



The Light of Orthodoxy

ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH AND
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
SUMMER 2022



**Blessed
and
Happy
Birthday!!!**

**Archbishop
Melchisedek
(80 years)**

**May God
Grant You
Many Years!!!**

From the Hands of the Apostle Paul:

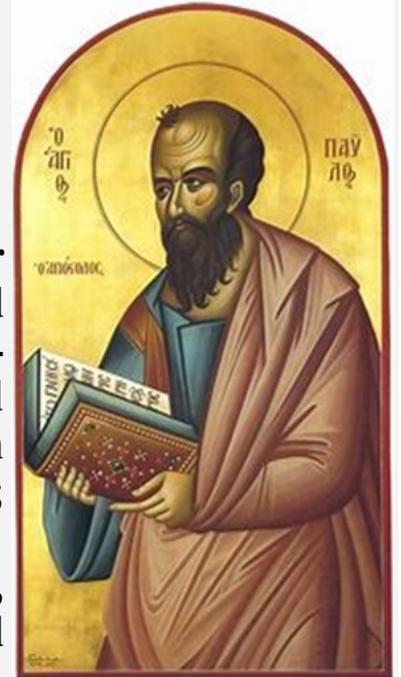
Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.

But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you and guard you from the evil one.

And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you both do and will do the things we command you.

Now the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

But we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.



2 Thessalonians 3:1-6 OSB

**ARCHDIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
AND WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA (OCA)
OFFICIAL CHANGES**

BRECKENRIDGE, PRIEST NIKOLAI, is released from the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and W PA (OCA) to the omophorion of His Eminence, Archbishop MARK, and the Diocese of Eastern PA (OCA), effective January 3, 2022.

CADMAN, ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER, is released from his attachment to the altar of the St. Nicholas Church, DuBois, and is assigned as Acting Rector of the St. Michael Church, Irvona, and the Nativity of the Theotokos Church, Madera, effective February 1, 2022.

STEFFARO, ARCHPRIEST JOHN, is released in retirement from the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western PA (OCA) to the omophorion of Archbishop PAUL, and the Diocese of the Midwest (OCA), effective January 25, 2022.

SOROKA, MITRED ARCHPRIEST IGOR, retired, reposed in the Lord December 18, 2021. **MEMORY ETERNAL!**

NOTICE: **ARCHDIOCESAN ASSEMBLY** will be Saturday, November 5, 2022 at St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park, PA.

Approved for distribution:
Archpriest William J. Evansky
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania
Orthodox Church in America
(15 June 2022)

Holy Synod issues statement on same-sex relationships and sexual identity



**ORTHODOX
CHURCH in
AMERICA**

There was a resolution proposed to affirm the Church's stance on issues of same-sex relationships and sexual identity. This matter, however, falls outside the competence of the All-American Council, since, in the words of the Statute of the Orthodox Church in America, "All matters involving doctrine, canonical order, morals, and liturgical practice" are within the competence and jurisdiction of the Holy Synod. Nonetheless, meeting under the presidency of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon, the Holy Synod has issued the following statement:

The Orthodox Church teaches that the union between a man and a woman in marriage reflects the union between Christ and His Church (Eph. 5). As such, marriage is by this reflection monogamous and heterosexual. Within this marriage, sexual relations between a husband and wife are an expression of their love that has been blessed by God. Such is God's plan for male and female, created in his image and likeness, from the beginning, and such remains his plan for all time. Any other form of sexual expression is by its nature disordered, and cannot be blessed by the Church in any way, whether directly or indirectly.

That said, the Holy Synod of Bishops expresses its pastoral concern and paternal love for all who desire to come to Christ and who struggle with their passions, temptations, and besetting sins, whatever those might be. The Church is a hospital for the sick; Our Lord has come as a physician to heal those who are ailing. Imitating our Savior, who stretched his arms wide on the Cross, we welcome with open arms all who desire the life of repentance in Christ.

Over the course of recent years, His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America have made numerous pronouncements affirming the Orthodox Christian teaching on marriage and sexuality. Metropolitan Tikhon, at the 18th All-American Council in Atlanta, Georgia, on July 20, 2015, in his opening address, stated that:

"... the Orthodox Church must continue to proclaim what she has always taught: that marriage is the union between one man and one woman and the Orthodox Church in America can in no way deviate from this teaching..."

