

Go therefore and make disciples of  
all nations . . . .  
Mt 28:19



Allez, faites de toutes les nations  
des disciples . . . .  
Mt 28:19

# CANADIAN ORTHODOX MESSENGER

Founded by the blessed Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov), 1866 – 1945  
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## Archdiocese of Canada Assembly 2007:

### 'Christian mission in a pluralistic world'

We reflected on our mission as Orthodox Christians in a pluralistic world. We prayed with our Metropolitan, our Ruling Bishop, and our two Retired Bishops in the new National Cathedral of our Archdiocese. We listened to a famous Orthodox missionary speak of his experiences in Albania, and we heard details of the new, exciting opportunity to help our diocese achieve stable sources of funding. Along with the youth and young adults present, we enjoyed a folk concert by a priest/singer/guitarist from the OCA's Diocese of the South. Gathered in workshops, we considered "Spiritual Sight in a Blind World," "Icons and iPods: Holy Images in a 'Facebook' Culture," "Orthodoxy and Ecology," "Tithing and Turning around a Church," and "Developing the Musical Life of Your Parish." Through it all we enjoyed fellowship together—at meals, in hallways, at a BBQ, at a festive banquet, and on a jaunt to "Fair Haven," Archbishop Seraphim's diocesan chancery, located south of Ottawa.



Cathedral, Archpriest John Jillions, is a professor of Orthodox Christian studies.

The keynote speaker for the Assembly was Protopresbyter Luke Veronis, a professor of missionology at both Holy Cross and St Vladimir's seminaries, and also a parish priest of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America. He gave three stirring presentations. In



Prominent guests of the Assembly, clockwise from left: Fr Luke Veronis, His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, and Fr Justin Matthews.

the first, he explained the Biblical, theological, and historical foundations for our "mission imperative." In the second, he offered a moving account of the many years that he and his young family spent in Albania under the direction of Orthodoxy's most renowned modern missionary, Archbishop Anastasios, and he told of "lessons learned" from the resurrection of the Church there after the fall of atheistic communism which had totally suppressed all religious expression for decades. Then in his final presentation, given at Annunciation Cathedral

following the Primatial Divine Liturgy and a luncheon served by the parish on Thursday morning, Fr Luke spoke passionately about how we can and *must* create missions-minded parishes, or else we fail to live out the calling which Christ has given to his Church.

The second prominently-featured guest of the Assembly was the young, recently-priested Fr Justin

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Matthews from St Anne's Church in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He came to us with his wife, his baby, and his immense musical and song-writing talent to give a concert of inspired folk-type music on the first evening of the Assembly. This performance was a meditation on our missionary responsibility to the people around us; on peaceful, non-violent service to the marginal ones in society; on seeing the light of Christ in others; and on witnessing to our faith in the Lord. Fr Justin was also present for most of the clergy synaxis, as well as being available to the children and young adults attending the Assembly.

The most prominent guest of all was His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, who arrived earlier than he had originally planned, and stayed as late as he possibly could. It was clear from his demeanor that he really enjoyed being with the hierarchs, delegates, observers, and young people of the Archdiocese of Canada, many of whom are warmly appreciative of the tremendous struggles which His Beatitude has been going through, and continues to go through, as he leads the Central Church Administration—and indeed the entire Orthodox Church in America—through the choppy waters of a financial crisis and major administrative change.

As at all of our triennial Assemblies, there were the necessary business sessions. These were largely “good news” meetings. His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim's report was very encouraging. Part of what he had to say about the current financial/administrative crisis in the Central Church Administration in the USA should be noted here:

At the present time, I am sadly seeing fingers pointed very directly at one or another person as if that person were solely responsible for all the trouble. This is, I suppose, inevitable, due to the progress of various hearings, and investigations. Nevertheless, it is a sad situation, because it is always revealing about ourselves, when we accuse someone else. If I am so able to see wrong-doing, or even evil in someone else, that means that I, myself, have experience of it. . . . There is a saying also, that when we point the finger at someone else, there are three pointing back at ourselves. So, regardless of whatever wrong-doing for which anyone may be found culpable, we are not facing just the foibles of a few persons, we are facing a general malaise. And this malaise has to do with trying to keep others from seeing our own falls by pointing out those of others. It has to do with pretending I am without fault myself. It has to do with trying to deny that I myself could be part of the trouble.

At the same time, it is true that there is a lot out of order. Things have been at the very least mismanaged. . . . We shall see in time. But we have to be very careful in the mean time. If we are observing this process, this investigation, it is important that we remember that the present situation is in part the result of a dysfunction in our Church that began after the time of the Communist revolution that established the Soviet Union. Our orphaning left a long shadow. Our

inability, after Autocephaly, to reorganize ourselves properly as an Autocephalous Church, and our continued unwillingness to do so to this day, is a part of the overall dysfunction that enabled the current malaise to develop. Now, with the various accusations, we are in a spiritual maelstrom. Persons are overcome with, as in the French, *la fascination du mal*. As I like to put it, it is comparable to looking into the eyes of a cobra, with similar results. Once hypnotized by such a poison, everything else is seen through the poison. It does not inspire any hope in anyone.

By contrast, regardless of the mess, and the losses, and regardless of who has what fault, it is my opinion still that we must see everything in the context of the Lord, and to be as righteous as possible. . . . It is important for the bishops first, and for everyone else together with them, to admit that our own lacks, our own negligence, our own falls, have contributed to this, and that we all, together, need to repent, to turn around. Here are some selected words from the Apostle Paul to the Romans, from Chapter 12: ‘Rejoice in your hope; be patient in tribulation; be constant in prayer; bless those who persecute you—bless, and do not curse them; live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty; repay no one evil for evil; never avenge yourselves, but give place to the wrath of God; do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.’

The Address of the Metropolitan on Thursday afternoon was delivered very informally, and very much in the spirit of the admonitions which Vladyka Seraphim quoted from St Paul. His Beatitude said that he believes that the current Central Administration crisis “has been sent to test us, to perfect us, to correct us in every way.” Even though some may think differently, he emphasized, “there really has been a complete change for the better [in Syosset] for the good of the Church.” We must let this process of change go forward, allowing it to be completed, “looking always to the future rather than dwelling morbidly on the past.” We must also, he added, “resolve the crisis in a way that both builds up the Church and is fair to all concerned, to get peace and trust back in the Church.” Some people are upset, he noted, “because they think we are ‘hiding’ things; but it is obvious that not everything can be said until all is resolved. Then the Holy Spirit will speak, and fully.” In conclusion, His Beatitude said that he really wanted most to talk about Archbishop Seraphim and the Archdiocese of Canada. “The Holy Synod knows what great work your Archbishop has accomplished here, and his great sacrifice. He gives his life to build up the Archdiocese of Canada and to serve the Holy Synod by his diplomatic trips. Because of Archbishop Seraphim's leadership, there are excellent priests in this diocese, and excellent lay leadership. To see this is a joy for me.”



In the Chancellor's Report, Archpriest Dennis Pihach noted that the Archdiocese of Canada continues to grow. When our Archbishop Seraphim was consecrated twenty years ago, there were fewer than 25 clergy in the Archdiocese. Now there are three bishops, 69 priests, 13 deacons, 12 non-clerical monastics, and 29 theological students. Currently, of a total of 102 parishes, missions, mission stations, and monastic communities, thirty-three have regular weekly services, and many others are served frequently. (It was expressed often, in various places of casual meeting, that the diocese is particularly blessed with a high number of relatively young priests and deacons, which bodes well for the future.)



