

St. Demetrius Orthodox Church

CHRIST IS BORN!
GLORIFY HIM!

Priest Message 2009

"Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Gal 6:10).

As I approach my 20 year Anniversary as a priest, and my tenth year serving at St. Demetrius Church, I am compelled to do a lot of reflecting in my ministry. 20 years from now I'll be 65, will I be retiring? Is this my half time evaluation of my life and ministry? Who knows what tomorrow will bring? Time now seems precious. How do I make the best of time rather than waste time and opportunity? Am I balancing my time properly and lovingly to the demands of my marriage, family and parish life? The word "opportunity" comes from the Latin word "toward the port;" it suggests a ship taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor. So I ask myself, "Am I making the best and most out of the opportunities that God has given me to navigate our church community to the Heavenly Kingdom?"

I am by no means perfect in my ministry. I came into this parish, by the grace of God, to nurture people's faith. I have tried to provide beautiful and meaningful services in Church and to provide people an opportunity to get closer to God in spirit and in truth. I am not a priest who tries to force people to come to church out of guilt or coercion. I love worshiping in Church because I love God. I want people to come to Church on their own free will because of their love for God. This has been my approach to serving God from the first day of my ordination. My goal as a priest is to create the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to change your heart. However, Church involvement and taking responsibility for your faith needs to come from within. Educational classes and services, community outreach and visitations, are some of the ways I have been trying to ignite our community to hunger more for their faith. I am always open to new ideas and approaches and help from others to accomplish this goal. Again, my love for everyone remains for this parish, however we all need to step up to the challenges and tasks to make this parish a growing, thriving, and spiritually strong community.

This past year our parish was faced with a tremendous challenge early on, in regards to filling the many financial and operational positions suddenly vacated by Donna Demos who faithfully administered these duties for many years. As grateful as we are for her past ministry, this sudden void created a challenge for all the current Church Board members to take on and share all the duties that Donna performed. The Church Board and those appointed to work on the bookkeeping, diligently made this transition happen which allowed for continuation of the Church's daily operations. This challenge became an opportunity for more people to participate in the process of strengthening our church. Someone once said, "Wisdom is knowing what to do next, skill is knowing how to do it, and virtue is doing it." Our Church Board shined this year with the wisdom, skill and virtue of running our Church with efficiency and care. Thank you Church Board and bookkeepers for stepping up to this vital task and a job well done! Bravo!

Our Church School has at least 10 teenagers and can get up to 15 preteens and toddlers on a Sunday. This challenge has created a nice opportunity for Courtney Anastasiadis, a college student, to give some much needed help to the other Church School teachers: Patty Koprivica, Denise Parks, and Debra Cummings. All our Church School students are learning about the Divine Liturgy. It is even more commendable that our parents are bringing their children to church to participate in the Liturgy beginning at 9:30 a.m. Bringing your child or grandchild to church and teaching them how to behave and worship in the presence of God is the ultimate opportunity for all of us to grow in faith and in love for God. The children are our presence!

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The parish statistics are as follows: 8 Baptisms, 1 Chrismation, 1 Marriage, 4 funerals. We received one new family into our parish through the sacraments of conversion, and we received another new family through a parish transfer. It is truly a blessing when the many children attending can at times outnumber the adults. The challenge of meeting new families and being with our highly energetic youth gives all of us the opportunity expand our spiritual family and make new friends.

The Choir, led by Barbra Rocco, Jeanne Dennerll, Diane McQuillan and Denise Parks have continued to sing the responses beautifully and prayerfully. We are truly blessed to have such dedicated people in our small parish who, through their singing, allows us to soar into heaven. Steve Grace has had his hands full in the altar, directing (and keeping an eye on) our altar servers. He has been a huge help for me behind the scenes, in the altar. Thank you to all who make our church environment prayerful.

We are the Body of Christ, the Church, a community of believers, a family of God. If we are going to thrive and grow closer to God, we must all work together. When we do our "own thing" we tend to go off in different directions and often forget to take time out for one another. We need to look at the Church as the Body of Christ and stop trying to work independently, but to work together for the same cause. That means we cannot approach the church as a thing of entertainment, or a place to be waited on, or a place to "get something out of." We need to be willing to put others above ourselves, and focus on serving one another.