Among the Holy Synod's affirmations of the same teaching are the "Synodal Affirmations on Marriage, Family, Sexuality, and the Sanctity of Life," from the 10th All-American Council, Miami, Florida, taking place from July 26-31, 1992; the "Synodal Reaffirmation of the SCOBA statement titled 'On the Moral Crisis in our Nation'," issued May 17, 2004; and the synodal "Statement concerning the June 26 US Supreme Court decision," issued June 28, 2015.

Therefore, in accord with the timeless plan of God our Creator, the unchanging teaching of Christ the Savior announced through his holy apostles and their successors, and the consistent witness of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America, the Holy Synod affirms what the Scriptures clearly and plainly proclaim and the holy fathers unerringly confess, namely: that God made human beings in two sexes, male and female, in his own image, and that chaste and pure sexual relationships are reserved to one man and one woman in the bond of marriage.

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Holy Synod issues statement on same-sex relationships and sexual identity

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As such, we affirm that sexual relationships are blessed only within the context of a marriage between one man and one woman. Motivated by love and out of sincere care for souls, we call those who suffer from the passion of same-sex attraction to a life of steadfast chastity and repentance, the same life of chastity and repentance to which all mankind is called in Christ.

We call upon all clergy, theologians, teachers, and lay persons within the Orthodox Church in America never to contradict these teachings by preaching or teaching against the Church's clear moral position; by publishing books, magazines, and articles which do the same; or producing or publishing similar content online. We reject any attempt to create a theological framework which would normalize same-sex erotic relationships or distort humanity's God-given sexual identity. The holy apostle Paul writes that such teachings will "increase to more ungodliness," and that such a "message will spread like gangrene" (2 Tim 2:16-17), misleading the faithful and inquirers seeking the truth.

Any clergy, theologian, teacher, or lay person who contravenes our directive thus undermines the authority of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America by disregarding the Holy Synod's consistent and unwavering teaching on these matters. We call on any such persons to cease their disruptive activities, which threaten the peace and tranquility of the Orthodox Church in America, cause scandal and uncertainty, and tempt those who struggle against their disordered passions to stumble. Consequently, those who teach these errors become participants in the sin of those whom they have tempted or whom they have failed to correct, and thus should seek remission of this sin in the mystery of holy confession. Those who refuse correction open themselves to ecclesiastical discipline.

Thus, we, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in Americas, conclude by once again affirming that all clergy, theologians, teachers, and lay persons of the Orthodox Church in America should teach nothing other than the fullness of the Orthodox faith, which is the fullness of the saving truth.

We remind our faithful and clergy that every person of goodwill is welcome to visit our parishes. However, reception into the Church, and continued communion in Christ at the sacred Chalice, is reserved for those who strive to live a life of repentance and humility in light of these God-given truths, conforming themselves to the commandments of God as the only path of salvation in Christ. All of us are sinners, but it is for precisely this reason that Our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to "Repent and believe in the Gospel, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. 1:15).

**For everyday news on the Archdiocese,
we invite you to visit the Archdiocesan
Website at
ocadwpa.org**

**Or on Facebook follow the youth at:
Archdiocese of Pittsburgh
Orthodox Youth**

THE LIGHT OF ORTHODOXY

is the Quarterly Newsletter of the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania, Orthodox Church in America. News, and submit photos by e-mail to hieromonkpatrick@msn.com or by mail to Igumen Patrick, 105 S. 19th St., Pittsburgh, PA 15203.

