

NEW JERSEY DEANERY
THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY
Report to the 2016 Diocesan Assembly

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

Your Eminence, brother clergy, and lay delegates and observers to the Diocesan Assembly,

Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Our deanery currently consists of twenty-six parishes, missions, and institutions. All are served by priests of our deanery, and all contribute greatly to the life of the deanery.

The clergy of the deanery meet regularly throughout the year. Deanery meetings are held at host parishes on a rotating basis. At these meetings, the work of the Church at the deanery level is discussed, and decisions are made that are deemed necessary to accomplish this work in a God-pleasing and effective way. These meetings also serve as opportunities to form and strengthen brotherly bonds between clergy. Gratefully, His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, is a frequent participant in these meetings.

Archbishop Michael provides yet other opportunities to strengthen clergy bonds not only between the priests and deacons, but between their families as well. Twice yearly, His Grace hosts clergy family get-togethers to help achieve this goal. The clergy and their families truly appreciate and are thankful to His Grace for these wonderful events.

This past year has seen several major parish celebrations. Saint Spiridon Church in Perth Amboy and Saint John the Baptist Church in Alpha celebrated 100 year anniversaries.

Several pastoral changes have occurred since our last assembly. Priest Thaddeus Franta was released from his duties as Rector of Holy Trinity Church in Rahway and assigned as Rector to Saints Peter and Paul Church in Herkimer, NY. Priest Theodore Gregory (ordained to the Holy Priesthood in March, 2016) was assigned as Acting Rector of Holy Trinity Church in Rahway. Archpriest David Vernak was granted retirement and relieved of his duties as Rector of Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus. Priest Leonid Schmidt was relieved of his duties as Rector of St. Gregory Palamas Church in Glen Gardner and assigned as Acting Rector of Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus. Priest John Diamantis was transferred from St. Vladimir Church in Trenton to St. Gregory Palamas Church in Glen Gardner in January, and was recently granted a Personal Leave of Absence. Archpriest George Hasenecz is currently assigned as Priest-in-Charge of St. Gregory Palamas Church in Glen Gardner. Priest Volodymyr Chaykivskyi is serving as Priest-in-Charge at St. Vladimir Church in Trenton. Subdeacon Russell Komline was ordained to the Diaconate. Deacon John (Russell) is attached to Mother of God Joy of All Who Sorrow Church in Princeton, NJ.

One deanery seminarian, Veljko Pejovic from Annunciation Church in Brick New Jersey, is currently studying at St. Tikhon's Seminary. May God bless him in his final year of studies and his future ministry as a leader of the Church.

On the "Sunday of Orthodoxy" (March 20th), His Eminence, Archbishop Michael hosted His Eminence, Metropolitan Joseph of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America for the Divine Liturgy at Saints Peter & Paul Orthodox Church in South River NJ. The two hierarchs concelebrated

with seven priests, among them Father Joseph Lickwar (Chancellor, Diocese of New York & New Jersey) and Father David Garretson (Rector, Saints Peter & Paul Church). They were joined by Archdeacon Michael Suvak. Metropolitan Joseph preached the homily. The responses were sung by the parish choir under the direction of Basil Kozak. After the morning Liturgy, Metropolitan Joseph and Father Thomas Zain (Vicar-General of the Antiochian Archdiocese) gave a presentation on the situation of Syrian refugees and the continuing war in Syria.

That evening, Metropolitan Joseph presided at the Vespers for the “Sunday of Orthodoxy” joined by Archbishop Michael and more than forty priests and deacons at Brooklyn's Saint Nicholas Cathedral. The homily was delivered by Archbishop Michael.

On the Sundays of Great Lent, the Deanery served two separate Mission Vespers services – one in the northern region of the deanery, and one in the southern area. On Bright Wednesday, the deanery celebrated a joint Vespers service at Christ the Saviour Church in Paramus with Archbishop Michael presiding. Collections taken at the services resulted in donations to the Diocesan Distinguished Benefactors, to IOCC for Syrian relief, and to St. Sava Serbian Cathedral in NYC to assist in the rebuilding and restoration of the church building after a fire in May.

As did our diocese’s other two deaneries, our deanery held the Parish Council Conference (Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus), and the Church School Teachers/Parents Conference (Mother of God Joy of All Who Sorrow Church, Princeton). The annual Diocesan Clergy Conference was hosted this year by the Assumption of the Virgin Mary Church in Clifton. The annual recognition dinner for the deanery’s Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors was also held in Clifton.

A production of GODSPELL was successfully and wonderfully performed this past September at the Assumption of the Virgin Mary Church in Clifton. Matushka Barbara Baz directed a cast of young people from nearby parishes. The orchestra consisted of local musicians led by Louis Camacho, choir director at the Clifton parish. Another production, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, is anticipated for this coming year.

As a deanery, we continue to strive to serve God and witness to His Good News. We pray that He continues to guide us in our efforts, and we give thanks to Him for providing the leadership of His Eminence, Archbishop Michael who shepherds us along the journey to His Heavenly Kingdom.

Respectfully submitted,

Archpriest Gary Joseph Breton, Dean