

Holy Synod concludes autumn session

DETROIT, MI – The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America held its autumn session at Saint Andrew House here October 19-23, 2015. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, presided at the sessions.



In his report, Metropolitan Tikhon shared his draft of “The Apostolic Work of the Church: Building the House of the Lord in Our Lands,” which will provide a “guiding framework for the Orthodox Church in America” for this triennium and beyond. Using the image of the four pillars of the altar table, he related how the OCA must build its ministry on the “the foundation, which is Christ,” and the pillars of spiritual life – stewardship, evangelism and outreach and external relations.

Among the decisions and actions taken by the hierarchs were the following.

- After the conclusion of a Church Court, the hierarchs canonically deposed the retired Archbishop Seraphim from the status and all sacred functions of the episcopacy, removed him from the ranks of the clergy, and returned him to the status of a lay monk.
- In conjunction with the new *Statute of the Orthodox Church in America*, which becomes effective November 1, 2015, general procedural standards for the use and application in Church Courts were adopted.
- Mission Planting Grants for 2016 were awarded to Saint Katherine Mission, Cardiff, CA; Saint John the Evangelist Mission, Tempe, AZ; Saint James Mission, Beaufort, SC; Saint Nektarios Mission, Waxahachie, TX; and Saint Juvenaly and His Companion Mission, Wasilla, AK.
- The text of a “Service of Prayer after a Miscarriage or Stillbirth” was approved and is available for downloading at <https://oca.org/PDF/Music/Supplemental/service-after-miscarriage.pdf>.
- A resource dealing with end-of-life issues, titled “A Gift for My Loved Ones,” was reviewed and approved. It will be available soon on-line for downloading.

A number of decisions presented by the Board of Theological Education concerning ordination and related matters also were ratified. ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/holy-synod-concludes-fall-session1>

OCA releases Assembly of Bishops Position Paper

SYOSSET, NY – The Holy Synod of Bishops released the text of a Position Paper delivered at the sixth annual meeting of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA in Chicago in September 2015. The text was reviewed during the Holy Synod’s autumn session.

“We believe that the three proposals of the Canonical and Regional Planning Committee would be best undertaken in the context of an Assembly of Bishops that is worshipping together at the Eucharist and is working provisionally as a Holy Synod of Bishops,” the position paper reads. “Addressing differences in pastoral practices, considering new models for restructuring our dioceses on a canonical basis and integrating the work of our ministries and departments will take place most effectively and organically when we are a Synod meeting together and praying together on a much more regular basis. This is the way of the Church.”

■ **FULL STORY:** <http://oca.org/news/headline-news/holy-synod-releases-position-paper-on-canonical-regional-planning>

A reminder...

Parishes are asked to duplicate and distribute **OCAreview** monthly, especially to those without internet access who desire printed highlights of OCA web site postings.

OCA receives “clean” audit opinion for 2014

SYOSSET, NY – In the independent audit of the Orthodox Church in America’s financial records for 2014, the auditors, CapinCrouse LLP, “once again issued an unqualified or ‘clean’ audit opinion,” said Melanie Ringa, OCA Treasurer. “The unqualified opinion is the best type of report an auditee can receive from the external auditor.”

“The financial results for 2014 show total operating revenues of \$2,380,032, with \$2,348,760 in total operating expenses,” she added. “A net surplus from operations of \$31,272, prior to income from investments, annuities and the 18th All-American Council, was realized, with a surplus for 2014 of \$89,176.” ■ **FULL STORY:** <http://oca.org/news/headline-news/oca-receives-clean-audit-opinion-for-2014>

Bishops’ Assembly releases new study

NEW YORK, NY – The Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA released “The Study of Educational Institutions Offering Programs in Orthodox Theology in the United States” on October 20, 2015.

Based on a survey of 12 US theological schools, the study offers detailed information on degrees and programs, accreditation, student bodies, and faculties.

The Orthodox Church in America’s seminaries represent three of the participating schools. ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/assembly-of-bishops-issues-study-on-orthodox-theological-schools>

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Metropolitan Tikhon presides at Synaxis of monastic superiors

MANTON, CA – His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon presided at the Synaxis of Superiors of Monasteries of the Orthodox Church in America at Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco Monastery here October 27-29, 2015. The superiors of 14 of the OCA's 25 monastic communities gathered to strengthen the monastic life in the OCA and identify areas of concern that could be better addressed on a wider level within the Church and through stronger inter-monastery cooperation.



His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin, in whose diocese the Monastery of Saint John is located, also was present for this year's meeting. ■ **FULL STORY:** <http://oca.org/news/headline-news/monastic-superiors-conclude-synaxis-at-st-john-monastery-manton-ca>

Register now for OCF college conferences

SYOSSET, NY – Each year during Christmas Break, the Orthodox Christian Fellowship hosts winter conferences for hundreds of college students.

Simultaneous conferences will be held at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA and Saint Nicholas Ranch, Dunlap, CA December 28-31, 2015. The theme for both conferences, "Modern Martyrs: Witnesses of the Word," will focus on the numerous opportunities to witness to Christ and the faith in the campus setting and the persecution of Christians today.

Nun Vassa [Larin] will deliver the keynote address in Ligonier, while Priest Apostolos Hill will offer the keynote in Dunlap. ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/registration-now-open-for-ocfs-annual-college-conferences>

OCMC Executive Director visits OCA Chancery

SYOSSET, NY – Father Martin Ritsi, Executive Director of the Orthodox Christian Mission Center, met with His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon and Archpriests John Jillions and Eric G. Tosi, OCA Chancellor and Secretary respectively, at the Chancery here on September 29, 2015.

Father Martin outlined OCMC's basic goals that include bringing non-Christians to Christ, establishing self-sufficient churches, and helping address the material, health and educational needs of their people. "All of this is done on a collaborative basis with the the local churches," he said.

Currently, several OCA clergy and laity serve as OCMC missionaries, following the lead of many who have served on mission teams during OCMC's 30 years of ministry. ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/ocmc-executive-director-meets-with-metropolitan-tikhon>

SC parishes partner with IOCC in flood relief efforts

COLUMBIA, SC – Archpriest Thomas Moore and the faithful of Holy Apostles Church here – a parish still suffering after weeks of severe flooding in October – are responding to the wider community by coordinating relief efforts with the region's other Orthodox parishes to provide housing, supplies and volunteers.



Fr. Thomas, parishioners "making the rounds."

Partnering with International Orthodox Christian Charities, Mennonite Disaster Services and Nechama Jewish Disaster Services, parishioners visited major flooding sites, delivered 16 sixteen pallets of relief supplies and engaged in clean-up operations.

"The damage has been devastating, and it will take months – if not years – of effort to help those suffering total loss to rebuild," said Father Thomas. "IOCC and the Orthodox parishes of Columbia are committed to providing them with ongoing physical and spiritual support." ■ **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/south-carolina-parishes-iocc-partner-in-flood-relief-efforts>

In Memoriam

● **Deacon Mark Hoepfner**, Saint George Church, Buffalo, NY, fell asleep in the Lord October 8, 2015. **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/news/headline-news/updated-in-memoriam-deacon-mark-hoepfner-md>

● **Archpriest Sergei Garklavs**, Dean Emeritus of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL, fell asleep in the Lord October 19, 2015. **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/in-memoriam/archpriest-sergei-garklavs>

● **Matushka Lila Ann Regan**, Saint Michael Church, Concord, CA, fell asleep in the Lord October 27, 2015. **FULL STORY:** <https://oca.org/in-memoriam/matushka-lila-ann-regan>