*Chancellor Archpriest  
Dennis Pihach*

The report of the Archdiocesan Dean, a new position created since the last Assembly, emphasized the work that the incumbent, Archpriest Cyprian Hutcheon, has been doing as the functions of this new position begin to evolve. Later in the meeting, when the report of the Ad Hoc Commission on Theological Education was given, it became very clear that Fr Cyprian's chairing of this commission has involved a great deal of work as he and his committee (including Fr John Jillions, Dr John Hadjinicolaou, Professor Richard Schneider, Mr Spencer Estabrooks, Fr Lawrence Farley, Fr Larry Reinheimer, and others) attempt to coordinate and share information among the four programmes of Orthodox Christian theological studies in the Archdiocese at this time: at the St Arseny Institute in Winnipeg; in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Sherbrooke in Laval PQ; in St Paul University's Sheptytsky Institute in Ottawa; and at the Toronto School of Theology. Currently the focus of this commission is on priestly formation above all, as the members try to work out a made-in-Canada solution to the need for the theological, liturgical, and pastoral education of our Canadian priests. This commission reports to the Archbishop and to the Archdiocesan Council, and it is expected that there will be many exciting developments to be announced in the near future.



*Archdiocesan Dean,  
Fr Cyprian Hutcheon*

Nikita Lopoukhine, Treasurer of the Archdiocese, gave a very positive report. Total parish tithes to the diocese have been increasing year by year, but so have expenses, as we attempt to live out our Orthodox Christian mission in Canada. The Treasurer reminded the Assembly again, as he has at every Assembly since 1993, that we still do not have an Administrative Assistant for the Ruling Bishop. This must be a financial priority. The Assembly also received a report from Kosta Stavrianeas, a Chartered Accountant who is a parishioner at The Sign of the Theotokos in Montreal. This report contained "internal control considerations" revealed by his analysis of the possible risks involved in the way financial recording, dispersals, and reporting are done currently in the Archdiocese. It seemed clear from his analysis that a major priority for the Archdiocesan Council must be the finding of a backup person for the Treasurer, as well as exploring ways of segregating the duties of recording, dispersing, and reporting, and including the use of a standard accounting software programme. As a result of this report, a motion was introduced by the Chancellor, and passed by the Assembly, directing the Archdiocesan Council to work through this report carefully and also to use Kosta's help in designing adequate financial controls for the diocesan treasury. It was emphasized that this is a matter of stewardship and transparency, not a question of trust.



*Archdiocesan Treasurer  
Nikita Lopoukhine*

It has been apparent to the Archdiocesan Council for years that the major obstacle to having a full-time administrative assistant for the Archbishop is financial. The Assembly learned that a resolution to this problem may soon be at hand. An ad hoc committee of young adults in the diocese, created by Vladyka Seraphim two years ago, has been intensely studying the administrative and ministry needs of the diocese, seeking to come up with solutions. To this end, the committee unveiled for the 2007 Assembly a new initiative to support



*Matthew Francis, Youth  
Coordinator of the diocese,  
who introduced STAS.*

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## . . . 2007 Archdiocesan Assembly . . .

. . . continued from page 3:

the ongoing ministry and mission of the Archdiocese of Canada: the St Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards programme [STAS]. In some ways similar to the OCA's Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards, STAS is designed to allow individuals across Canada to give, in addition to their regular gifts/tithes to their own parishes, directly to the diocese, providing sustainable funding for ministry needs well into the future. The programme was introduced and explained by Matthew Francis of Edmonton, one of the committee members. (Matthew also bore another large responsibility at this Assembly, as director of the youth and young adult programme.) Details of this new initiative, as well as a sign-up form, are found on pages 8 - 10 of this *Messenger* issue.

The 2007 Assembly also passed amendments to the Archdiocese of Canada Bylaws. Introduced and explained by David Grier, a member of the Archdiocesan Council from the Manitoba/Saskatchewan Deanery, these approved changes will rectify contradictions between the existing bylaws of the diocese and the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, specifically with respect to how representatives to the Metropolitan Council are selected; will allow for changes in the number of deaneries in the Archdiocese of Canada; will add the ex-officio position of the Archdiocesan Dean, which includes functioning as Secretary of the Archdiocese, and remove the position of Secretary from the Archdiocesan Council; and set out more clearly how nominations, elections, and overseeing of appointments by the Ruling Bishop are conducted.

The Assembly also heard presentations on the new general property insurance plan of the Archdiocese from the brokerage firm of Aon Reed Stenhouse (Edmonton) and the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company (Toronto). Because this plan is being offered to all the communities of the diocese by a single insurer, the high volume of premiums will allow for uniform coverage, a reduced cost of premiums, a much broader coverage, and more options for risk control. Because there will be only one insurer (Ecclesiastical) and one broker to handle claims (Aon), the policies, designed specifically to meet each parish's needs, will spread the risk and the cost over the large group which, in turn, should in every case lower the cost of premiums that any parish or mission is now paying for its coverage with other insurers. Although there is a consistent expiry date in November for this new Archdiocesan plan with Aon, delegates were urged to get their parishes to send in applications right away, so that a quick response detailing rates can be offered, and everything can be put in place to begin coverage with Ecclesiastical right away when the parish's current

insurance expires. In addition to information about the plan itself, the presentation also included a brief account of the current situation with regard to abuse claims, now one of the heaviest costs in insuring religious organizations. Those parishes which sign on with this Archdiocesan plan (and this will be of the greatest benefit to all communities in the diocese if there is 100% compliance), will be given a wealth of advice and educational material from Aon and Ecclesiastical on how to prevent such claims and how best to handle them immediately, should they occur.

At the last business session of the Assembly, held on Friday morning, members of the Archdiocesan Council were appointed or elected as follows:

Chancellor, Archpriest Dennis Pihach; Archdiocesan Dean, Archpriest Cyprian Hutcheon; Treasurer, Nikita Lopoukhine; all the Deans: Archpriest Lawrence Farley (BC), Priest Vasili Kolega (AB), Archpriest Robert Kennaugh (MB/SK), Archpriest Oleg Kirilov (ON), Higoumène Irénée (Rochon) (QC, Maritimes), and Archpriest John Jillions (Cathedral Dean); and Lay Representatives: Sava Duran (BC), Peter Ewanchuk (AB), David Grier (MB/SK), Deacon Gregory Scratch (ON), John Hadjinicolaou (QC/Maritimes), and Mira Davidson (at large, elected by the Assembly).

Elected by the Assembly to the Metropolitan Council, to serve for a three-year term beginning at the close of the 2008 All American Council, were Archpriest Cyprian Hutcheon and David Grier.

Elected to the Auditing Committee were Priest Rodion Luciuk (Yorkton), Priest Ronald Poworoznik (Sherwood Park AB), and Lorne Pinkerton (Calgary). Archbishop Seraphim said that this committee should come to Ottawa once a year to look at the financial records, just prior to an Archdiocesan Council meeting.

The one resolution passed at this Assembly also related to future auditing of the diocesan books. Introduced by Fr Rodion Luciuk, the resolution called on the Archdiocesan Council to engage an external auditor to do an *audit review* of the diocesan financial records prior to the 2010 Assembly of the Archdiocese. The resolution was unanimously passed.

After a brief, charming presentation by the young people present at the 2007 Assembly, the clergy and lay delegates from the British Columbia Deanery all stood together as one while their Dean, Fr Lawrence Farley, read a letter from Priest John Hainsworth of All Saints' Church in Victoria, British Columbia, offering to host the next Archdiocesan Assembly in the summer of 2010.

— MS



## Metropolitan Herman serves Primatial Liturgy In new Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Canada



19 July 2007: the great doors of Annunciation Cathedral, Ottawa. The people wait inside for the entry of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman.



The warden of the Cathedral, Alexandra Lopoukhine, welcomes His Beatitude with traditional bread and salt.



The photograph at left gives a partial idea of the scale of the main body of Annunciation Cathedral, which is one of the largest temples in The Orthodox Church in America.