Welcome, and Pastoral Wisdom: In Gratitude to our Fathers of the OCA Holy Synod

July 25, 2022 · Edith M. Humphrey

At the recent All American Council of the Orthodox Church in America, a resolution was put forward that fell under the purview of the bishops, rather than the entire enclave. Many of us (not only in the OCA, but in other jurisdictions) are enormously grateful for the quick response of the bishops regarding these questions of sexuality and the teaching in the Church, and for the resultant statement (<https://www.oca.org/holy-synod/statements/holy-synod/holy-synod-issues-statement-on-same-sex-relationships-and-sexual-identity?fbclid=IwAR1E-7wZi0Dh5ojr-d4VVFygBe3Z6eyuMojos5tk0ocxS02bSiT0thmB6NI>). In contrast to those who authored the immediate attack from such expected platforms as *The Wheel*, *Public Orthodoxy*, and *Orthodoxy in Dialogue*, we are greatly heartened. Our family in particular is encouraged, since the recent questionable baptisms performed by the Metropolitan of GOARCH in Greece had become a stumbling-block to dear friends who had just begun a serious inquiry into Orthodoxy, including attending a local parish. I am pleased to reassure them (and others) of the Church's continued soundness by reference not only to the Greek Synod's response to this encroachment (<https://orthochristian.com/147269.html>), but also to this promptly-issued statement by our own bishops.

Those who are seeking to normalize same-sex relations within the historic Church have charged our good bishops with fearful oppression, callous exclusion of those struggling with sexual passions, and lack of pastoral concern for their flocks. To the contrary, the welcome words of our God-fearing fathers are marked by a courage that sets us free for fruitful and faithful exploration of the mystery of human sexuality, by a generous inclusiveness that calls all to a life of repentance and humility, and by a clarity of vision that shines a guiding light for the faithful in a time of great anthropological confusion.

The bishops have called upon all the faithful in teaching positions, whether lay or ordained, to cleave to the united witness of the Scriptures and the fathers concerning theological anthropology and the physical expression of our sexuality. Not only have they made this call, but they have also invited those whose teachings are outside of the Tradition to repentance, encouraged them to see the confusion and polarization that their un-Orthodox teaching (direct or indirect) is causing among the faithful, and warned that "those who refuse correction open themselves to ecclesiastical discipline." It is to be expected that those who sit loosely to the Church's teaching should judge this to be a stifling of their academic freedom, and it is merely typical of their rhetoric when they speculate that this episcopal action is born of fear in the context of our challenging age.

Let's consider these charges for a moment. First, we thank our bishops for giving reasons for their teaching, and for their generous call to repentance, born of love for those who are misguided, whether in the way that they live or in what they teach. Second, those of us who have been increasingly concerned by the burgeoning boldness of those supporting same-sex relations (whether in tacit acceptance, blessings, or arguments for 'marriage') are delighted that the bishops are not simply reminding the faithful of the Church's teaching, but are prepared to act when that teaching is set aside by those with influence. One critic of the statement opines that there was no need for another statement, but that "what has Actually, what has changed is the openness with which "pro-LGBTQ" members of the Orthodox communion are now prepared to teach and put into practice their secular views. The bishops' statement is not marked by fear, but by clarity and courage, as they perceive

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a change in those who have more quietly dissented in the past. They are willing to speak the truth for the sake of the whole flock, even when they know that this will evoke the ire of society at large and of the smaller group of influential academics (some ordained) among us who disagree.

What about “academic liberty,” which the editors of *The Wheel* insist is “the lifeblood of the Orthodox tradition?” What, exactly, does this mean and what should it entail among those teaching in an Orthodox institution, or even among those Orthodox who teach in other venues? One well-known Orthodox teacher promotes the “relational self” over against hyper-individualism and thus “imagine [s] us [Orthodox] supporting the political legalization of gay unions as a way of affirming the committed long-term relations that even involve sex, no matter who the persons are, [and] manifest the very virtues that St. Maximos identifies with the presence of God.” (transcribed from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n33aL5i0B4Y>). Yet this same teacher does not think that in the context of a religious college, all things should be open to debate:

“[We wanted to] provide a space ... for there to be free discussion ... on practically any topic.... We do draw the line at certain places.... Our Center really is not going to have a conference debating the divinity of Christ. That’s part of the dogmatic tradition; that’s non-negotiable. But we also feel that the dogmas of the church ... which ... are really just a few ... are all centered around the person of Christ, who Jesus is, [and] they really set the parameters for discussion and debate, they don’t really stifle it.” (transcribed from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNd1bCS8bB0>).

