

HOLY ASCENSION PARISH

DECEMBER 2008 NEWSLETTER



THE HOLY ASCENSION ORTHODOX CHURCH

is the Washington, DC, parish of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA), under the *omophor* (or the conciliar leadership) of Bishop Agafangel of Odessa & Taurida. The Holy Ascension Parish was organized on Ascension Day, May 17, 2007.

BISHOPS & LOCAL CLERGY

- ✠ Agafangel, Bishop of Odessa & Taurida, and chairman of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad Provisional Supreme Authority
- ✠ Andronik, Bishop of Ottawa & North America
- ✠ Joseph (Hrebinka), Vicar Bishop of Washington
- ✠ Michael Foster, deacon
- ✠ Seraphim Englehardt, subdeacon
- ✠ John Hinton, subdeacon
- ✠ Daniel Olson, reader & choir director

ADDRESS

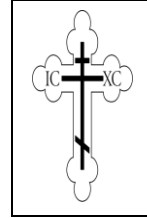
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PART 1. OUR PARISH

The Holy Ascension parish welcomes all Orthodox people to its sacraments and all people with an interest in Christianity and the abiding Tradition of the Holy Orthodox Church. The immediate Holy Ascension parish background is Russian émigré with many English-speaking converts. Members, visitors, and people in touch online come, however, from all ethnicities: Arab and African, Greek, Romanian, Serb, Ukrainian, as well as American, western European, and far eastern peoples. The Church is One.

1. <http://ruschurchabroad.com/engindex.htm>
2. <http://ruschurchabroad.com>
3. <http://www.holyascension.info>



PART 2. EARLY WINTER EVENTS

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 17TH, THE FIFTH ALL-DIASPORA SOBOR

The *sobor* [church council] took place the week of November 17, 2008, in Nanuet, New York. The *sobor* determined that Bishop Agafangel is to be the metropolitan of the reaffirmed Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA). The Church Abroad is the same Church that has survived since the Russian Revolution. The *sobor* produced many documents that deplored Sergianism in church polity and the Soviet abuse of Christians in Russia. The *sobor* also came to agreement, welcoming the half-million catacomb Orthodox Christians of the Sekachev/ Pozdeev bishops, whose ordinations were normalized and brought into the tradition of ROCA [<http://ruschurchabroad.com/eng081031.htm>]. The assembly of bishops also welcomed Father Igor Hrebinka, our rector, into monasticism, and consecrated him Bishop Joseph, ROCA vicar bishop of Washington. The week culminated with the canonization service for Metropolitan Philaret (Voz-nesensky) at the Holy Trinity Church, Astoria, Queens.

Visitors to the *sobor* in the Holy Ascension delegation brought back many encouraging personal observations. They noticed how readily everyone could speak to the floor, in disagreement as well as assent. Bishop Agafangel (Pashkovsky) was not eager for the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad to set up the office of synodal metropolitan, but, after the office became a fact, he accepted his election as new metropolitan with patience, humility, and resolve.

The many delegates from Russian and Ukraine also made a striking impression on American observers. They appeared dedicated, brave, intelligent, and efficient. The accession of the Sekachev/Pozdeev membership brings about 200 new parishes into ROCA, many of them led by these impressive clergy who visited New York. Although

ROCA has about 10 parishes in the United States, the greater part of its membership lives in the old Russian and Ukrainian heartland.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9TH

A fall Sunday afternoon saw the Brotherhood of Saints Cosmas and Damian serve a *shashlik* barbecue to the membership, raising about \$700. The chefs were Mr Philip Rapp and Mr Vladimir Lutchenkov.



Saint Philaret of Moscow

The brotherhood will use the proceeds to print copies of the *Longer Catechism of the Orthodox, Catholic, Eastern Church* also known as the Catechism of St Philaret of Moscow, using the 1845 English translation.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6TH

Some photographs are duplicated now, from the Astoria ordination to the diaconate of Father Michael Foster.



Ordination of Deacon Michael by Archbishop Andronik



Father Wsevelod, Archbishop Andronik, and Deacon Michael

PART 3. GIVING HOLY OBJECTS & FUNDING.

BENEVOLENT FUND.

Our parish has established a Benevolent Fund to assist those in need, at the discretion of the Parish Council. If you would like to make a contribution, please write *Benevolent Fund* on the memo line of a check payable to Holy Ascension Orthodox Church (or, in the case of cash, on the envelope in which you place the cash).