The temple, a former Roman Catholic church dedicated to the Protection of the Mother of God, is in process of renovation. The parish has accomplished many changes in the past year to make the temple more Orthodox, but the major tasks of painting icons for the iconostasis, and frescoing the walls with icons, remain to be done.

All three of the Archdiocese of Canada's hierarchs served with Metropolitan Herman at this Primatial Divine Liturgy. Here they are shown at the end of the Divine Liturgy, from left to right: His Eminence Lazar, Retired Archbishop of Ottawa; His Beatitude Herman, Archbishop of Washington and New York, Metropolitan of All America and Canada; His Eminence Seraphim, Archbishop of Ottawa and Canada; and His Grace Varlaam, Retired Bishop of Vancouver.



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## *... Primatial Liturgy at Annunciation Cathedral ...*

*... continued from p. 5:*



*One of the major renovations already accomplished by the Cathedral parish is the extension of the bema (altar area) to make the space ample enough for visiting hierarchs and their retinues. The photograph at left was taken from a vantage point near the High Place. Because the main body of the cathedral is so large, this extension of the bema and solea into the narthex does not produce any sense of smaller space there.*

*Often the “unsung heroes” of an Assembly are the choir director and the faithful who sing at all the Vespers, Matins, and Liturgy services held during the event. For this Primatial Liturgy, choir members of the Cathedral joined some of those who had already been singing at services at St Paul’s. The director for all the liturgical services of the Assembly was the Cathedral’s choir director, Michael Holden.*



*The faithful wait in line to receive the Holy Gifts.*

*On this occasion, a morning during the work week, many parishioners of Annunciation Cathedral took the time to join the Assembly’s delegates and observers in worship, in order to welcome them to what is “the Cathedral for all the faithful of the Archdiocese of Canada,” as Vladyka Seraphim has often said..*



*... Some photographs from the 2007 Assembly ...*



*Archpriest John Jillions (l), Dean of the Annunciation Cathedral, and Mary Ann Lopoukhine (r), chief organizer of the Ottawa Assembly arrangements.*



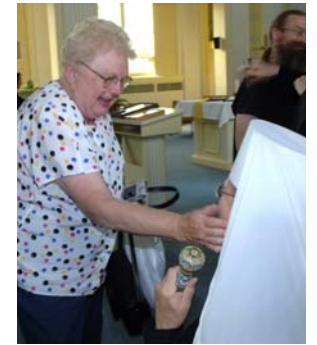
*Gabriel Scratch (l) and Neva Tkachuk gave a brief accounts of their youth programme experiences.*



*Many had a chance for the first time to meet leaders of St Arseny's Orthodox Theological Institute: Fr Myrone Klysh (l), the registrar, and Spencer Estabrooks (r), the director.*



*At left are Archpriest Larry Reinheimer (l) of Calgary and Lawrence Purdy of Ottawa, who were the Chairmen of the 2007 Assembly.*



*Awe and affection : Benjamin Holden (l, with Matushka Denise Jillions) of Ottawa, and Kay Tychon of Sochava AB (r), greet the Metropolitan.*



*Above, some of the young adults who came to Fr Lawrence Farley's popular workshop on living the Christian life. At right (inset) is Fr Lawrence, Dean of British Columbia. In the group photograph, Fr Michael Fourik and Matushka Elena (Holy Resurrection, Vancouver) are in the background.*



*Prof Richard Schneider gave a major report on the work of the Metropolitan Council and its past three years of struggle; in addition, he led workshops on iconology. He is also the coordinator of the Toronto School of Theology programme in Orthodox studies, and was formerly President of the Canadian Council of Churches.*



*Present for the Assembly banquet on Thursday evening was His Grace Alexander, Bishop of Ottawa, Eastern Canada and Upstate New York, of the Antiochian Orthodox jurisdiction. At right he is shown with His Eminence, Archbishop Seraphim.*



## **STAS programme Unveiled at 2007 Assembly**

Since the beginning of Archbishop Seraphim's episcopacy in 1987, our Archdiocese of Canada has continually grown and expanded. We then had around twenty clergy. We now have a Ruling Bishop, two retired Bishops, sixty-nine priests, and thirteen deacons. Many new missions have formed and are now reaching maturity. We have a great task ahead in proclaiming the Orthodox faith to a new generation of Canadians.

The 2007 Assembly in Ottawa saw the unveiling of a new way to support the ongoing ministry and mission of the Archdiocese of Canada. This new initiative is the *St Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards* programme. Known as *STAS*, this programme is designed to allow individuals across Canada to give directly to the Archdiocese, providing sustainable funding for ministry needs well into the future.

We actually began receiving pledges for this new programme at this year's Assembly, and we are off to a very solid start. In only three days, twelve persons became St Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards, and together have committed over \$8,000.00 in annual giving to the Archdiocese of Canada. Glory to God!

*STAS* calls to mind the ministry of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow, who laboured so diligently as a missionary bishop here in North America. Just as he sacrificed greatly to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so too are we called to follow in his footsteps. Giving through *STAS* is simple and straightforward – a standard pre-authorized donation from your chequing account for any amount you determine. You need only to fill out the enrollment form provided in this issue of the *Canadian Orthodox Messenger* (see facing page), and submit it along with a personal cheque marked "VOID," to the Western office of the Archdiocese of Canada. You can cancel, raise, or lower the amount of your monthly donation at any time. Your participation in *STAS* is totally a matter of your own prayerful discretion.

Becoming a *St Tikhon Archdiocesan Steward* is user-friendly, but not necessarily easy; for giving through *STAS* is by no means intended to replace

your regular stewardship to your local parish. According to the teaching of the Apostle Paul, that parish level of giving comes first. Nevertheless, as Fr Luke Veronis reminded those gathered at the Assembly, becoming mission-minded requires not only giving locally, but also giving to the Church nationally and globally. Becoming a *St Tikhon Archdiocesan Steward* is an "above-and-beyond" commitment to the work of the Orthodox Church here in Canada.

The funds that flow into the Archdiocese through *STAS* will be allocated to the ministry needs of the Church by the *STAS* Vision Committee. This Committee is composed of the Archdiocesan Chancellor, Archpriest Dennis Pihach; the Archdiocesan Dean, Archpriest Cyprian Hutcheon; and a lay delegate selected from within the members of the Archdiocesan Council (to be decided at the November 1 - 3, 2007 meeting); and a lay delegate chosen at large by the Archdiocesan Assembly. The 2007 Assembly chose Reader Justin Grimmond of All Saints' parish in Hamilton, Ontario as the lay delegate at large on the *STAS* Vision Committee.

Why not take a moment to consider becoming a St Tikhon Archdiocesan Steward?

*For further information about STAS you may contact the Chancellor, Archpriest Dennis Pihach at [dpihach@sthermans.ca](mailto:dpihach@sthermans.ca) or Matthew Francis at [Matthew.Francis@shaw.ca](mailto:Matthew.Francis@shaw.ca)*

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Patriarch of Moscow (+1925),  
Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov),  
and other missionary labourers  
of the Orthodox Church in America.*

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*St Tikhon  
Archdiocesan  
Stewards*



With the blessing of His Eminence, Archbishop SERAPHIM, the St Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards (STAS) is being founded at this Archdiocesan Assembly 2007. The purpose of the Stewards programme is to financially support and encourage the ongoing ministry and pastoral care of the Archdiocese of Canada, through regular giving. At this time, we invoke the memory and prayers of our beloved Father in Christ, St Tikhon, who laboured so diligently for the Gospel in this land. May we who follow in his footsteps be faithful stewards of God's gifts.

