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### Diocesan Diaconal Formation Program nears completion of 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester

On Saturday, 3 December 2011, Bishop Michael made a scheduled visit to the Diocesan Diaconal Formation Program and students at the Endicott NY campus. It was a full day of divine services, tonsuring, ordination, lectures, and fellowship.

The day began with a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy during which students Ilya Arnopolsky, David Chow, and Gregory White were tonsured Readers; and student Reader Michael Pylypsiw was ordained a Sub-deacon.

Serving with His Grace were Father Alexey Karlgut, Father Jason Kappanadze, Father Timothy Holowatch, Father James Worthington, and Father Daniel McKay, assisted by Deacon Matthew Markewich and several sub-deacons, readers, and altar servers.

His Grace delivered an inspiring sermon, exhorting the newly tonsured and ordained (as well as all students) to devote themselves to studying the Holy Scriptures daily -- to know Christ, to love Him, and to serve the Church with total commitment and fervent dedication.

After enjoying a wonderful Nativity-Lent reception graciously prepared and hosted by parishioners of Saints Peter and Paul Church (Endicott NY), Bishop Michael began an afternoon of lectures to the diaconate program students on homiletics; reflecting on his own experiences in preaching and public speaking. In addition, His Grace wonderfully unified the topics of studying Holy Scripture, preaching, the teaching/doctrines of the Church, liturgics, service ("*diaconia*") and evangelization, as being central to a deacon's understanding of his place in the life of the Church and his broader vocation as a witness to Christ.

The Diaconal Formation Program was created in 2010 as a part of Bishop Michael's vision of revitalizing and growing the ministries and outreach in the Diocese of New York and New Jersey. It is generously supported in large part by **Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors** who fund such ministries within the diocese through their sacrificial offerings.

Concluding its third semester, the program is conducted in collaboration with Saint Tikhon's Theological Seminary and is designed specifically to educate and to prepare candidates, endorsed by parish rectors, for potential



