

New York State Deanery

Diocese of New York and New Jersey
Orthodox Church in America

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Dear Brothers in Christ,

1 June 2010

A meeting of the clergy of the New York State Deanery was held on 21 May (Friday) at Saints Peter and Paul Church, Endicott NY. A photo slideshow of the gathering may be viewed on the diocesan webpage: <http://nynjoca.org/>

Present for the meeting were:

His Grace, +Michael, Bishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey
Archpriest Alexey Karlgut (Dean)
Archpriest Stephen Mack (Treasurer)
Archpriest Ken James Stavrevsky (Secretary)
Archpriest John Chupeck
Archpriest Jason Kappanadze
Priest Terenti Wasielewski
Priest Ilya Gotlinsky
Priest Timothy Holowatch
Priest James Worthington
Protodeacon Stephen Sweet
Deacon Andrew Boisvert
Deacon John Boshush

Absent were:

Archpriest Igor Burdikoff
Archpriest Herman Schick
Archpriest Stephen Janos
Archpriest Peter Olson
Protodeacon Michael Speck
Deacon Michael Burdikoff

The meeting formally began at 12:00 Noon. Following the opening prayer and Archpastoral blessing, Father Alexey Karlgut welcomed all in attendance, offering profound joy and thanks to the newly consecrated diocesan Archpastor, His Grace +Michael, for the spirit of

renewal he has already brought to the diocese, and for attending the meeting in the midst of a whirlwind schedule. Unfortunately, both Father Herman Schick (continuing his treatments and recuperating) and Father Igor Burdikoff (recently injured) were unable to attend the meeting. Father Karlgut asked everyone to keep them in their prayers for increased health and strength, and stated that the deanery is offering whatever support is possible in assistance to clergy when they require it; notably, Father Timothy Holowatch has traveled often to Buffalo NY to assist Father Herman Schick.

His Grace, Bishop +Michael greeted all in attendance. He stated that, in the days following his consecration, people have been extremely welcoming and loving; and, he reiterated that the main focus must not be about him but rather on the parishes. The well-being, nurturing and growth of the parishes is “the main thing.” He then shared and discussed the following:

The historic *Episcopal Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Hierarchs of North and Central America* will take place 25-28 May in New York City. This assembly has great potential, with 65+ hierarchs anticipated to be in attendance. It is likely that all Orthodox Church in America [OCA] bishops will attend and have a voice in the General Assembly, although the OCA will not be granted a seat on the Executive Committee. [A news release regarding the Assembly has just been released on the OCA webpage: <http://www.oca.org/news/2168>] The position and commitment of the Holy Synod is that the OCA’s autocephaly will not be compromised. We “have a story to tell,” in that for 40 years we have existed and functioned as autocephalous; dedicated to bringing Orthodoxy to North America and not simply caring for Orthodox Christians from the “usual” heritages of the Orthodox mother churches. It should be noted that for many people in the OCA (the recently converted, and the young of age) it is the case that they have never been under the authority of a “Mother Church.”

Plans are well underway for the All-American Council in Seattle WA, October 2011.

The OCA Strategic Plan in in-progress and town hall meetings will begin soon to disseminate and discuss the work of the Committee. His Grace would prefer three geographically centered town hall meetings to encourage and facilitate participation in the deaneries.

His Grace has been tasked by the Holy Synod of Bishops to research and propose options to enable a move away from assessment-based funding. He asked for ideas and inputs in this regard, and stated that he would welcome input from anyone in the diocese.

Since our ability to communicate openly and effectively is critical to our unity and work as a diocese, Bishop +Michael announced that he has appointed Father Ken James Stavrevsky to the position of Diocesan Communications Director.

Father Karlgut offered the following informal report on the recent Diocesan Council Meeting (17 May):

His Grace reappointed the currently serving Diocesan Chancellor, Archpriest Joseph Lickwar, and the three Deans: Archpriest Samuel Kedala (New Jersey Deanery), Archpriest Alexey Karlgut (New York State Deanery), and Archpriest Wiaczeslaw Krawczuk (New York City Deanery).