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*You are invited prayerfully to consider joining the  
St Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards . . .*

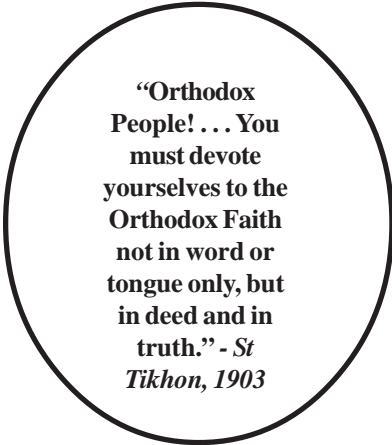
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- Enroll me today as a **Faithful Servant** to give "50 cents a day" (\$15.00 per month).
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This is your authorization to debit the indicated account \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on the 1<sup>st</sup> \_\_\_\_ or 15<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_ of each and every month as a donation to the **ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA** until further notice.

This authorization may be cancelled at any time upon written notice to the **ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA**. It is warranted by the donor that all persons whose signatures are required to sign on the above account have signed this authorization. All charitable donations will receive an annual receipt.\*

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*All proceeds given through the St Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards (STAS) programme will be allocated according to the ministry needs of the Archdiocese of Canada as directed by the Ruling Bishop, the Archdiocesan Council, and the STAS Vision Committee.*



## 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrated For Archbishop Seraphim In Edmonton

Joy filled the temple at St Herman of Alaska's Sobor in Edmonton on June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> as clergy and faithful gathered from across Canada to honour His Eminence Archbishop Seraphim on the occasion of his 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Consecration to the Episcopate. It was June 13, 1987 which marked the beginning of a new era for the Orthodox Church in Canada, as Vladyka Seraphim was entrusted with the pastoral oversight of our Archdiocese. Since that time, the Church has grown steadily and continues to mature.

The weekend of celebration began Friday evening with a *moleben*, a Service of Thanksgiving to God, for Vladyka Seraphim's life and ministry. Chancellor of the Archdiocese Archpriest Dennis Pihach and Protodeacon Wilhelm Friesen served. His Eminence was joined by His Grace, Bishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West, who twenty years earlier had been present as a layman for the Consecration. Congratulatory greetings from the Prime Minister of Canada were brought by Edmonton Centre MP Mr Laurie Hawn. An icon was presented to the Archbishop by Hieromonk Vladimir (Lysak), and a Citation was given on behalf of the City of Edmonton by Mayor Stephen Mandel. A reception followed the *moleben*, with many warm tributes and gifts presented to our dear Vladyka.

Realizing that our very life is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the centrepont of the Anniversary weekend was the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, which was served on Saturday morning. As His Eminence constantly reminds us, our life is to be discovered and renewed in drawing near to the Holy Eucharist. This glorious Liturgy was served by Archbishop Seraphim, together with His Grace Bishop Benjamin, and His Grace Bishop Iov of Kashira, Administrator of the Moscow Patriarchal Parishes in Canada – as well as sixteen priests and three deacons from all

across Canada. It was a blessing to be there, and “in faith and love” to draw near to Christ, remembering all the while Archbishop Seraphim's steadfast service to his flock.

The celebrations for the Archbishop then flowed naturally into another, that of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of St Herman's Sobor in Edmonton. Over one hundred volunteers from the parish participated in making the weekend a very special time. The children of



Archbishop Seraphim and Bishop Benjamin receiving greetings joyfully

the parish were especially celebrated, with unique treats for them. The close connection between St Herman's and our Archbishop were not forgotten, since it was here that His Eminence was received into the Orthodox Church, and then later was consecrated a bishop, through God's mercy, to become our father in Christ.

*Eis Polla Eti Dhespota!*

- Matthew Francis, St Herman of Alaska's Sobor, Edmonton



Children of St Herman's with the clergy on the day of celebration.

*An historic church in process of renewal:*

## **Myrrh-streaming icon Visits St John's, Windsor**

On Sunday July 1, a humble handmaiden of God, Alice, crossed the border into Canada with an icon of the Theotokos in her arms. It was not just any icon, however, for this one has been outpouring God's grace in the form of Myrrh on the faithful for the past eleven years.

This is the Myrrh-Streaming and Wonder-Working Icon of Livonia, Michigan, and Alice brought it to our Church, St John the Divine in Windsor, Ontario, with the hope of helping us raise some funds for our roof and ceiling projects.

You see, St John the Divine Church, after decades of service to the Orthodox in Windsor, closed for about four years, as the faithful were increasingly unable to support its upkeep. The members scattered among the neighbouring Orthodox Churches and put down roots. Over the years, without heat, the leaky roof caused a lot of ceiling damage, with the repeated freezing and thawing.

A core group of Christians whose matriarch was the daughter of one of the past priests of the parish (Fr Lukian Stesiuk, who served at St John's for over forty years) took upon themselves the monumental task of re-opening the parish. As the many hurdles were uncovered one by one, not the least of which was the demise of the old boiler, they faced each one with a perseverant faith in God's timing and provision.

The church opened to the faithful again almost two years ago, at first doing reader's services, and then this past January, with a full-time priest. The hurdles keep coming, but God's grace keeps surpassing each of them.

For example, one cold night in February, we discovered that a pipe froze in the basement, literally inundating the new carpet and tile floor with about an inch of water! A plumber friend responded within twenty minutes and called in some friends with wet-dry vacuums, and by 11:00 pm (some four hours later), all the water was gone and the drying process was underway. None of the men were Orthodox and all, including the plumber, said "No charge!" And if that is not grace being outpoured, just try calling a plumber on a weekday night and ask him to bring help and work for free!

But the roof still leaks and plaster still keeps raining down. Thus, it has been a priority for our small

core group of about ten people to pursue its repair with donations and loans.

One day in June, Alice contacted me and offered to bring this Myrrh-streaming icon to our Church, on July 1. That day we had over one hundred people in attendance at our Divine Liturgy. At the end of the service, we anointed the faithful with the precious Myrrh. Because of the visit of all these faithful people, we collected over a thousand dollars that day! Afterwards, Alice said to me that "she [the Theotokos] valued the prayers of the faithful and responded with a greater than normal outpouring of Myrrh."

I marveled at Alice's familiarity with the Mother of our Lord and the matter-of-fact way in which she explained this phenomenon. The money we received that day was truly a gift from God's endless mercy upon us.

Our faith in the vision, that we will continue to see St John the Divine's Church increasingly upholding the faithful and ministering to their spiritual needs, has become deeper.

— *Fr Constantine Katsilas, St John's, Windsor*



*Fr Constantine anoints the many faithful with the Myrrh which streams from the Icon of the Theotokos.*



*Fr Constantine with women who made possible the visit of the icon to St John's.*



## Annual Sifton Pilgrimage held, Orthodox museum opened

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Pilgrimage to Sifton MB was held on June 23 of this year, and it brought over sixty people together from many places: Dauphin, Ethelbert, Yorkton, Grayson, Winnipeg, Flin Flon and Saskatoon. Quite a few children were in attendance, too, which was great to see.

There were several specific joys this year. First, we were so glad that Archbishop Seraphim was able to be with us, blessing us all. Second, we continued the tradition of a Procession from the Community Centre to the Church. A Cross and two icons (St Arseny, written by the hand of Matushka Jennie Hainsworth, and The Joy of Canada), led the Procession, followed by a choir, several priests, a priest-monk, and our Vladyka. Behind them came several persons in cars who wanted to be in the Procession but whose health did not allow them to walk. The way to the Church is about half a kilometer. Many local persons received Holy Communion this year, another great blessing.

A final joy was that the Canadian Orthodox Pioneer Museum was opened on Saturday afternoon, with prayers led by the Archbishop. The exhibit was shown for the first time to a “live audience” with the CD narrative providing the story. Then Reader Michael Luciuk took up his post as museum guide which he will keep for the rest of the summer.

