

Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada

PARISH GROWTH RESOURCE GUIDE



"Go and make disciples of all nations..."

Rev. Fr. Andrew Jarmus

Office of Missions and Education, UOCC

2003

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Publication and use of this "Parish Growth Resource Guide"
is blessed by His Beatitude Metropolitan WASYLY,
Archbishop of Winnipeg, Primate of the
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.

Forward

In July of the year 2000, the 20th Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada passed a resolution calling for the development of a guide book to assist our parishes in attracting new members to their communities. In fulfilment of this resolution, we have published this document — the UOCC's first-ever *Parish Growth Resource Guide*.

The first three chapters of the *Guide* set the stage for the discussion that follows, examining a general Orthodox Christian approach to missions, the place of our Ukrainian heritage in parish growth, and what we have to offer those who are not of Ukrainian Orthodox descent. The next six chapters offer practical ideas on how to attract newcomers to, and keep them in, your parish. Chapter 10 offers some thoughts about working with youth and young adults. You will also find three appendices with some additional information that might prove useful to your community for parish growth. Finally, the *Guide* ends with a bibliography of recommended reading for those interested in learning more about the Orthodox Faith.

The goal of this *Parish Growth Resource Guide* is to give our parishes a set of general principles and practical suggestions to help them in their endeavours to create growing communities. The ideas found in this *Guide* are not just theory, but have been proven successful in actual parish settings. It is hoped that they will be of use to our communities concerned with regaining or maintaining vitality in their parishes. Concrete ideas and guidelines for parish growth programming.

— Fr. Andrew Jarmus, Director of Missions,
Education and Communications, UOCC

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Towards a Missions Mindset

What the Bible Says about Missionary Outreach

The task of bringing new members into our communities is part of the Church's missionary work. Although we tend to think of missions as something that happens in far-off, exotic, perhaps hostile environments, we also have "domestic" missionary activities right here at home. To understand the Orthodox Christian approach to missionary work — that is, to bringing in new members — we must look first at the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

In the New Testament, Jesus offers clear outlines regarding missionary work. In Luke, chapter nine (verses 1-7), we find the following account of Jesus sending out the apostles on their first mission of preaching the Good News:

Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. And He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey, neither staffs nor bag nor bread nor money; and do not have two tunics apiece.

"Whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. And whoever will not receive you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet as a testimony against them."

So they departed and went through the towns, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

During this mission, the apostles went only to the people of Israel, following Jesus' own example. However, after His Resurrection, Christ gave the apostles the mandate to take the Gospel to all people:

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptis-

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ing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."(Mt. 28:18-20)

An important (and clear!) sign showing that the Gospel was to be spread beyond the Jews, to the whole world, was the miracle of Pentecost. The Evangelist Luke records the events of Pentecost in the second chapter of the book of Acts:

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

"In Genesis, God tells the man and the woman to "be fruitful and multiply" (v. 28). "Be fruitful," as the Fathers teach means, "grow in the faith". "Multiply" means, spread this faith to others..."

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marvelled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs — we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."(2:1-11)

A less known, biblical teaching touching upon the importance of missionary work is found in the Old Testament. In the narrative on the creation of the world in the Book of Genesis, chapter one, God tells the man and the woman to "be fruitful and multiply"(verse 28). Although this is literally understood to be a blessing on physical procreation, the saints of the Church have another interpretation for this commandment. "Be fruitful," as the Fathers teach means, "grow in the faith". "Multiply" means, spread this faith to others so that all people may become the children of God.

From the examples mentioned above, we can see that the Bible gives us clear teachings about the importance of sharing the faith. Based on this scriptural teaching, in fact, we can conclude that missionary work is *not only one of* the ministries of God's People, rather it is *the primary ministry*. Bearing this in mind, our Orthodox Christian ancestors always made the mission of bringing the Good News to new people a top priority in their lives as a community of faith. Looking at how they did this will also help us to understand how we need to approach this work today.

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The Traditional Pattern of Orthodox Missionary Outreach

If we look at the history of Orthodox Christian missionary efforts throughout the centuries, we see a common pattern emerging. Missionaries went to a region/nation where the Good News had not yet been heard. Upon travelling to a new land, the missionaries would take time to learn the language and culture of the people there.