So, then, those who champion flexibility and freedom in the academic sphere also draw limits. As one who has taught for decades in non-Orthodox settings, I make sure that my students know the various positions surrounding all the hermeneutical, theological, and pastoral matters that we tackle, but I also “profess” what I have received from the Scriptures and Tradition, sometimes at personal cost. Teachers at this level are not called to indoctrinate; neither are they meant simply to give a smorgasbord of ideas without any direction. We may, indeed, open up questions of Christology (or sexuality) when in discussion with those who are not believers, but need to make it clear that this is for the purposes of discussion, and not matters which we ourselves hold lightly. For discussion within the Church itself, the question is not foundationally one of absolute freedom, but of where the lines, the “parameters,” are to be drawn. Some have tried formally to limit these parameters to the solemnly articulated creeds, but one cannot imagine these same teachers allowing discussion concerning the morality of murder, racism, or pederasty. It is salutary to remember that, from the beginning, the New Testament books spoke not only about creed, but about conduct and church organization: the pastoral letters present a whole variety of sayings that are “worthy of full acceptance,” and only some of these have to do with Christology. This is true, also, of the councils, which articulated canons on various matters, not merely creedal concerns.

So, we are left with the principle that within a bounded area, debate, discussion, and questions may and should be fruitfully asked. This area represents the frontiers of our faith, and presents challenges to theologians, pastors, and counsellors. There are certainly matters of human sexuality that require discussion, and complexities that need to be addressed. At the current time, the Church is called to address theological anthropology, just as in the past she had to address Christology. But the

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foundations for such explorations are clearly laid out in the short passages of the gospels, the epistles, and the ensuing Tradition. What is not up for discussion is the normative creation of male and female (confirmed by Jesus in his citation of Genesis), and the proper place of sexual relations within a committed marriage of one male and one female person, in echo of Christ's love for the Church. These are the very precepts that the bishops' statement highlights. Upon that foundation, theologians may well think more precisely about the nature of female and male persons, and their calling to be with each other in ordered and truly loving ways, and pastors may well explore how to counsel wisely, while loving those who find this teaching difficult, either in practice or in idea. Now that the foundation has been firmly established, the Church may freely move on to give guidance for parents dealing with a confused teen, theological and social explanations as to why opposite sex marital union has been established by God, theological exploration of the way that men and women are called to live together in society and in the Church, and pastoral guidelines for priests and others as they pastor those who are either moving towards or join those who identify as GLBTQ. Understanding, for example, the difference between someone who has "trans" leanings because of inner psychology, or a disjunction between physical and hormonal characteristics, or cultural pressures, will be part of that pastoral discernment. But the foundational truths remain as those concerned come to understand these things better. Just as Christology required boundaries for fruitful discussion, so, too, does our anthropological crisis.

The second two charges against the bishops concerning "exclusion" and "unhelpful pastoring" are seen to be simply wrong-headed when we understand this document as a foundation upon which the community is to build. The bishops make it quite clear that they are "motivated by love and out of sincere care for souls" in their call that those who are same-sex attracted apply themselves, along with the rest of the Church, "to a life of steadfast chastity and repentance." As bishops who are themselves celibate, they are not naïve concerning the particular challenges that this may present for those who cannot marry. As Jesus put it, there are some born eunuchs, some made eunuchs by men, and some who choose this life for the sake of the Kingdom. In effect, the bishops are inviting those who are not in a position to marry to join them in an honored celibate role within the Church—this is radical inclusion, not exclusion. A statement like this cannot do everything, and so it will be up to the Church to find creative (but pastorally wise) ways in our isolationist age to build families and friendships that embrace singles, whether opposite-sex-attracted or same-sex attracted. Similarly, it will be up to those who counsel to understand that many are not simply distracted by disordered passions, but lonely, and in need of human intimacy (not eroticism). This statement provides, again, the parameters within which such loving community-building can take place.