Good hospitality abounded at the home of Dot Connelly, who has done so much to bring the Church restoration forward in the last four years. The meal after the Pilgrimage was, as usual, fantastic! Free door prizes of all sorts brought the Pilgrimage to a close on a light and happy note. To quote one old-timer, “this is just how it used to be!” She was referring to the days of Archbishop St Arseny and the annual pilgrimages then.

Please keep the Canadian Orthodox Pioneer Museum in your prayers, as we tell the story of the wedding of Han’ka and Petro, 1927, a look at pioneer life in the area, both the spiritual side of marriage and the festivities surrounding it. The CD narrative about Han’ka and Petro is based on real archival facts about early weddings; it greets the visitors and takes them back to 1927. We hope the exhibit brings many visitors, who also get to hear about the church restoration, learn about the

life of St Arseny, see religious artifacts, learn about priest’s vestments, listen to chants, and take home books, CDs and more.

A brief flashback: it was a blessing that on June 16, as we were unpacking the Museum and store, our first tourists arrived, eager to see the Church: Susan and Robert Senger of St George’s Romanian Church, Regina. They were in the area because Robert’s roots go back to the Sclater parish nearby. They stayed and visited, bought store items, and left a memorial donation for family members. Now we hear from Dauphin that seniors are arranging a tour bus to come, and pamphlets are in the Dauphin Tourism booth to attract tourists coming to the Dauphin Ukrainian Festival.

When Michael is not busy with tours, he is working on new displays (on icon-writing, among them), and in his spare time, he works to develop the Quiet Garden in the south-east corner of the churchyard. He offers Reader’s Services and a “Learn to Chant” programme. The icon of St Arseny has been placed



At the door of the Sifton church, two visitors hold the icon of St Arseny with Reader Michael (r), who is the Orthodox Pioneer Museum guide.

centrally before the Royal Doors with his Life beside it. Around the icon is an embroidered *rushnyk* from St Arseny’s home village of Derhachi.

How green and quiet the church surroundings are, and every now and again the wind stirs the old rafters and domes, carrying the promise of renewed life in the Holy Spirit to this lovely old vineyard which the Lord has planted.

May it truly be so!

— *Katya Szalaszyj, Archdiocesan Archivist*

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## Calling all iconographers!

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One of the most exciting—and perhaps dangerous—things happening in the Orthodox Church in particular and in the art world in general is the growing interest in iconography. There are iconography courses happening in many places across Canada and the United States—not to mention around Europe, especially in Finland. Iconography has become the art flavour of the day, the hobby of the month, the theme of the year.

What worries me is that we are taking on the name of iconographer without having proved ourselves as iconographers. Taking one course does not an iconographer make. I know too many people who have taken a one-week or two-week course on iconography, and suddenly they are hanging out a shingle saying that they are iconographers. The maxim “A little knowledge can be dangerous” comes in to play here—and believe me, I am speaking from experience. When I first started painting icons, I knew so little, and arrogantly thought I knew much. After many years of study, I have much to regret and so much more to learn. If I can help anyone else not make the same mistakes I did, I will gladly do so.

To be an iconographer, one must practice: drawing, painting in egg tempera, and learning the brush strokes. Not everything that an iconographer or someone aspiring to be an iconographer paints or draws is blessing or should be blessed. As an iconographer, each one of us has a responsibility to educate ourselves not only in the techniques of iconography, but also in the theology of icons and the history of iconography, and to immerse ourselves in the fulness of the church in prayer. More so, we must make sure that what we paint is accurate to established models. I have said many times that an iconographer is only as good as his resources. An article on the Internet entitled, “Imitate, don’t Innovate,” I think says much about the proper attitude to iconography.

I have recently seen several icons that, although well-intentioned, nonetheless missed the mark as to what the established models are for particular saints and feasts. These mistakes are theologically incorrect; in such cases where the theology represented in the icon is questionable, the icon should either be sent back to the iconographer unblest with instruction for the edification of the iconographer, sent back to be corrected; or burned. However, these were deemed acceptable by the priest of the church and blessed. In the instance of the iconographer, I understand that it is difficult financially to collect an appropriate library from which to draw models and inspiration; I have managed to collect a

substantial library of old and new books on iconography from Russia and Greece, many of them classic and necessary books for any iconographer. If anyone is needing resources, please do not hesitate to contact me. Canada is such a huge country, but through email, we can bridge the gap and make sure we are all canonically sound, and not painting in a vacuum, which is also dangerous.

There is another problem, and that primarily is the responsibility of the priest. As Professor Richard Schneider said in an article he wrote for St Vladimir’s Seminary, education in iconology and iconography is so important in our seminaries, and is virtually non-existent. I would like to reiterate that thought, with some modification. It is wonderful that Professor Schneider is teaching at St Vladimir’s, but the level at which he is teaching assumes that everyone who takes the course knows what an icon is. Unfortunately, the first essential level is not taught to priests or to parishioners, or, dare I say it, to budding iconographers. The priest today becomes the stop-gap to what is approved by the church and what is not, and too often the priest does not know what is canonical and what is not.

Theological statements in colour: one icon does not an iconographer make; by the same token, a theological degree does not make a theologian. A theologian writes about his experience of God, and the Church confirms this writing as an authentic experience if it is harmonious with the experience of Orthodox believers in general and through the ages. It is not about just writing words, but it is an encounter with God. The same is to be said about iconography. The experience of the iconographer and his or her encounter with God is seen in the icons themselves.

This article is not meant simply to raise an issue and then forget about it; I hope and pray that it will open a dialogue among all of the iconographers in Canada. As iconographers, we need to pool our resources for the betterment of the church. Yes, there are many of us who are trying to eke out his or her existence through the production of icons, and we are protective of our commissions. But this should not hinder open and healthy dialogue, nor further instruction. As I have said many times, every icon teaches me something new. Each one of us, iconographer, priest and parishioners alike, have much to learn.

If anyone would like to contact me, I can be reached at: [priestmonk@gmail.com](mailto:priestmonk@gmail.com), or by mail at:

Fr Vladimir (Lysack)  
Box 88  
Grayson, Saskatchewan  
S0A 1E0.



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*Our mother among the saints,  
Elizabeth the New Martyr:*

## **Lest guilty blood be shed**

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St Elizabeth the New Martyr was born the daughter of Louis IV, Grand-Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt and Princess Alice, daughter of Queen Victoria. She was also the older sister of Alexandra, who eventually married the last Russian Tsar, Nicholas II. In 1884, at age nineteen, Elizabeth married Grand Duke Sergei, a son of Emperor Alexander III of Russia and brother of Nicholas II. Because she was Protestant, two ceremonies were held, one Orthodox, the other Lutheran. However, after two years of intense study and prayer, of her own volition Elizabeth decided to become Orthodox and was received into the Orthodox Church in 1891, the same year her husband was appointed Governor of Moscow by Alexander III.

After her marriage, Elizabeth increasingly gave herself to charitable work, caring for the well-being of many people in need. However, as a member of the aristocracy, her husband had political enemies. On February 4, 1905, shortly after he left home, Elizabeth heard a terrible blast. Hurrying in the direction of the explosion, she found that her husband had been killed by a terrorist bomb, his body blown to pieces. In the subsequent dark hours Elizabeth barely left the coffin of her deceased husband, often keeping solitary vigil. But after two days she was impressed with the awareness that her late husband wanted her to go to the terrorist who had killed him and express his forgiveness. She undertook this mission.

At the prison, the terrorist, a man named Kaliayev, told her that several times he had nearly killed her husband, but had hesitated because she was with him. "And it didn't occur to you that you have killed me together with him?" Elizabeth asked. Then she told him she was there to bring her husband's forgiveness. She begged him to repent of his sin, giving him the Holy Scriptures and an icon. Kaliayev seemed unmoved, but later Elizabeth found out from the warden that he had placed the icon she had left on his pillow. This gave her hope.