A Council of Presbyters was established to assist and advise Bishop +Michael. An inaugural meeting of the Council is scheduled for 8 July, 2010 at the Diocesan Center in Bronxville NY. Composition of the Council [“of Twelve”) is comprised of: the Chancellor, the Deans, two priests from each deanery, and two retired priests. Priests assigned to join the Chancellor and Deans on the Council of Presbyters are:

Igumen Christopher Calin (NYC Deanery)
Archpriest Jonathan Ivanoff (NYC Deanery)
Archpriest Gary Breton (NJ Deanery)
Priest Stephen Evanina (NJ Deanery)
Archpriest Igor Burdikoff (NYS Deanery)
Archpriest Ken James Stavrevsky (NYS Deanery)
Archpriest John Nehrebecki (Retired)
Archpriest Sergius Kuharsky (Retired)

His Grace also appointed a Spiritual Court with the following members:

Clergy	Diocesan Chancellor (Archpriest Joseph Lickwar) Dean, New York State Deanery (Archpriest Alexey Karlgut) Dean, New Jersey Deanery (Archpriest Samuel Kedala) Dean, New York City Deanery (Archpriest Wiaczeslaw Krawczuk)
Laity	Mr. Scott Anderson Mr. George Elia

The Diocesan Center at Bronxville NY is in good shape. Residence and offices for His Grace and the Diocese will be set up in June-July. Once established as ready for operations, diocesan meetings will be conducted at the Center.

His Grace discussed several items reflecting his thoughts and ideas, and effecting the future course of the diocese and the deanery:

Since the parish community is at the heart of the local Church, there are two coexistent priorities: (1) assisting existing parishes, and (2) establishing new parishes. The institution of “Family Days” for parishes to gather together in love and fellowship is desired. It is also hoped that an Annual Parish Council

Conference will enable those serving in parish leadership to grow in their faith and competencies.

The previously mentioned Diocesan Diaconal Program is under review and is being researched for development by Father Alexey Karlgut. Current expectations are for an accredited certificate program resulting in (essentially) the completion of the equivalent of the first year of studies at Saint Tikhon's Seminary. Classes would be on Saturdays, paralleling the fall/spring academic semesters (15 weeks each; holidays off). Cost is anticipated at \$600 per semester. Candidates would be recommended by their parish rector and, as is always the case, would enter with the knowledge that successful completion of the program does not guarantee ordination. His Grace will send out details and a course description to all clergy of the diocese for review and comment. The location(s) for the conduct of the program will be dependent upon the locations of the students enrolled. If all goes well in planning and a sufficient interest is found, the program could begin as early as the fall semester of this year.

His Grace asked that, in liturgical commemorations, he be referred to as "His Grace" and/or "Bishop +Michael (as is the usual practice). He specifically does not want the additional appellation -- "*Our Lord*" -- applied to any reference to himself. While this style of terminology has recently appeared in various places and publications, His Grace finds it disturbing and offensive to many for whom the English word -- "Lord" -- is reserved for our God and Savior, Jesus Christ, alone.

His Grace was asked **whether or not deacons were permitted**, with his blessing, **to distribute the Holy Eucharist at the Divine Liturgy** (to offer, for example, a second chalice to communicants). He gave his approval and blessing, pointing to the important ministry of deacons in the life of parishes.

A question was posed about the **status of deacons** (i.e. voting/clergy or non-voting/laity) at Deanery Meetings and at Diocesan Assemblies. His Grace indicated his decision that deacons would be recognized as "clergy/voting" members of Deanery Meetings; and in regard to Diocesan Assemblies, this matter would be discussed for resolution by the Diocesan Council.

Father Ken James Stavrevsky offered a brief report on the on-going plans and preparations for the summer camping programs at **Saint Andrew's Camp**. Complete details and registration information for campers and volunteers is available on the camp website: <http://www.standrewscamp.com/> Bishop +Michael plans on making Saint Andrew's Camp a "base-of-operations" during the camping season while conducting visits to upstate parishes during that time.

Informal reports were presented by the clergy present on the life, issues, and activities of their respective parishes.

As he concludes his duties as Dean of Saint Tikhon's Seminary and makes the move to the Diocesan Center, His Grace continues a fast-paced schedule of parish visitations, meetings, and activities. To enable personal communication between himself and the deanery clergy, he provided his cell phone number: 610-505-9295

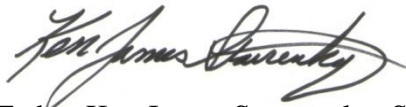
A Deanery Family Cook-Out (for all clergy and their families) will take place on **Monday, 5 July at Auburn NY beginning at 11:00 a.m.** Details will be forthcoming. All deanery clergy families are encouraged to attend to enjoy fun and fellowship in an expression of our unity as laborers in Christ's vineyard.

The **Diocesan Assembly** will be convened on **9 November (Tuesday) at the Cathedral of the Holy Virgin Protection, New York NY.**

The **next Deanery Meeting** is scheduled for **11:00 a.m. on 21 October 2010 (Thursday) at Saint Nicholas Church in Cohoes NY.**

With the singing of "It is truly meet..." and the blessing of Bishop +Michael, the meeting adjourned at 4:23 p.m.

Your brother in our Lord, Jesus Christ,



Father Ken James Stavrevsky, Secretary

cc: His Grace, +Michael (Bishop of New York and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey)
Very Rev. Joseph Lickwar (Chancellor, Diocese of New York and New Jersey)