BUILDING COMMITTEE.

The committee continues searching for a building or building site convenient to highways in Virginia and Maryland. If you notice a site that looks promising to you, please mention it to the committee--to Mr John Herbst, chairman; Mr Gontscharow, Mr John Hinton; or Bishop Joseph (Hrebinka).

PART 4. DECEMBER LITURGIES, CIVIL CALENDAR

All Sunday Liturgies begin at 10:00 AM. A luncheon buffet always follows. Volunteers may help with cooking at home and preparation at the church. The food brought so cheerfully from our homes should try to match the Orthodox calendar rubrics for fasts and feasts, but no one's gift is going to be turned away. We also keep a schedule that designates a family responsible for cleaning the church after the services. The cleanup duty is for one month at a time. If you wish to volunteer, please see the warden/*starosta*, Mr Gontscharow. He and Mrs Herbst of the Sisterhood also know the rubrics and can advise about Lenten seasonal recipes.

We have several copies of a 2009 Calendar & Typikon prepared and printed with the blessing of Bishop Agafangel in Odessa. These are sold at the candle stand for \$10 each.

On most Saturday afternoon a BIBLE STUDY GROUP meets at 3:30 PM, chaired by Bishop Joseph. Please check beforehand with the church office, to be sure that the study group will meet.



- ❖ Wednesday, December 3, Vigil at 6 PM.
- ❖ Thursday, December 4, ENTRY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS, INTO THE TEMPLE. Hours & Divine Liturgy at 7:20 AM.

- ❖ Saturday, December 6, Vigil at 5 PM.
- ❖ Sunday, December 7, 25th Sunday After Pentecost, Hours and Divine Liturgy at 9:40 AM. AFTERFEAST OF THE ENTRY OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS INTO THE TEMPLE. GREAT-MARTYR CATHERINE.

- ❖ Saturday, December 13, Vigil at 5 PM.
- ❖ Sunday, December 14, 26th Sunday after Pentecost, Hours and Divine Liturgy, at 9:40 AM. PROPHET NAHUM.

- ❖ Thursday, December 18, Vigil at 6 PM.
- ❖ Friday, December 19, St. NICOLAS THE WONDERWORKER, ARCHBISHOP OF MYRA IN LYCIA, Hours & Divine Liturgy at 7:40 AM.

- ❖ Saturday, December 20, Vigil at 5 PM.
- ❖ Sunday, December 21. 27th Sunday After Pentecost, Hours & Divine Liturgy, at 9:40 AM. VENERABLE PATAPIUS.

- ❖ Saturday, December 27, Vigil at 5 PM.
- ❖ Sunday, December 28, 28th Sunday after Pentecost. Hours & Divine Liturgy. SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS.

- ❖ Saturday, January 3, Vigil at 5:00 PM.
- ❖ Sunday, January 4, 29th Sunday After Pentecost, Hours & Divine Liturgy at 9:40 AM. FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST. SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS.

- ❖ Saturday, January 10, Baptism of Mr Adam Frick into the Holy Orthodox Church.
- ❖ Sunday, January 11, Wedding and Crowning of Mr Frick & Miss Xenia Herbst



PART 5. READING & CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Classes continue to meet after liturgy. Smallest children meet with Mrs Edmunds and Mrs Kotchoubey, and several high school students meet with Mr Hinton.

PARISH AUTHORS.

Bishop Agafangel has an Internet website with a wide range of information regarding the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCA). The English website is <http://ruschurchabroad.com/engindex.htm>.

The *Wall Street Journal* recently reported a new museum of 350 Russian icons, established by Mr Gordon Lankton, who first offered his icons to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; and to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. His generosity has opened a Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, Massachusetts, a little west of Boston. The museum is open to all and is the largest American icon museum. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB122765238077157809.html>

PART 6. DEVOTIONAL & PRACTICAL

BOOKSTORE.

The bookstore sells icons, religious books, and other articles that are part of an Orthodox life, such as liturgical calendars.

LITURGICAL EQUIPMENT.

The parish has ordered *a tub large enough for water to immerse an adult during Orthodox baptism*. The altar of the parish also needs a larger *prestol*, or *table of oblation*.

Please report matters of newsletter distribution and by all means any corrections to the newsletter preparer, Patrick Brown ~ hpcjfbrown@cox.net.