With her unassuming nature, Elizabeth had not wanted anyone to know of her visit to the terrorist, and she was pained when news of it reached the public, who, the biographer Lubov Millar notes, was astonished at her "spiritual strength and moral greatness." No doubt others were scandalized and angered. After all, Kaliayev belonged to a revolutionary movement threatening the lives not only of one grand duke, but also of everyone who was part of the tsarist regime.

At his trial, Kaliayev expressed no remorse, even advocating his own execution. "Be careful of the verdict you are about to render," he told those hearing the case. "If you acquit me, I shall take up arms to destroy tsarism and liberate the Russian people. You must, therefore, condemn me to death."

Even after the sentence was passed, Elizabeth appealed to her brother-in-law, the tsar, for clemency. Nicholas, fearful that an act of mercy would encourage other revolutionaries, upheld the sentence. Kaliayev was duly executed.

Perhaps there will always be those who, like Tsar Nicholas, posit that terrorists or others who commit atrocious crimes should receive capital punishment for their offences. They cite a commitment to public safety, the need to deter others from committing murder, and obedience to certain sections of the Old Testament. Some attempt to justify capital punishment as war is often justified - a "necessary" or "lesser" evil.

But why should Christians accede to any type of evil when there is always the alternative of righteousness? Our primary concern as Christians is not to enforce security (even the safety of our family and friends or country); it is not to discipline or punish others; it is not even to deter others from doing evil. Our primary task as Christians is to emulate Christ's obedience to God's command to love our neighbors/enemies, even if in doing so we must abandon other ideals and sentiments.

There is a great challenge in the bold witness of St Elizabeth. In her we see neither pride nor sentimentality. Instead in her actions we see a woman who, embracing Christ's commandment, chose to love her enemy, and therefore God, more than herself, her family or even her beloved adopted country. Refusing to elevate death or revenge as a solution, she acted instead on God's command that "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink." (Romans 12:20)

Elizabeth's efforts on Kaliayev's behalf included not only interceding for his very life, but also arranging meals for him at the prison and proclaiming to him the good news of repentance and forgiveness. In these astonishing acts, she gave witness to her awareness that even the most damaged, demonically driven person bears the image of God. Furthermore, though most people have a natural aversion to the shedding of innocent blood, Elizabeth's concern surpassed even this: she showed a holy concern that not even guilty blood be shed. She believed and chose to act on the truth that one death, the death of an innocent Christ, has already overcome evil. To exact the blood of the guilty, even for reasons that

*continued, next page. . .*

. . . **St Elizabeth**, *continued from page 15:*

seem to be good, can never be life-giving or healing. The death sentence is a dead end.

For Elizabeth, the act of forgiving her husband's killer marked a deepening conversion. Choosing to center her life on the works of mercy, she abandoned her high position in society and used her wealth to purchase a large piece of land with four buildings. She took the vows of a nun and founded the Martha and Mary Convent. There, inspired by the ancient vocation of deaconess, women from all classes of society joined her in ministering to criminals, outcasts and orphans living in the worst slums of Moscow.

When the Revolution came in 1917, Elizabeth turned down the offer of a Swedish Cabinet Minister to help her escape Russia, saying that she wished to share the destiny of her country and its people.

Refusing to save her own life, she was eventually arrested. While being brutally beaten by her Bolshevik captors, she repeated the prayer of Christ on the cross, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." In the end, along with her faithful companion, Nun Barbara, Elizabeth was thrown down a mine shaft where she died praying for her enemies.

In this frightening, insecure world, there are many seemingly good arguments in support of capital punishment. Some might say that St Elizabeth's martyrdom by terrorists is a case in point. Yet we know from her life that she would seek the conversion rather than the death of those who took her life, for it is incongruous to say you forgive an enemy yet seek his execution. If we accept the worldly wisdom of capital punishment, don't we risk making void the sacrifice of Christ himself, along with a host of others, such as St Elizabeth?

In these post-911 days, let us pray for the strength to emulate St Elizabeth's potent witness to the power of Christ's death and resurrection, particularly to those who name themselves our enemies and seek to terrorize us, our families and countries. Holy St Elizabeth, pray for us. — *Renée Zitzloff*

*[We would like to thank the editors of In Communion (Summer 2007) for permission to reprint this article by Ms Zitzloff, who is the Coordinator of the Minnesota chapter of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship and attends St Elizabeth Orthodox Mission in Eagan MN. She is involved in a Minneapolis inner city ministry called Peace House where she is able to be with those living in poverty including the homeless, the lonely and those suffering from chemical addictions and/or mental illness. She is a writer, married, and the mother of six children.]*

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## 'The earth is the Lord's, And the fulness thereof'

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During the Age of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, there developed first a notion and then a theology of man's dominance over and ownership of the earth. Even the creation narrative was re-interpreted as giving man a purely utilitarian ownership of the earth. While this desire to dominate the earth pre-dates these two extraordinary developments in human society, it had previously been necessary only to accommodate oneself to a certain amount of control, such as irrigation. It was these two events, one on the level of the mind ["Enlightenment"] and the other on the level of our action [Industrial Revolution], that made it possible for us to carry out such domination.

Nevertheless, in the Law [Leviticus] we are taught that all the land belonged to God and that portions were divided among the tribes to be held in trust and used for their needs, and as the embodiment of their responsibility to cultivate their ability to respond, like the Lord, with care. God even went so far as to give a sabbath to the land, so that it might be rested and resuscitated. From this it is clear that God cares for the earth and desires that it be sustained.

It is equally clear that the earth does not belong to *us*, rather *we* belong to *it*. Not only are we an integral part of the eco-system, but at the end of our lives the earth will reclaim us and return us to her bosom. God made us from the dust of the earth and established an important principle, for He also breathed into us the spirit of life. We are, therefore, both of Heaven and of earth. In a manner of speaking, we share in the image of the two natures of Jesus Christ, and so are invited to cultivate the sanctification of our incarnate way of being.

**"Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from bondage to corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).**

Apostle Paul tells us that all of creation fell *together* with man, and that it has been redeemed together with man. This is obviously a great mystery, for here he says that there is an intimate bond between man and the rest of creation. The purpose of man is not simply to worship God but to serve as a point of unity for all that exists. Man alone consists in the spiritual, the material and the intellectual, and he is therefore a microcosm of the whole universe — both the visible and the invisible. We have the capacity through our worship to



serve creation as God *loves* creation. *Ortho-doxa* is more than just “right worship”; it indicates also the correct understanding of worship. Such *ortho-doxa* — right worship with a correct understanding — makes it possible for us to serve creation with blessing and healing.

There is no relationship with our Lord and Saviour where there is not blessing but cursing, [where] there is no cultivation but only a stripping away (a kind of spiritual strip-mining), no healing but only harm. Man should have fulfilled this vocation as a unifying element in nature, for he is not only its crown, but the microcosm of creation. This vocation could only have been fulfilled through unselfish love and the absence of egotism. This would have constituted a proper use of his energies.

The fall [of mankind, in the Garden of Eden] really constitutes a proclivity to habitually misuse our energies, not the loss of them. Christ healed this misuse through His perfect humanity, in whom the perfect human nature is expressed, making unity with God and the cosmos once again possible for human beings — a unity which Christ realized for us in His unity of perfect humanity with complete divinity. Human nature, restored in Him, has now the ability to make the proper use of its energies.

This proper use is manifested in the Church — His Body — even if the members of the Church so often fall short of it. Understanding this is necessary in order for us to understand the complexities of the Incarnation of God. Jesus Christ as Incarnate recapitulated our nature and became the new Adam in order to correct our failures, complete our calling, fulfil our purpose and therefore deliver not only *us*, but the *whole cosmos* from bondage to corruption.