Having fully familiarised themselves with the ways of the local people, the missionaries would "translate" the Gospel so that it was accessible to the people of that land. "Translating" involved not only conveying the teachings of Christ in the language of the local people, but also supporting expressions of faith which naturally emerged from the people's native heritage. Likewise, "Gospel" was not only the Scriptures; rather, it came to include all expressions of the Good News: the writings of the saints, doctrinal and canonical decisions of Church councils, and liturgical texts

Once the Church had a "foot hold" in a given land, the missionaries would support the growth of the local Church until it was seen to have the appropriate resources to be able to stand on its own. Thus it became a full-fledged church which strived within its jurisdictional borders to bring in the "unchurched," and it also joined the forces of those sister churches which were working to this end in other regions where the Gospel was yet unheard.

What you have above is the typical pattern for missionary work and Church growth in the Orthodox tradition. In North America, however, because of the unique history of Orthodoxy in the western world, we have seen a different situation emerge.

The Uniqueness of the "New World"

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The first thing that is unique about North America is that people have come to North America from various Orthodox countries so there is no one "sponsoring Church" doing missionary work here. Each jurisdiction, to differing degrees, has its own approach, its own plan, and its own target group for missionary activities.

Secondly, a major difference between the contemporary North American situation and other historic situations is that the majority of Orthodox people who came to this continent from Ukraine, and other places in Europe and the Middle East, did not come as missionaries. They came to build a better life for themselves here.

For example, when our forebears came to Canada, they established in their new homeland the life that they knew from the old homeland. For Orthodox people, the life that they brought with them naturally included the Church. So, one of their first priorities once they established their homesteads was to build a church — in some cases even before they had a priest to serve the congregation!

While the Faith was a vital part of our pioneers' lives, the idea of sharing it with others was not understood to be a central mandate in their spiritual worldview. One reason for this was because of their understanding of the relationship between Church and state which they brought with them from the "Old Country". Why would the "English" be interested in the Ukrainian Church (or the Greek Church, Romanian Church, Serbian Church...) when they had their own "English Churches"?

Another important reason for our pioneers' lack of interest in sharing the faith came from their personal experiences. Many came with emotional and spiritual scars from a personal history of struggle and strife. For some, this happened in their "Old Countries" under regimes that oppressed Orthodox Christians. Others experienced a continuing struggle as they found oppression in this "New Country" as well — from people who viewed them as second-class citizens. These struggles naturally put the Orthodox immigrant populations in the "Diaspora" on the defensive. Outsiders were viewed with distrust, and the notion of reaching out to them was viewed as a compromise of their national and religious identity.

Such an approach seemed to work fine for the "ethnic" Orthodox while their numbers were strong. As long as new waves of immigration were coming in to "beef up" parish membership, our communities could go on in relative seclusion within the wider community, without any challenge to this paradigm.

Today's Realities

Now, however, as we enter the 21st Century, the situation has changed radically. The latest "wave" of immigration from Ukraine is not as "nationally" driven as earlier ones. Moreover, those coming do not necessarily share the same religious conviction or cultural philosophy as the people of previous immigrations currently in our parishes. We cannot "count on them" simply to refill our ranks; rather, we must look at them as part of the larger mission field in which we must work.

Another very important part of our "missions field" here are the children of the immigrants who maintain - to a greater or lesser extent - the cultural values of their forebears who came to Canada, but who clearly identify this country as their "home and native land". Since the 1970's, we have engaged in debates, discussions and lamentation over our "lost generation" (now lost generations).

A final group in our contemporary situation which we must not neglect are those who are not of Ukrainian Orthodox background, but who want to make a spiritual home for themselves in UOCC parishes. In the late 1990's, the Encyclopaedia Britannica Year Book listed the Orthodox Church as the fastest growing Christian Church in America. Likewise in Great Britain, Eastern Orthodoxy is among the fastest-growing Christian faith traditions. It is safe to assume that this trend will spread into our country as well. Based on Christ's mandate of making disciples of "all nations", we must be ready to welcome them into our parishes where and when these seekers arrive.

We have our work cut out for us, then. Fortunately, we do not do it alone, nor do we have to reinvent the wheel. We have the witness of the Holy Scriptures as our foundation. We have the legacy of Orthodox missionary activity to look

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towards for direction. We have examples in our own Church of parishes that are turning the tide and once again experiencing growth.

The goal of this *Missions Resource Guide* is to give our communities a set of general principles and practical suggestions to help them in their endeavours to create vibrant, growing communities. These principles are not just theory, but have been proven successful in actual parish settings. It is hoped that they will provide the members of our communities concerned with regaining or maintaining vitality in their parishes with concrete ideas and guidelines for parish-based missionary outreach.

As the Lord granted our forebears to be builders in this community, He can also grant us success as we continue their work. We must seek to be builders of a place of peace, fellowship and prayer for ourselves, our descendants, and for all those who embrace our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church as their source of spiritual nurture.

