basis, with the diocese paying only for paper and mailing costs. As Doug and I work together, we are beginning to try to find ways of enhancing the quality of photographs in the publication. The quality of the printing of words is always excellent, but because we rely largely on digital cameras, there are problems with the production of photographs that we hope to work out in the next three years. Doug has just begun to develop a process of mixing some acrylic-based ink into the regular rubber-based black, which should work a lot better with fine screens (dot-patterns used for photos). We hope that this will go some way to improving photo quality in future. There are also a number of things I will be trying at the desk-top publishing end of the process. Alex Ovodov has also said that he may be able to help me improve the photo quality before the pictures go to the printer. Clearly all of us will need to be working on this!

Doug reminds all who send photographs to the editor for publication, to try to set their cameras to the highest resolution-setting available to any particular camera, to get the sharpest photos. He also notes that a higher quality of paper would produce better output for pictures, but that is an extra expense that the Archdiocesan Council may not see as justifiable, especially since the photos are of quite good quality when they appear on the Internet (the digital media being so compatible).

I thank God for the work and dedication of each of these faithful people mentioned above, and I thank all of you - everyone in the Archdiocese of Canada - for your advice, encouragement, and help. Please continue your interest and support and labours for the love of Christ in this particular medium of our witness and service to the Lord as Orthodox Christians in Canada.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mother Sophia (Zion),  
Monastic Community of St Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown ON