In the beginning — in the creation — man fit into the eco-system in a perfect balance. Had he truly acquired the knowledge of good and evil as a gift from God in the fulness of time, he could have maintained that balance. Having accepted from Satan a counterfeit of that knowledge, man’s relationship with the cosmos also became counterfeit. The fact that the human race has come so close to destroying the eco-system upon which its own life depends makes it clear that humanity has misunderstood not only its own *Being*, but its *relationship* with the earth, with the universe, with God, and even with *itself*. These misunderstandings, not forming ourselves on that which is foundational to creation — the Creator’s love and affection — always come hand in hand. We misunderstand both our own being and creation, including the whole of the universe, and God in one and the same act.

This set of misunderstandings, born of a self-centred egotism, is a major aspect of what Christ came to earth in order to heal. It is important to remember that self-centred egotism is not something most people are able to see and to understand about themselves, but it is deeply embedded in their whole way of putting their understanding of the world together. It is a fundamental misrepresentation of self, world and God and the only way we can untie this knot is by coming to know how it began, and shedding the light of Christ on this unconscious orientation.

To a large measure, the Incarnation is a response to man’s misinterpretation of himself and misunderstanding of his purpose in the universe. In the words of Canadian philosopher David Goa, “The Incarnation of Jesus Christ invites us to our own incarnation, our own becoming enfleshed in the world of God’s making. Only then are we free from a world of our own making, a world that does not exist but can be nurtured as a real illusion in ways that destroy the very foundations of our life together. We can and do turn creation into detritus. But we can also, and to this we are called, turn the dry places into fertile land when we seek to be faithful to Adonai [the Lord]. It was so with Abraham and it is our calling.” Let us try to focus the light of Orthodoxy on the darkness of this misunderstanding.

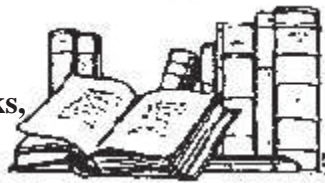
— *His Eminence, Archbishop Lazar, Retired Bishop of Ottawa, from an outline of his workshop on “Orthodoxy and Ecology,” given at the 2007 Assembly of the Archdiocese of Canada.*

Asked by the *Ottawa Citizen* “What is more important, love or wisdom, and why?” Fr John Jillions of Annunciation Cathedral answered,

“Wisdom is more important, because it helps us discern how to love. Of course love is at the centre of Christianity, but there is a lot of confusion about what this means. People can be said to ‘love’ anything. Boyfriend, girlfriend, family, children, money, fame, success, health, security, pleasure, outlook on life, religion, country. These things can become the focus of our desire, ultimate value and self-sacrifice. ‘Love’ in any of these cases might be a bad decision, as anyone who has made the wrong choice of partner can tell you.

“This is why wisdom in the Jewish and Christian tradition is valued so highly as a divine gift. And this is why Solomon’s prayer was so pleasing to God. He didn’t ask for long life, or riches or power, but for ‘a hearing heart . . . that I may be able to discern between good and evil’ (1 Kings 3:9). For Christians, this prayer is most clearly answered through the example of Jesus Christ. If we desire the wisdom to know how to love, we look to him.”

**Fr Richard Rene,**  
*The Nightmare Tree.*  
Regina SK: Coteau Books,  
2007.



[for availability, see: <http://www.coteaubooks.com/>]

— *Reviewed by Bev Cooke, All Saints', Victoria*

Jonah Comfait's father is missing. His tour boat was found on a reef, and it's assumed he perished in a storm. Jonah does not accept this and the reader is touched by the fourteen year old's hope when he sees his father in what he thinks is a dream, the more so because the reader knows the treachery behind the apparition. We fear for him as Jonah rushes off to find an old hermit on a nearby island, who will give him the clues he needs to rescue his father from the Djinn, who feed on his nightmares.

The quest takes him to the fantastic hidden island of Mysterion, where he meets angeli, Monviel, the ruler, and receives help and advice on the quest.

Jonah's journey to his father is fraught with danger – he must escape from the Cyclops, decide whether or not to trust a helpful companion, brave the Bay of Storms before he reaches his destination.

Once on the Djinn's island, Jonah is faced with the ultimate choice – take his father's place as a slave or leave his father to his fate until the Djinn release him. It is Jonah's voluntary acceptance of the slavery which ultimately frees them both, and sets the stage for the defeat of the Djinn by Monvieil's subjects in the climax of the book.

Fr Richard Rene's childhood memories of living in the Seychelle island chain off the coast of Kenya provided the vivid and realistic setting for his debut mid-grade novel. His love for the area informs and uplifts the descriptions in the book. As well, Fr Richard knows sailing and sailboats, and his descriptions of Jonah's trials as he sails over the reef onto the open ocean are fraught with tension, and edged with realism. We heave a sigh of relief when Jonah finally makes it past the dangerous coral, and onto the open water.

The story pulls the readers in and holds them in tense anticipation from the opening sentences to the final resolution of the book. But more than this, Fr Richard has woven Orthodox themes and our timeless, universal theology into the very fabric of the story, so that any Orthodox tween or early teen reading this will not only have an exciting adventure, but will also recognize and learn from the underlying layers of the tale.

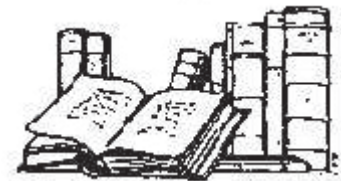
The symbolism in the book is never overt, and the author never preaches. Rather, he weaves the symbolism seamlessly into the story, so that without even realizing it, the reader feels a strong, comfortable recognition with the truths presented every week in the Divine Liturgy.

The purpose of the book is not, however, to teach theology, no matter how subtly the lesson is presented. Published by one of Canada's foremost secular children's publishers, the book is, first and foremost, a story to be read and enjoyed. Fr Richard succeeds admirably – his characters are realistic, his settings clear and vivid and Jonah's problems complicated enough to require the utmost effort to solve.

*The Nightmare Tree* will undoubtedly raise comparisons with Lewis' Narnia stories, and for the same reason – love and hope permeate the book from beginning to end. You close the book feeling refreshed and revitalized. It's a good thing that the author plans more stories in Mysterion, because readers will want to return.

**Fr Lawrence Farley,**  
*Let Us Attend: A  
Journey through the  
Orthodox Divine  
Liturgy.*

Ben Loman CA:  
Conciliar Press, 2007.



[for availability, see: <http://www.conciliarpress.com/>]

— *Reviewed by Fr Richard Rene, St Peter's Calgary*

Reading Fr Lawrence Farley's new book *Let Us Attend: A Journey through the Orthodox Divine Liturgy* was a challenging experience. I am not speaking technically, of course. As a text, this is a well-written and thoughtfully-presented book aimed at "the holy commoners of God." Its pastoral goal is to encourage us to embrace more fully the most important thing that we Christians do: enter into the Kingdom through our collective work of praising, blessing, worshipping and giving thanks to God in the Divine Liturgy.

Fr Lawrence takes us step by step through the liturgy of St John Chrysostom, explaining the text and actions in language both passionate and accessible. For those who suffer from theological attention-deficit disorder (as I do), the chapters are short and to-the-point. Key terms are defined in boxes as they appear in the



text, which is helpful not only for non-Orthodox readers, but also for Orthodox who have used familiar terms for an entire lifetime without really knowing their meaning. At every point, the author uses historical scholarship of the liturgy to illumine its theology. Historical study never devolves into an end in itself, always remaining a tool that Fr Lawrence uses to challenge us to greater prayer and devotion.