Chapter 2

Our Ukrainian Heritage

In the latter part of the 20th century, a debate arose among the Orthodox jurisdictions of North America regarding the relationship between faith and ethnic identity. One camp asserted that faith and ethnicity were independent of each other. Living in North America, they said, we should do away with what they called "hyphenated Orthodoxy" (i.e., Ukrainian-Orthodox, Greek-Orthodox, Romanian-Orthodox, etc.), and simply be "Orthodox" without all of the ethnic trappings. The other school of thought stated that the Orthodox faith is lived in its fullest precisely within the context of its ethnic expressions. To take away the ethnic connection of the Orthodox parishes, they said, would be to take away the very thing which helped these communities maintain their faith in the first place.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, when immigrants from Orthodox countries like our own Ukrainian pioneers came to North America, they brought with them their whole life experience. This naturally included the Church. In the case of the Ukrainians, having been Orthodox for over 1000 years, our whole identity has been infused with Orthodox spirituality: the rhythm of life (fasts and feasts), the basic world view of the Orthodox Church, the way we interpret our personal life experiences, and the list goes on. Although in our secularised, modern world some have tried to divorce the cultural elements of our heritage from the faith that has nurtured them for over ten centuries, these efforts have been unsuccessful. Faith and culture are intricately interrelated for the Ukrainian people and indeed for all Orthodox people in their historic countries of origin. The following is a consideration of only some of those areas where we see this connection in a clear and profound way.

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The Calendar

One part of our faith/culture experience where we can see the interrelation of belief and custom is the annual celebrations of feasts and fasts. All of the most popular elements

of Ukrainian folk art and customs, for example, have some connection to the liturgical year of the Church (the twelve meatless dishes are part of the Christmas celebration, pysanky are a Paschal tradition, etc.). While it is true that many of these customs have their roots in pre-Christian times, they have endured over the centuries because of their "Christianisation". Thus, as we practice these customs today, they find their true meaning and value now only within the context of the Faith which they celebrate.

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The liturgical calendar of the Orthodox Church, which we follow as Ukrainians, sets the tempo for our lives. The daily routine is broken with periods of intensified spiritual struggle during the fasts. The reflective times of fasting give way to the joyous celebrations of the feasts. Every season bears with it respective holy days with their particular celebrations and rites connected to - and guided by - the time of year in which they fall. All of time is sanctified by the Church calendar. This sanctification is "brought home" by the people through our participation both in liturgical celebrations and in the customs and practices handed down to us in our ethnic heritage.

Names

Ukrainian names which are so familiar to us are the names of Saints. In the baptism records of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, there is a space for the child's name "in Ukrainian". What this really represents is a request for the child's "Christian name", the name of the Saint whose name they were given.

When we seek to find a "Ukrainian" name for a child, more often than not, we are giving him or her a Christian name. These names became popular among our people because of the role that these Saints played in the life of the Church, as martyrs, teachers, healers, etc. Among the Ukrainian Orthodox people, popular saints include St. Volodymyr, the Baptiser of Rus'-Ukraine, and St. Anthony, co-founder of the Pecherska Lavra — Caves Monastery — in Kyiv. Part of a child's upbringing should include knowledge of who their spiritual namesake is and how this person glorified that name through his or her dedication to Christ and His Holy Church.

A Unique Worldview

The worldview of a people is shaped by the land in which they live and the experiences which form their history. Every nation has its own unique worldview, and this is no different for the Ukrainian people. One unique feature of our Ukrainian worldview is our willingness to address both the joys and pains of life. For example, we have as many folk songs that speak of unfortunate circumstances as we do those that sing of happiness. Life is both bitter and sweet and to be truly alive one must accept both realities. Modern-day psychotherapists and psychologists speak of the importance of not living in denial — of honestly accepting what one's life brings to you. This truth has been part of the Ukrainian worldview for centuries.

Another element of our worldview is that Ukrainians are a people close to the land. Even the major urban centres in Ukraine have beautiful green belts adorning their cityscape. As people become more and more interested in environmental issues, our closeness to the land gives us a natural openness and sensitivity to these concerns. In this regard it is important to remember that the very reason we love the land so much was because our people viewed the earth as a sacred gift from God, and viewed themselves as the custodians (or more to the point, "stewards") of that gift.