The strength of the Early Church was their strong commitment to one another and meeting each other's needs. Serving one another is a challenge because it requires personal sacrifice, of your time, energy, money or the things you want to do. Serving doesn't come easy, especially when you may feel tired, drained or discouraged. For example, if you cannot sponsor a coffee hour, you can lend a hand serving or cleaning up. Or if you can sponsor a coffee hour and unable to prepare the meal, there are people willing to help out. The coffee hour is the extension of the Liturgy in regards to fellowship and strengthening the community. Everyone should serve in some way and participate in this opportunity, in whatever way they can. There's a sign-up sheet always posted, available for anyone to host.

We also need to encourage one another. The Church is a hospital for the soul, so that means there are a lot of wounded souls in our community. People struggle, and have battle scars. Many of the wounds are inflicted by our own side! And we do little to heal the wounds. If someone is hurting I am here for counseling and confession. If someone is struggling in their marriage, struggling in relationships or substance abuse I am here to make that first step towards healing and wellness. Everyone knows a person who stays home and does not seek the healing of the Church. Provide the opportunity and encourage them to join you to come to Church.

Make it your goal to get to know someone different in our community. We have new faces and new families that joined our church family, take the opportunity to meet and greet each other. It's great to be with our friends at coffee hour, however it will be even better to include others into you social network friends. Encouraging one another means we are helping each other out on our journey to the Kingdom. Not being encouraging allows our hearts to be hardened. We have been facing economic recession in our state for the past few years and people are feeling the pinch. St. Paul calls us to bear one another's burdens. When someone hurts, we hurt with them and try to lift them through their struggles. The Church is not about fending for yourselves in times of crisis, nor is it to seclude yourselves because you're in a crisis. If God is going to help us, we need to help others, and allow others to help us in our time of need. We also need to pray for one another. Our duty as an Orthodox Christian is to pray for one another. If someone is sick or in need of intercession, please pray for them. If you are a loved one is in the hospital or nursing home and in need of prayers or visitation, you must call the priest, because the hospital and new laws prevent me the priest, or any other health care provider the free access to give medical information.

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There is no greater comfort to know that people are praying for you, and having the sacraments administered to you. By praying for one another we become accountable for one another. If you need a ride to Church, because it's too dark or the person who normally drives is at the casino, there is always someone available to help. Being accountable for one another becomes prayer in action.

Brothers and sisters, keep doing good things and support the church. When opportunities arise, don't wait for others to make it happen, you make it happen! God will provide many opportunities for all of us to shine. God will provide the opportunities for all of us to grow. Keep faithful by praying daily and participating in our church services. Do not become weary in doing good things. God will bless us at the proper time to reap the harvest that we have planted. Don't give up! If this is my "half-time" in the game of my life, I am proud to have all the parishioners of St. Demetrius as part of my team. I will continue to fight the good fight, and ask you to join me. I will continue to enjoy all of God's blessings as I serve His Holy Church, and I ask you to join me. I pray that as I approach the "second half" that I utilize all the opportunities that God gives me to touch other people's lives with His Love and Care. The Victory is ours to grasp! Let's all go out there, and let's do it!

Archpriest Fr. Dusan Koprivica

Mission/Outreach Work

As an ongoing church project, St. Demetrius will be collecting can vegetables every Sunday. We are asking everyone who comes to church to please bring a can (s) of vegetables.

On Monday, our collection will be taken to the Immanuel Lutheran Church Food Pantry. On Saturdays, the pantry distributes bundles of food to local residents that are in need of assistance.

All Church Vision Meeting - Sunday, January 17th

For the past few years St. Demetrius Church Board has been responding to the ongoing changes in our church community. Some parishioners are aging and at the same time the number of children who are enrolled in Religious Education has increased to 29.

Our church building is over 50 years old, and is limited in it's ability to meet the needs of our people. Since 2007, we have investigated some of the possible solutions to these challenges and have discussed them with the parish at the last 3 annual All Church Meetings held in December.

In an effort to address these issues, Jean Dennerll will lead us in a series of All Church Vision Meetings. The first one will be on **Sunday, January 17th**, after Coffee Hour, one hour meeting. We will focus on the church building and possible addition to our facilities.

We hope that you will be able to join us and ask for your prayers as we all move forward into the future.

Future Facilities Committee

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Please remember in your prayers

For Good Health

Van Christoff
Stella Stamatakis
Winnie Wangler
Michael Wangler
Kalliopi Anastasiadis
Helen Tannis
Mary Lazaroff
Elaine Kleiner
Patty Canalas
Phil Lazaroff
Mother Gabriella
Father Roman
Milan Koprivica
Cyndi Frantzis

Departed

Deno Demos
Ted Chames
Ellen Koprivica
Samantha Cipolla
Mike Egnatuk
Lou
Archbishop Job

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In Memoriam: His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest



On Friday, December 18, 2009, His Eminence, Archbishop Job of Chicago and the Midwest unexpectedly fell asleep in the Lord.