But this work is more than just an “explanation” of the liturgy. It is also a work of theological vision. As someone who has known Fr Lawrence for many years, I can personally witness that he loves the liturgy and prays it with true fervor extending beyond the merely formal. His first and foremost concern is that the liturgy be more than some symbolic act. As his quote from Fr Alexander Schmemmann at the beginning reminds us, when we accomplish the liturgy, we make a *real* journey into the Kingdom of God, involving not just the mind, but all the senses, the will, the heart—in short, our whole being.

*Let Us Attend* most challenges us precisely in this vision. Throughout we find practical liturgical suggestions, from prayers said out loud to a restoration of the peace among the faithful, that continues to advocate Fr Schmemmann’s call to liturgical renewal. That I personally agree with many of these suggestions perhaps disqualifies me as an “objective” reviewer. However, any slightly informed reader will note that everything Fr Lawrence writes is rooted in sound liturgical scholarship. Furthermore, his work lies firmly within a patristic vision of liturgy in which *lex orandi est lex credendi* (“the rule of prayer is the rule of faith”)—which is to say that *how* we worship both describes and defines our faith as Christians.

However, whether or not one finally agrees with all the practical implications of the author’s liturgical vision is not particularly relevant. *Let Us Attend* does not pretend to be definitive or comprehensive, remaining firmly focused on the liturgy as it derives from its Russian origins and as it is practiced in North America. Within this context (the context for which it was written) this is ultimately a very helpful book. It is helpful to understand the historical origins and development of the liturgy without wading through thousands of pages of dry scholarship. It is helpful more firmly to grasp what exactly we say and do when we come to “offer the holy oblation in peace.” And finally and perhaps most significantly, it is helpful in exhorting and encouraging each of us to be more fully present as we, “the holy commoners of God,” gather week by week to continue our journey into the Kingdom of God.

## Pastoral Notes

On 28 May 07, Archbishop Seraphim blessed the establishment of a Domestic Chapel dedicated to St John the Baptist at Kaslo BC

On 1 Aug 07, at the petition of **Archbishop Lazar**, Archbishop Seraphim received the Parish of St Nicholas the Wonderworker in Langley BC, into the Archdiocese of Canada, in the Deanery of British Columbia. The parish had formerly been a Metochion of All Saints’ Monastery in Dewdney BC.

As of 1 Aug 07, **Bishop Varlaam**, retaining all his other duties, is released from his responsibility as Rector of St Nicholas the Wonderworker’s Parish in Langley BC.

As of 1 Aug 07, **Priest John Bingham**, retaining his other responsibilities, is assigned Rector of St Nicholas the Wonderworker’s Parish in Langley BC.

As of 1 Aug 07, at the request of **Metropolitan Herman**, **Archpriest Andrew Jarmus** is released from his responsibilities as Rector of the Mission of the Theotokos of the Life-giving Spring in Winnipeg MB, and transferred to the Omophor of Metropolitan Herman, for assignment.

As of 1 Aug 07, the Mission of the Theotokos of the Life-giving Spring, in Winnipeg MB, is temporarily to be served by Deanery clergy.

As of 1 Aug 07, **Archpriest Waldemar Kuchta** is returned from his temporary service in the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, and is attached to the Bishop’s Chapel of St Silouan the Athonite in Johnstown ON.

As of 1 Aug 07, the **Priestmonk Daniel (Baeyens)** is released from his responsibility as serving in the Communauté Monastique de St-Séraphim de Sarov. He is attached to the Bishop’s Chapel of St Silouan the Athonite in Johnstown ON, and he is given the blessing to serve in the Monastery of the Protection, Lachute QC, under the Omophor of **Archbishop Nicolae**.

## Account of a recent pilgrimage

During our most recent pilgrimage to Ukraine and Russia my wife Faye and I were blessed to visit ten monasteries, four of them lavras, as well as many churches. We venerated relics of some of Russia's greatest saints: Anthony and Theodosius and many others from the caves in Kiev; Saints Sergius, Matrona, Tihkon, Innocent, Alexei (Mechev), John of Kronstadt, Ksenia and others. We also venerated the miraculous icons "Prizry Na Smirenei" (Kiev, "A call to Humility"), "Mother of Holy Hills" (Donetsk), St Nicholas (Donetsk), Vladimirskaia (Moscow), and Kazanskaya (St Petersburg).

There is so much to recount, but here I would like to say a few words about our very impressive visit to the Holy Hills Dormition Monastery. Nestled in the wilderness of south-eastern Ukraine, between Harkov and Donetsk, along the gently flowing northern Donetsk River, one finds this ancient monastery. It dates back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century, during the heresy of iconoclasm. At that time many Greek monks fled Constantinople to places like southern Italy, Crimea, and the Caucasian Mountains. When the purges against icon veneration worsened, some monks fled farther north along the Don River and its tributary. These monks dug caves in the chalk hills and began this holy place.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the monastery was already referred to as "the holy hills" according to ancient chronicles. After the great expansion of the monastic territories and the building of several churches (under the leadership of Igumen Arseni), in 1844 the monastery came under the Moscow Patriarchate. In 1922, during the Russian civil war, the monastery was shut down by the communist regime. In 1992, at the invitation of a local priest, my brother Vladimir attended the blessing of the church bells which had been hidden here for seventy years. At that time there were two monks living at the monastery. The following year, the miraculous icon "Holy Hills Mother of God" was brought back after being hidden since 1922.

A little later, I stayed at the monastery for the first time and met Fr Seraphim. There were eight monks living at the monastery at that time. Since my first visit I have returned to the Holy Hills in 1998, 2000, 2003 and this past spring. Through God's grace, this monastery has experienced incredible growth in only fifteen short years. Six churches have been either rebuilt or reopened and the monastery now has iconography, beekeeping, candlemaking, construction, farming, choir, exotic birds and other obediences. In 2004 the status of the monastery

was elevated to "Lavra." It presently has more than 100 brethren and Bishop Arseni is the rector while Archimandrite Seraphim is the "douhovnik."

On 24 August 1995 St John the Recluse was canonized and his relics laid to rest in the Dormition Cathedral. Thousands of pilgrims come every year to venerate the relics and many miracles are occurring by his intercession. On Holy Tuesday of this year my wife Faye and I visited the monastery and, after the liturgy of Presanctified Gifts and venerating the relics, we were escorted to Bishop Arseni, where we delivered lists of names from parishioners from Canada, as well as their donations. Vladika Arseni took us to the skete dedicated to "All Russian Saints." This is actually a small wooden village including a large chapel. All the buildings are made of logs in the old 16<sup>th</sup>-century tradition. The skete is located on monastery grounds on top of the mountain several kilometres behind the main churches.

The skete was built in 2000 where there had previously existed a church destroyed in 1947. Near the skete is the monastery farm which feeds not only the brethren but also thousands of pilgrims. Later, we were driven to the top of the chalk mountain to the church dedicated to St Nicholas. It is believed that this church dates back to the origins of the monastery and the arrival of St Nicholas's miraculous icon. It sits overlooking a heavy forest of oak, pine, and maple trees, and the gently flowing northern Don River. Next to the church is a tiny chapel dedicated to St Andrew the Apostle, dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Then we proceeded down inside the mountain along narrow chalk passageways where ancient monks used to live, arriving at the small "kelia" where St John lived in seclusion for seventeen years, looking out a small window on a scene of incredible beauty. Next to this room is a small church dedicated to the Forerunner, where St Nicholas appeared to St John. The temperature inside the mountain is a constant five degrees Celsius. There is also yet another church inside the mountain dedicated to St Alexei (the man of God).

If ever you are traveling to Ukraine, I highly recommend this hidden jewel of Orthodoxy, and I thank our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ that my wife and I have been blessed to experience it.

— *Subdeacon Andrei Boldireff, St Seraphim of Sarov's,  
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