



## **Saint Innocent of Alaska Orthodox Mission**

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### Parish happenings and events

St. Innocent of Alaska Orthodox Mission has been increasing outreach efforts in Oneonta and in the surrounding communities. An updated, more visible sign was designed by the parish council, purchased, installed and blessed on September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2017.

Vespers and Divine Liturgy have been served every week since Fr. Vasil's assignment to the parish on December 1, 2015. In addition to this, Vespers have and liturgy have been served for all of the 12 major Feasts, the American saints and a full Lenten weekly schedule of services have been well-attended. This consistency has added much stability to the mission.

The Mission is still currently working on the parish iconography project. Many beautiful icons had been donated to the Mission from various donors and Fr. Vasil together is in the process of building appropriate frames for them. The project has thus far been successful.

The 10-acre land purchase was completed in January 2017 and completely paid off on the same date. This was thanks to a most-generous donation by the O'Connor Foundation, a goodwill foundation which donated money to such projects, churches, bridges, townhalls and multiple charitable causes. After having the parish's 10 acre plot of land surveyed this summer, the land is currently being logged with over 100 hardwood trees being harvested to be sold for timber. This will not only help the parish financially, but also make the task of clearing the land for future building plans easier. The timber sale will take place on the first of December 2017. The amount will not be known until the sale.

Ethnic food sales have gone over extremely well. Eastern-European foods made by Fr. Vasil, Pani Lesya and parishioners have sold out very quickly and have introduced the parish further into the community. People are now ordering food ahead of time and the Mission is looking to increase food sales to a regular basis. In 2017, the parish has made a total of \$2,579.00 on our first food sale of 2017. The parish will be having the second ethnic food sale on December 2, 2017. All of the proceeds have been added to the building fund. The parish operating budget amount is \$9,002.00 and the building fund is \$6,849.00, property value is \$37,473.46 and the bookstore account - \$800.31.

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The parish is grateful for His Eminence, Archbishop Michael's visit to the Mission in July to participate in the Hartwick College Seminary Institute and also in August for his annual archpastoral visitation. Fr. Vasil Dubee was awarded the nabadrenik installed as rector of the mission. In addition to His Eminence, the parish is very grateful for all of the help given by our Dean, Archpriest Alexey Karlgut, Rev. Deacon Stephan Karlgut, Subdeacon Robert West, to Matushka Anastasia Karlgut, Fr. Nikolai Khalimonov and Matushka Tatiana Khalimonova for their outstanding singing voices that made the services so beautiful. The parish also wishes to thank all of the DDB members and Diocesan supporters for their continual support. Without their help, the parish could not be what it is. THANK YOU from everyone at St. Innocent Mission!

A parishioner of St. Innocent Mission has entered into the deaconate formation, Reader Tikhon Wallace. Fr. Vasil is currently mentoring and helping him to prepare for this wonderful event in his future service to the Lord.

New music books have been arranged by Reader Vasiliy Warner. The books have been arranged in two-part harmony for a small choir with a consistent font and translation. This has made the divine services all the more beautiful.

Adult education has continued to be held during coffee hour with engaging conversation. The Mission continues to increase its outreach to everyone, striving towards its ultimate goal of building a church, building a permanent community to offer the Orthodox Faith to the people of Oneonta and the surrounding area. Fr. Vasil teaches classes about Orthodox Christianity for the Center for Continuing Adult Learning in Oneonta. This past lent, the entire class spent the final 3-hour Friday class in St. Innocent Chapel for a Lenten Moleben and Panakhyda service. The remaining two hours were left for questions. There were 36 students in attendance. Fr. Vasil also taught classes throughout the month of March to make Ukrainian Easter Eggs. Average attendance for Sunday Divine Liturgies was for this year has been 25 (including children). Average attendance for Presanctified Liturgies was 13. The Parish Council meeting was every third Wednesday of the month following a Moleben service to the Mother of God "The Tenderhearted". Weekly feast day attendance has been 9 people. Fr. Vasil will be teaching again for the Spring session in 2018. Fr. Vasil also teaches a course on Orthodox Christianity over the summer Seminary Institute at Hartwick College in Oneonta. In addition to this, Fr. Vasil has granted a bi-monthly column in the local Oneonta newspaper, The Daily Star. Fr. Vasil writes articles in the Community Religions section about Orthodox teachings and theology.