Richard Hays tells the poignant story of "Gary," his college friend who in later life contracted AIDS. Tragically, Gary had found neither a place among conservative Protestant churches, who were uncomfortable with his presence, nor revisionist churches, who told him what he knew was untrue—that he had no problem, and should embrace his alternate sexuality. For Gary had experienced his own same-sex desire as a "compulsion and an affliction" for over 20 years, and had searched many current books affirming gay activity in the churches, finding in them only "wishful

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interpretation.” Caught between gay rights activists in the churches, and fearful people, Gary turned to his friend and the Scriptures for truth and for comfort, and finally made this discovery: “Are homosexuals to be excluded from the community of faith? Certainly not. But anyone who joins such a community should know that it is a place of transformation, of discipline, of learning, and not merely a place to be comforted or indulged” (Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1996, 401). Gary was searching for a Church that would be faithful enough to be truly inclusive: inclusive enough to call every member of her body to ongoing repentance and fullness of life, while all of us await the full redemption of our bodies. No doubt Gary would have dismissed as condescending those ‘half-way’ strategies that admit homoerotic unions to be less than God’s perfect will, but the best that some can manage, given their present condition. He held out for the hope that there was truly no male or female, no gay or straight in Christ: and this meant being brought into God’s very own life of purity and health. However, life in Christ did not mean for Gary a reorientation towards desire for the opposite sex. Some Christians today still speak of this kind of healing in their sexuality; this was not Gary’s experience, yet he was content with God’s grace as he committed to abstinence. Professor Hays saw in his friend a powerful sign of God’s power made perfect in weakness, embodying our present situation ‘in between the times.’ God’s Spirit is at work among us, yet full glory remains a future hope. Gary’s integrity, and the faithfulness of others like him (some of them my dear friends!), reverse the image of human disintegration featured by Paul in Romans 1. They witness redemptively to all of us about Christ’s grace, love, and fidelity. So our life in the Church becomes more than simply learning about how best to help those with disordered identity and sexuality: we *receive a unique gift* from these brothers and sisters when they remain faithful. All these riches will ensue for a Church that orders itself and conducts itself with the unifying and reasonable power of the Holy Spirit, falling neither into the Scylla or Charybdis that “Gary” encountered. May we be that Church for future seekers.

We are thankful to the bishops for setting us on such a firm foundation, with welcoming but wise words, and in holding to the life-giving words that we have received in the Scriptures and in the fathers. In contrast to the rejection by the editors of *The Wheel*, let us receive this statement as a faithful rearticulation of what the Church has always taught, and not as the type of heretical teaching that St. Meletios of Antioch urged the faithful to disobey. The bishops are exhorting us precisely “to say and to believe in things” that *are* to our benefit (and to the benefit of the whole world) and that have been taught consistently since the time of the Gospels and Epistles. Though it would be easier simply to let the bishops’ own wisdom stand as self-evident, I have been compelled to speak against those who are maligning them: “What pious man would hold his tongue? Who would remain completely calm? In fact, silence equates to consent” (St. Meletios). I hope others will join me in thanking the bishops for their wisdom and courage. Now, as Metropolitan Tikhon indicated in his response to the reversal of *Roe v. Wade*, things are not over: we have God’s work to do!

This article was published in “A LAMP FOR TODAY, UNDERSTANDING THE OLD TESTAMENT WITH JESUS AND THE APOSTLES”, and Ancient Faith Ministries Blog by Dr. Edith Humphrey on July 25, 2022 and is reprinted here with her permission.

Encouraging Ministry in Your Parish

By **Joseph Kormos**

Parish Development Ministry leader, Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania

The recently held Parish Development Forum Online had as its theme “Parishes as Vessels of Ministry: Increasing Our Capacity for Ministry”. Over one hundred persons, many from the Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania, gathered online to explore this topic.

How do we increase our capacity for ministry?

One area of fruitful discussion concerned motivating the faithful to actively participate in the ministry work of the parish. One *product* of the Forum was the identification of good practices to encourage ministry.

