

Office of Communications

Orthodox Church in America Diocese of New York and New Jersey

RELEASE NUMBER 2011.36.1

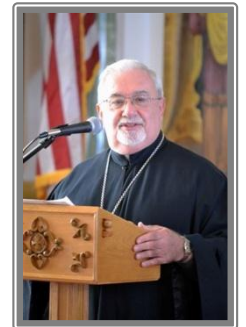
2011 Diocesan Clergy Conference

The 2nd Annual Diocesan Clergy Conference was convened by His Grace, Bishop Michael, on 17-18 October at Holy Assumption Orthodox Church in Clifton NJ. In addition to providing clergy with an opportunity to consider and discuss specific topics of pastoral concern, the conference seeks to foster bonds of friendship and priestly brotherhood among the participants. The topics of presentation and discussion for this year's conference were: Internet Porn Addiction and Cases of Sexual Misconduct.



The participants welcomed Dr. Albert Rossi and Archpriest Michael Matsko as conference presenters/facilitators. Dr. Rossi teaches courses in pastoral theology at Saint Vladimir's Seminary. He is a member of the SCOBA Commission on Contemporary Social and Moral Issues. He has written numerous articles on psychology and religion. After teaching at Pace University for 24 years, he retired as Associate Professor of Psychology. He is a licensed clinical psychologist in the state of New York.

Archpriest Michael Matsko is a member of the Sexual Misconduct Policy Advisory Committee [SMPAC] of the Orthodox Church in America's Metropolitan Council. He has an extensive background and expertise in pastoral care, law enforcement, clinical counseling, and hands-on experience in the forensic investigation of sexual misconduct cases.



Following the celebration of Great Vespers on Monday evening participants were treated to a wonderfully prepared dinner, thanks to the kindness and efforts of local parishioners and their rector, Father Stephen Evanina. The evening session featured a discussion on "Internet Porn Addiction" led by Dr. Rossi. In addition to offering vital information and data, the presentation provided critical insights and practical options for pastoral response on the part of priests. "It was noted during the conference," said Father Joseph Lickwar (Diocesan Chancellor), "that every hit at a pornographic site ultimately leads to someone's addiction, prostitution, or death. Pornography is just as much an addiction as heroin or alcohol."

On Tuesday morning the conferees gathered around Bishop Michael for the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. It was the festal commemoration day of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke. In his sermon,

