

# **Report on St. Arseny Orthodox Theological Institute to the Assembly of the Archdiocese of Canada**

Ottawa, July 2007

## **A. A Summary of Developments since the Last Archdiocesan Assembly**

### **1. B. Th. and M. Div. Degree Programmes Added to the Reader's, Diaconal, and Lay Certificate Programmes of Study Offered by the St. Arseny Institute**

#### **Courses for Bachelor of Theology and Master of Divinity Degree Programmes in Orthodox Studies to Begin in September, 2007**

- A full programme of courses (96-credit hours) for a graduate Master of Divinity degree in Orthodox studies (Association of Theological Schools standard) has been approved by His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim, and the Dean of Theology, University of Winnipeg. A Bachelor of Theology degree programme will also be available. St. Arseny Institute is now able to provide degree programmes for both laity and prospective candidates for the priesthood in Canada, beginning in the fall of 2007.
- The B. Th. and M. Div. degrees also allow for various practical training components being done as part of the academic credit for the degree.
- The degree programmes allow for a considerable number of courses being done through distance education or intensive studies or directed studies.
- The Institute is planning to offer toward the M. Div. degree five courses in the fall, 2007 term; five courses in the Winter 2008 term; and several intensive courses of differing lengths in the period between May to August during the Spring/Summer 2008 term.

#### **Note: Ongoing Reader's and Diaconal Study and Lay Certificate Programmes**

The Reader's Training and Diaconal Study and Lay Certificate programmes continue to be offered by correspondence across Canada, and by local class sessions, one-on-one directed study, or tutoring in a few locations across Canada. The Reader's Programme and Diaconal Programme each have about fifteen students officially enrolled in training toward being tonsured as readers or toward ordination to the diaconate, while others take courses without a view to official service in the Church.

Two students who have completed the full 20 courses of the diaconal programme have been ordained to the Holy Diaconate, and a third student who has completed a few courses with the Institute has also been ordained. Seven students have completed the Reader's Programme.

## **2. Academic Theological Library Established**

- Our St. Arseny Institute library has been catalogued, shelved and is being circulated by the University of Winnipeg Library, with allowance for growth by the U. of W. Library.
- Significant offers of contributions to the St. Arseny Library Collection have been received and are being followed up.
- Our degree students also have access to the University of Winnipeg Library's theological collection and other holdings of the Library.
- Through distance loan our degree students have access of the libraries of other universities, electronically-stored theological library resources (e.g. the *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*) are available to our students through the University of Winnipeg Library's membership in ATLA. Hard copies of those early volumes are not available electronically, are being obtained and will be added to our library collection.
- Through the Winnipeg Theological Cooperative, our degree students have access to eight other theological libraries in Winnipeg.

## **3. Presence Established at the University of Winnipeg**

- The Director of the St. Arseny Institute, Spencer Estabrooks, has been appointed as Adjunct Professor of Orthodox Studies for the Faculty of Theology. We are awaiting office space at the University.
- Classroom space is also provided by the University.
- 15% of fees is taken by the Faculty of Theology, and the remainder goes to the Institute to be used to pay faculty and administration costs. [If we have one student registered in a course this would be a very substantial increase over current honoraria received by our faculty for teaching diaconal courses]. With eight or nine students in a class our faculty will receive a reasonable standard of remuneration for sessional-lecturers.
- The St. Arseny Institute is an increasingly active contributor to, and catalyst in, the Winnipeg Theological Cooperative. The nine member theological academies of the WTC work with the Faculty of Theology to provide a variety of course offerings for the Master of Divinity degree.
- Faculty members of St. Arseny Institute have participated in theological education events in Winnipeg and elsewhere in Canada and in the United States. Through UOCC connections with the Faculty of Theology at the University of Winnipeg

Father Thomas Hopko spoke at the University in March, 2007. The Institute co-sponsored with the Faculty of Theology a lecture at the University by Fr. Michael Oleksa, also in March, 2007. St. Arseny Institute also recently cooperated with the Faculty of Theology in hosting two prominent Orthodox scholars from Europe. In June the Institute arranged public gatherings for Kouria Maha Mlke Wehbe, an Orthodox spokeswoman from Lebanon, who is in charge of Women's Programmes for the Middles East Council of Churches and involved in the World Council of Churches.

- Resources for distance education courses via computer are available to our faculty through the Faculty of Theology. Many services, including some secretarial services, some publicity, and printing of materials for classes are available via the Faculty of Theology.
- Our students in the degree programmes have access to Faculty of Theology bursaries.

#### **4. On-line Academic Theological Journal Established**

- The St. Arseny Institute has established the on-line *Canadian Journal of Orthodox Christianity* ([www.cjoc.ca](http://www.cjoc.ca)) which we believe will play an increasingly significant role in theological education in the Archdiocese and also in the whole Orthodox Church in Canada.
- The *Journal* has an Editorial Board consisting of Orthodox scholars from across the Archdiocese of Canada.
- The managing editor is Dr. (Deacon) Lasha Tchamouridze of the University of Manitoba.
- Five issues have been published on-line.
- A number of quality articles by members of the Archdiocese of Canada have been published.
- Hymns for Vespers and Matins for St. Arseny (Chahovtsov), a Life of St. Arseny, and writings by or about St. Arseny are have been published in various issues of the *Journal*.

## **B. Projects in Progress**

- **An Academic Board of Orthodox Scholars from Across the Archdiocese**  
The Institute very shortly expects the finalization of an Academic Board for the Institute. The Board will assist in assessment of the qualifications of potential faculty members, assist in ongoing improvement of course syllabi, and help generally in maintaining quality academic standards for St. Arseny Institute's programmes of theological education for the Archdiocese.

## **C. Projects To Be Initiated**

- **Catechist and Lay Programmes in Orthodox Studies To Be Developed.**  
At the direction of Vladyka we are beginning work toward a training programme for lay catechists in parishes. Also extensive programmes for lay theological education within the Archdiocese are being considered at His Eminence's direction.
- **A Blessing Has Been Given for a Major Detailed Biography of St. Arseny**  
The Vita already submitted by the Archdiocese of Canada to the Canonization Commission of the OCA will provide the basis for this publication. The Institute is also considering the publication of a shorter, popularly written biography on St. Arseny for distribution among the faithful of the Archdiocese.

## **D. Financial Needs**

- **Funding from the Virginia H. Farah Foundation is being sought for an intensive, short-term project to identify and explore potential sources of financial support for the on-going operational costs of the St. Arseny Institute, which would provide a sustainable basis for the administration and operation of the Institute.**
- We appreciate any suggestions or help in establishing a solid basis for covering operating costs, obtaining necessary office equipment, and in providing reasonable compensation for those administering the rapidly growing programmes and activities of the Institute.
- **We operate in the black on a budget of less than \$15,000.00 a year.**

Many thank to Archpriest Andrew Jarmus, who has contributed so much in his short time with us. We pray that the Lord will richly bless his efforts as the new Director of Ministries and Communications for the OCA.

We give heartfelt thanks to God for all that has been accomplished in our first four years and want to express publicly our gratitude to all of those who have contributed in so many generous and sacrificial ways to the work and vision of St. Arseny Institute.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the St. Arseny Institute Administration,

Spencer Estabrooks,  
Director



Website: [www.saintarseny.ca](http://www.saintarseny.ca)

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