His Eminence, Archbishop Job was born Richard John Osacky in Chicago on March 18, 1946. He completed university studies at Northern Illinois University and, after graduating from Saint Tikhon Seminary, South Canaan, PA, in 1970, he served as cantor and youth director at Saint John the Baptist Church in Black Lick, Pennsylvania. He assumed responsibilities in leading Divine Services in the prescribed manner for readers, conducting religious education and youth work, and painting icons. It was his extraordinary affinity with Orthodox youth that gained him the recognition of the Church at large.

In 1973 Reader John was ordained to the holy diaconate and consequently to the holy priesthood by Bishop Theodosius of Pittsburgh [later Metropolitan Theodosius of All American and Canada]. He was assigned to the parish in Black Lick, where he also served as spiritual director for the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at nearby Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

As a celibate priest, he maintained a zeal for the monastic life in all his endeavors. In 1975 he was made a riasaphor monk, and later was tonsured a monk in the Lesser Schema by [then] Bishop Herman in August of 1982. In November of that year he was elevated to the rank of archimandrite.

Recognizing that zeal and spirit of dedication to Church service in Father Job, the Diocese of New England nominated hieromonk Job as their diocesan bishop. The Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in America ratified the nomination and elected him Bishop of Hartford and the Diocese of New England. He was consecrated to the episcopacy on January 29, 1983, at All Saints Church in Hartford, Connecticut.

At its session of November 5, 1992, the Holy Synod of Bishops elected Bishop Job as Bishop of Chicago and Diocese of the Midwest. He was enthroned as Bishop of his native city at Holy Trinity Cathedral on February 6, 1993.

In his years in the See of Chicago, the Diocese of the Midwest experienced tremendous growth. This was witnessed in--but certainly not limited to--the establishment of numerous new mission parishes in the diocese.

In addition to his regular duties as the ruling hierarch of the Diocese of the Midwest, His Eminence enjoyed his long-standing and excellent reputation as an iconographer and iconologist. He was often called upon to offer lectures on this subject, and he was willing to assist and encourage other iconographers.

In recognition of his more than twenty years of "good and faithful" service as archpastor, at the March 2004 Session of the Holy Synod, Bishop Job was elevated to the rank of archbishop.

An audio interview about Archbishop Job's falling asleep in the Lord is available on [Ancient Faith Radio](#), in an interview with Archpriest John Zdinak, Chancellor of the Diocese of the Midwest. Fr. John spoke to His Eminence only 2 hours before he departed this life.

May His Eminence, Archbishop Job's memory be eternal!

Bible Questions

Answers to last months questions:

1. Almost all of this book is made up of quotes of one person - who? **Moses**
2. How old was Moses when he died? **120 years**
3. Where was Moses buried? **In the valley in the land of Moab**
4. What were the three cities that Moses set as a refuge to a person guilty of homicide? **Bezer, Ramoth and Golan**
5. When Moses again gave the ten commandments to his people, what was the fifth commandment? **Honor your father and mother**

The following answers may be found in the book of Joshua:

1. What was the relationship of Joshua to Moses?
2. What river did the tribes have to cross to get to the land God gave them?
3. When Joshua saw the man with the sword in his hand, what did the man tell Joshua to do?
4. What age was Joshua when he died?
5. The land of Canaan was divided and given to how many tribes?

2010 Parish Council

Phil Frantzis—President	Monica Dellas
Nick Anastasiadis—Vice President	Lisa Pritt
Jean Dennerll—Secretary	Andrea Nicolau
Denise Parks—Treasurer	Nicoleta Grace—Alternate

Blessing of Homes

The Blessing of the homes of the faithful with Holy Water will begin right after Theophany. Please let Fr. Dusan know of your interest in have your home blessed.

Congratulations Cindy Parker

We would like to salute our own *Cindy Parker* for receiving the **Yolanda Renee' Top Ten Poetry Award** for her book of poetry, *Spectrum*. Yolanda Renee' is an accomplished author and the host of her own show on Blog Talk Radio, *Conversations with Renee'*.

You can hear Cindy being interviewed by logging onto:

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/yolandarenee>

We still have some copies of Cindy's book for sale in our bookstore. All proceeds are donated to St. Demetrius Church.

Congratulations Cindy! We're very happy for you!