1. Help others to visualize the benefits of ministry with stories and examples.
2. Find only a small part in a ministry for some people at the beginning.
3. Include ministry in the parish mission statement.
4. Everything the church does should be a ministry.
5. Give people autonomy over a ministry as much as possible.
6. Find ministries for people with limited funds or abilities.
7. Budget for ministry in the church.
8. Ask people individually. Don't just always put out a call for ministry to the group.
9. Involve families in ministry.
10. Share examples of ministry from the lives of the saints.
11. Recognize ministry with awards, thanks, gifts. Say thank you often.
12. Include notes on how to minister in the parish bulletin.
13. Have a Ministry Drive at parish wide meetings. Try on the slogan, “Every Member in Ministry.”
14. Have ministry brainstorming sessions in parish groups.
15. Actively search for ministries.
16. Ask good questions. See nearby box for some examples
17. Find some ministries that are finite –time bounded – that allow a commitment for a specific period of time,
18. Speak often about the essential nature of ministry. A *duty* not an option. The fulfillment of the Eucharist.
19. Help people to find their personal gifts (charisms), talents and interests as their first step toward fulfilling this duty.
20. Think of ministry as a pathway to discipleship. An active role of sharing Christ's love in the world. Help persons develop their own personalized *Discipleship Pathway*.

Questions for Motivating Ministry

There are many good practices for helping to encourage effective ministry in parishes. Some are listed in the box nearby.

One of the best is simply asking good questions –from the pulpit, at parish council meetings at town hall meetings during coffee hour. Here are some good questions:

What are the ministries offered by and through our parish?

What was the last new ministry – one that involves the active contribution of time and love by parishioners –begun by our parish? When was that?

Can/should we consider new ones –perhaps replacing activities and efforts that no longer relevant? Or which seem to be self-serving?

What factors limit our parish's capacity for ministry? What holds us back? Is it money and funding? Is it motivation? Is it a lack of creativity? Is it the misconceptions about what “ministry” is or why we do it? A unwillingness to try something new? A general lethargy toward parish life? Skills and talents? A willingness to look the other way when confronted with the needs of others?

How many (what portion of parishioners) are truly involved in a ministry of some sort –whether internally focused or external? How can we engage those who may be on the fringes? Might some of them be participating in Christ-centered ministry

What is Ministry?

By Joseph Kormos

The recently held Parish Development Forum had as its theme “Parishes as Vessels of Ministry”. In seeking to enliven the theme planners of the event began to define how to help people better understand “ministry”. One priest shared that he needed help clearly explaining ministry to his parishioners. Some people needed a clearer definition. Many had misconceptions.

What is Ministry?

We asked a number of respected clergy and lay persons the simple question, “What is Ministry?”

Their answers covered a spectrum of views from “teach people to love the church... by teaching them to clean the church” to “connecting to one another and to God” to “making a commitment to learning about the church, serving one another and using all God given resources build up Christ’s church” to “becoming vessels through which the divine meets the human”.

As a result a working definition of ministry emerged:

“Using your gifts, talents, interests & experience to discern needs and actively share God’s love with others.”

Many Misconceptions

Forum content also explored the prevalent myths, misconceptions and obstacles to ministry. Most have a grain of truth to them. Here are a few with a brief explanation:

Essential -- Not Optional

In the eyes of too many Orthodox, ministry is a nice extra – a good thing to do – if we have time. In the words of Larry Jenney in a 1989 article on OCA.org: “Ministry is a duty. Not a suggestion or even a recommendation but a commandment. It is a shared responsibility. We serve Christ by serving others. “

Priest’s Job

The job of the priest is to lead, to present Christ, to keep reminding his flock of the Christian vision of life and death and to guide them to see Christ working in their daily lives. Just as it is not (only) the priest’s job to visit the sick or shut-ins, most forms of ministry can and should be done by the laity. This is how we live out the liturgy –the work of the people. As Denise Jillions notes in a 1982 article ‘An Orthodox Vision of Lay Ministry’, “At our last judgment it just won’t do to tell Christ that we sent the priest to visit Mrs. Jones when she was sick in bed.”

Far Away

Another misconception is that ministry is something that we need to do far away. A foreign land or a rarely visited urban location away from our often safe neighborhoods. While those locations of course afford excellent ministry opportunities, there are many ministry opportunities in a more accessible form. Look inside the church to be a ministry of presence to those sick or lonely. One contributor saw ministry as an opportunity to teach others, by your actions, “to love the church.” Think of your workplace as an opportunity to use deeds, hospitality and good cheer to shine forth the light of Christ.

