

Alberta & the Northwest Territories Deanery Report to the Archdiocesan Assembly August, 2013

Since the last Archdiocesan Assembly in Victoria in July of 2010, the Deanery of Alberta and the Northwest Territories has been a hive of activity and change. Heading up the list has been the suspension of our ruling Bishop, His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim. This continues to be a matter that is on the hearts & minds of our communities and in our prayers as I'm sure is the case for the communities across the archdiocese. We are thankful that His Grace, Bishop Irénée has been present to carry on the pastoral needs of our archdiocese in these times. The Alberta deanery, in particular, has been blessed with His Grace's presence a number of times over the last several years. His Pastoral presence has helped the deanery to feel embraced and valued as part of the life of the larger Archdiocesan community.

I am pleased to report that the communities themselves have managed to maintain their equilibrium and to carry on with the day-to-day matters of Christian life and community without losing heart in the midst of the various challenges that they have faced. It is thanks to their faithfulness and the effective pastoral guidance that they have been receiving that we've continued to see growth in numbers and faith in this deanery.

Pastoral assignments, movement of clergy and ordinations have been a major factor in the life of the deanery over this past three years.

- Of our deanery clergy, only two of them are in the same assignments that they had at the time of the last assembly. Fr. Nicolai Nikolaev continues to faithfully look after his rural communities (the St. Tikhon group of parishes) in northeastern Alberta and Fr. Philip Speranza continues to pastor a steady growth of faithful at Holy Trinity in Edmonton. Their steadfastness has been an anchor to our life in the deanery.

Clergy changes since the last Archdiocesan Assembly:

- Archimandrite Alexander Pihach has been released from his duties as Chancellor and as Dean of Alberta and the Northwest Territories and assigned other duties by the Orthodox Church in America.
- Fr. Ron Poworoznik has been released from his duties as Rector of St. Athanasius in Sherwood Park and given the status of unassigned clergy in the archdiocese.
- Fr. Vincent Lehr status has changed from second priest at St. Herman of Alaska in Edmonton to interim Priest-in-Charge.
- Fr. Vasily Kolega has been released from his responsibilities in Smoky Lake the Century Group of parishes and transferred to the deanery of Ontario where he is currently the Rector of Christ the Savior Sobor.
- Fr. Gerasim Power has been transferred from the deanery of British Columbia and after nine months as interim Priest-in-Charge of Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut in Calgary, was given the assignment of Rector of the Century Group of Parishes in northeastern Alberta, overseeing seven parishes.
- Fr. Larry Reinheimer has been released from his duties at Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut in Calgary Alberta and transferred to the British Columbia and Yukon deanery where he is now the Rector at All Saints in Victoria BC.
- Fr. Phillip Eriksson has been released from his duties as second priest at St. Herman of Alaska in Edmonton and been assigned as Rector at Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut in Calgary Alberta. He has also been recently assigned as Dean of Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

In addition to these changes in clergy assignment, we have been blessed to add two deacons and three priests to the deanery since the last assembly.

- Jesse Isaac was ordained to the diaconate and attached to St. Herman of Alaska in Edmonton.
- Kevin Wigglesworth was ordained to the diaconate and attached to Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut in Calgary.
- Deacon Matthew Francis was ordained to the priesthood and assists at St. Herman of Alaska in Edmonton where he lives and assists at St. Herman of Alaska Orthodox church when he is not at St. Nikolai of Zhitsa Mission in Whitehorse Yukon where he is currently Priest-in-Charge.
- Deacon Daniel Friesen was ordained to the priesthood and is attached to Smoky Lake and the Century Parishes and is currently responsible for parish at Dickie Bush Alberta.
- Andrew (Brent) Applegate was ordained, first to the diaconate, and then to the priesthood and is attached to Holy Martyr Peter the Aleut in Calgary and has the assignment of supply priest for the deanery of Alberta and the Northwest Territories.

Parish Changes:

- All Saints Orthodox Church in Meadow Lake has recently been transferred from the deanery to the Deanery of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Fr. Vincent and Fr. Daniel are due special thanks for the time and travel that they have given for the support of this parish.
- St. Aidan Mission in Cranbrook is being transferred to the deanery from the British Columbia and Yukon deanery and will be served by Fr. Andrew Applegate with assistance from the clergy of the parish of St. Peter the Aleut.
- With the closure of St. Athanasius in Sherwood Park last summer, there are matters to consider both regarding its closing and also the future of any new endeavour in that community.

The deanery is working through the reality that change is normative and that we as deanery, clergy and faithful cannot become too comfortable with our worldly circumstances. Personally, there has been a significant learning curve regarding a Dean's responsibility and much paperwork to deal with, including things such as arranging for Governing Authority to register clergy in the province of Alberta. I have to say that, in order to cover all the needs of the deanery, the clergy and laity have very been willing to assist each other with time and resources to the benefit of our life together in Christ. This is much appreciated.

Submitted with sincere thanks to all,
Dean of Alberta & Northwest Territories



Archpriest Phillip Eriksson,
Dean of Alberta & Northwest Territories