

Adult “Home” closes after 37 years

Saints Cosmas and Damian Adult Home, Staten Island NY, recently closed its doors after 37 years of service. Rising costs, increasing regulations by the State of New York and New York City, and the inability to make capital improvements over the years became insurmountable for the non-profit facility.

The Home was founded in 1977 by the late Protopresbyter Alexander Warnecke with the blessing of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Ireney [Bekish] and the assistance of the Saint Panteleimon Society of New York City and young Orthodox Christians of various jurisdictions. The first Board of Directors consisted of members representing several jurisdictions, some of whom served on the original staff. The Board of Directors petitioned that the Home’s chapel be named under the patronage of Saint Ireney in recognition of Metropolitan Ireney’s great financial support. The home’s long-time administrator was Argyra Lapchuk, daughter of Father Warnecke, and the present OCA Chancellor, Archpriest John Jillions, served as Home administrators in the early 1980s.

“The facility was committed to providing the highest quality health and personal care services to its residents in an affordable and most cost-effective manner,” said Archpriest Joseph Lickwar, Jersey City NJ, and corporate CEO. “It served thousands of needy persons from its beginning. The corporation was governed by state and city regulations and strived to satisfy all the demands of unions, inspections and regulations. It was truly a ‘home’ for people, who had no place to be. It was an ideal experience providing affordable care and a safe place to be within a community with a church.”

The Home also housed its own spiritual center, Saint Ireney Chapel, in which regular services were celebrated by resident chaplains and visiting clergy. Although the facility was open to people of all faiths, it was home for a number of Orthodox Christians, including Metropolitan Ireney, Archbishop Nikon [de Greve], Archimandrite Innocent [Fryntzko], and Archpriest Prokopy Powers [Povarnitzin].

While the facility has been sold, the Saints Cosmas and Damian “non-profit” Corporation will continue to exist under the management of its Board of Directors, who will manage the income from the sale of the property, satisfy payables, resolve on-going issues, and look to developing in the future care for the elderly. The annual meeting of the Board of Directors will be held in April 2014, and under the chairmanship of His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, there will be an election of officers, reception of new members to the Board of Directors, and the formulation of an agenda for the immediate future.

“This ministry was a ‘first of its kind’ for Orthodox Church in America,” added Father Joseph, “and the Board of Directors expresses deep appreciation to those countless Orthodox Christians who have given their financial support, time and talent over the years. We thank God for those who served this cause faithfully.”

The new name of the facility is the Mariners Residence, whose business office may be reached at 718-720-8800. For additional information, contact Archpriest Joseph Lickwar, CEO of the corporation, at jlickwar@yahoo.com