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What is Ministry? By Joseph Kormos

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Parish Growth

Often we hear of parish's desire to undertake ministry with the motive of attracting new members. A growth program. While growth is often a very real by-product of ministry we do this, as stated above, not to grow or to make us feel good, but to share God's love with others.

An Uncomfortable Task

While doing ministry helps to pull us out of our comfort zones – to stretch our lives as Christians, it need not be uncomfortable. Good ministry starts with our own gifts, talents and interests the things we like to do and are good at to connect with others. Sharing your faith with others is an important ministry but not all of us are gifted in a way that we can feel comfortable with this. Build toward this but don't let current limitations stand in the way of finding comfortable outlets for your current skills.

Two-Fold Mission

Father Alexander Schmemmann of blessed memory describes the Mission of the Church as being twofold:

“The first mission of the church is to ascend into the heavenly holy of holies, to worship the Almighty God, and to receive the eternal life and light from him,

And the second mission of the Church is to be sent back into this world as witnesses of the light and the life we have received, and to communicate that to the world. Let us go forth in peace; in the Name of the Lord.

This twofold mission of the church constitutes the rhythm of our whole life in which we go up and in, and then out to bear witness.”

Joseph Kormos is Parish Development Ministry leader for the Archdiocese of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania



CONGRATULATIONS TO LORY NEScott ON HER RETIREMENT AS CATHEDRAL CHOIR DIRECTOR

On Sunday, July 10th St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral celebrated the retirement of Lory Nescott after 40 years of service as choir director. Lory's tenure of service has included numerous years of service to the OCA, to St. Tikhon's Summer Camp and to the Archdiocese in a number of capacities.

The event was marked with a banquet in her honor, as the Church gathered to say thank you to a faithful servant.

May God grant her Many Years!!!



PARISH LIFE AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

St. Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Allison Park Church Camp



Intercession of the Holy Virgin Parish, Carnegie, Church School



Intercession of the Holy Virgin Parish, Carnegie, Restores Domes



PARISH LIFE AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH, DUBOIS, HOSTS ILLINI 4000 BIKE AMERICA TEAM

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, 301 S. State Street in DuBois hosted The Illini 4000 Bike America Team, which is a student run, 501(C)(3) non profit organization out of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Since 2007, Illini 4000 has sent a group of students on an annual cross-country bike ride to raise funds and awareness for cancer research and patient support services. To date the organization has raised over \$1 million in support of its various benefactors.

The Illini team arrived at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in DuBois around 3:00 pm on Sunday, May 29. They were received with refreshments and food donated by the parish and some local businesses. The team of 23 students enjoyed a good supper before bedding down in the parish hall and church for the night. They were up bright and early for breakfast and onto the next leg of their journey which started from New York City and will take them to San Francisco by late August. Our prayers and support are with them and it was a pleasure to host this amazing team!



St. John the Baptist Church, Canonsburg, Blesses First Responders



PARISH LIFE AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

St. Andrew's Church, Lyndora, Renovates Church Kitchen

St. Andrew Orthodox Church in Lyndora, PA, was honored by a visit from his Eminence Archbishop Melchisedek who served Liturgy with Archpriest Michael Sochka and Deacon Seraphim Truckley. After Liturgy, the archbishop blessed the kitchen that the men of the church had recently remodeled.



St. Andrew's Church, Lyndora, Honors Parishioners

Awards of Appreciation were presented to past and present parishioners for their services to St. Andrew Orthodox Church in Lyndora, PA. Archpriest David Vernak was the scheduled priest for Divine Liturgy who was assisted by Deacon Seraphim. After Liturgy, there was a covered dish luncheon honoring the recipients.



PARISH LIFE AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

Nativity of St. John the Baptist Church, Conemaugh, Blesses River to Protect Community from Flooding

“The river is key to life and key to this community,” Archpriest George said, “so we asked the Lord’s blessing that he lets the river help the community and also protect us from any harm or danger from flooding, and so forth.”



Nativity of St. John the Baptist Church, Conemaugh, Blesses First Responders



PARISH LIFE AROUND THE ARCHDIOCESE

St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, McKees Rocks, Vacation Church School



Chapel of the Holy Spirit, Snyder County Blesses First Responders

