

NEW JERSEY DEANERY
THE DIOCESE OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY
Report to the 2017 Diocesan Assembly

Wednesday, November 1, 2017

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. Saints Peter and Paul Church in Jersey City celebrate its 110th year anniversary. Holy Trinity Church in Rahway was consecrated on its 50th Anniversary.

On Saturday, December 17, 2016, St. Simon of Cyrene Mission was officially established and received into the Diocese by Archbishop Michael. On that day, Samuel Davis was tonsured a Reader and several catechumens were baptized and chrismated. The mission's first services were held the weekend of January 7-8, 2017; Reader Vespers (Saturday evening) and Sunday morning Reader Service (Obednitsa), were served every weekend until Saturday, July 1, when Reader Samuel Davis was ordained a Subdeacon and then subsequently to the Diaconate. The Sunday morning service at the mission since then has included the distribution of the Eucharist. On October 1, the mission hosted an Akathist to the African Saints and Prayers for the Elimination of Racism in America at which Archbishop Michael presided and preached.

The other pastoral changes in the deanery since our last assembly include the change of status from appointed Acting Rector to assigned Rector for Priest Leonid Schmidt (Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus) and Priest Volodymyr Chaikivskyi (St. Vladimir's Church, Trenton). Additionally, Priest Joseph Gall was released from his duties at St. Nicholas Church, Pittsfield, MA, and the omophorion of Archbishop Nikon and the Diocese of New England. He was transferred to the omophorion of Archbishop Michael and the Diocese of New York & New Jersey. He is assigned as Assistant Priest of Holy Transfiguration Chapel, Princeton.

A major priestly award was bestowed upon Father John Nehrebecki when he was elevated to the dignity of Mitred Archpriest by Archbishop Michael. Other major milestones were celebrated by Archpriest

Paul Shafran who this year celebrated his 95th birthday, 70th anniversary of priestly ordination, and 70th anniversary of marriage to Matushka Mary.

Veljko Pejovic from Annunciation Church in Brick New Jersey graduated from St. Tikhon's Seminary with a Masters of Divinity degree. Veljko was tonsured a Reader in June and was married this past July in his home country of Serbia, where he currently resides with his wife Mihaela. Efforts are underway to bring him back to the diocese through the immigration process so that he may serve God in a diocesan parish.

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, and to various deanery needs that presented themselves during the year.

As our diocese's other two deaneries did, our deanery held the Parish Council Conference (Ss. Peter & Paul Church, South River), and the Church School Teachers/Parents Conference (Christ the Saviour Church, Paramus). The annual Diocesan Clergy Conference was hosted this year by St. Gregory the Theologian Church in Wappingers Falls. The annual recognition dinner for the deanery's Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors was held at Holy Resurrection Church in Wayne.

There is an ongoing effort by a group of parishioners from Mother of God Church in Princeton to establish a house of hospitality in Trenton. The group has established a 501(c)(3) corporation, has a board of trustees that meets regularly, is meeting with local knowledgeable people, and is seeking a suitable property for the ministry. Prayers are requested, and questions may be directed to the group's website at www.stbasilhouse.org.

A production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat 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. Musical instrument accompaniment to the cast's voices was provided by Father David Cowan and Simeon Brasowski. Next year's production has yet to be announced.

The deanery hosted the annual Conference of the Brotherhood of Saint Moses the Black on October 6-8 at Mother of God Church in Princeton NJ. The theme was: "Closer to Christ, Closer to Each Other." The Brotherhood is a pan-Orthodox organization committed to making the Orthodox faith available to the African American community in America.

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