Accepting life in all its glory and pain, and a deep respect for the environment are two facets of our cultural heritage which can be our gifts to the modern world. This is especially true when we keep in mind that both of these understandings are spiritual in their nature. The spiritual journey of life must be accepted in its fullness - the good with the bad - if it is to be authentic, nurturing true inner growth. Likewise, as we look at the world, we must always remember that it bears the signature of the Creator, and that it can lead us to a deeper adoration of God if we treat it with due respect. In our modern world, where we seek the quick fix and all things are so easily looked upon as commodities to be consumed, both these concepts, handed down to us from our Ukrainian Orthodox forebears, can guide us to look at our world and our journey through it in a more balanced way.

1000 Years and Counting

For over 1000 years, the lands of Ukraine have been infused with an Orthodox Christian identity. In fact, the Orthodox Church has had an even longer presence in these lands

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as is witnessed by the New Testament itself. In his letter to the Colossians, St. Paul teaches that in the Christian life "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scyth'ian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all."(Col. 3:11) The Scyth'ians mentioned in this passage are the ancestors of our Ukrainian people. Ours is a people who have heard the Good News preached for two millennia.

This long-standing heritage has withstood the test of time in good moments and bad. The Church in Ukraine celebrated a golden age of the great Metropolitans of Kyiv such as Saints Ilarion, Makaryj, and Peter Mohyla. The Ukrainian Church has withstood persecution at the hands of the Muslim Tartars and the atheistic communist regime of the USSR. Over the centuries, we have amassed a great choir of Saints who stand before the Lord and pray for each and every one of us. Men and women such as St. Volodymyr the Great, St. Ol'ha, Saints Anthony and Theodosius of the Kyivan Caves Monastery, St. Job of Pochayiv, St. Anna Vsevolodivna, and St. John the New Martyr of Suchava are our fathers and mothers in the faith, and our brothers and sisters in heritage.

"The same faith that fed our forebears in days gone by can feed us today as well. While times may have changed, the essential spiritual journey we are on — a journey from darkness to light, from sin to salvation — remains the same."

All of this great legacy is not simply a thing of the past, a museum piece. This twenty-century history also speaks to us today. The same faith that fed our forebears in days gone by can feed us today as well. While times may have changed, the essential spiritual journey we are on — a journey from darkness to light, from sin to salvation — remains the same. Our Orthodox Ukrainian heritage provides us with a multifaceted model or template for living our faith today. Far from denying it, we should celebrate it and share it with all those who wish to make one of our parishes their home. Even though such people may not be Ukrainian by birth, all can become sons and daughters of the spiritual legacy that is the Ukrainian Orthodox tradition. The key is that we do not allow this heritage to become an obstacle for the non-Ukrainians who come to us, by placing heritage over the Faith — rather, let us regard our heritage as the means of celebrating and expressing the Faith that will save us.

Chapter 3

What About Non-Ukrainians?

A recent survey conducted in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America revealed that over 70% of marriages celebrated in Greek Orthodox parishes in the U.S.A. are between a Greek Orthodox Christian and a non-Greek, non-Orthodox person. Although there have been no similar surveys conducted officially in the UOCC, there is enough anecdotal evidence to suggest that the statistics are similar for our Church.

Over the past several years we have seen a growing number of non-Ukrainian people come through our parishes. Some, like those mentioned above, come by way of a family connection. Others have heard of Orthodoxy and come for a closer look. Still others drop by not really knowing who we are or what we are about but just to check things out. Regardless of how they come, sooner or later they ask the same question: "What does a Ukrainian parish have to offer me?"

In the mixed marriage, it is not at all uncommon to find a situation where the non-Ukrainian views the Orthodox Church as his/her spouse's Church, but not his/her own. When children are involved, what happens most often is that the Ukrainian spouse will go to the Ukrainian Orthodox parish part of the time, and attend an English-language, western Christian church (Catholic or Protestant) the rest of the time with the non-Ukrainian spouse and their children. They do so because the English parish provides "common ground" where everyone can participate, learn and grow as a family. More often than not, we will see the whole family at church only for special occasions or "high holidays" like Pascha.

When the children of such families grow up, the only time we usually see them in our church is for a wedding, or perhaps the funeral of the Orthodox parent. Even then, some children make arrangements with their own pastor for the funeral of their Orthodox parent, a frequent occurrence these days that devout Ukrainian Orthodox Christians may not even get an Orthodox funeral if their children have left the Church!

Complicating the problem even more is the fact that we

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Orthodox tend to do a less than adequate job of promoting our Church. Many "cradle Orthodox" feel that, because they received little education about the Church, there really is little substance to our religion; they fear that if they get into a discussion with a knowledgeable Christian of another faith tradition, they will embarrass themselves with a lack of answers. Others fear that Orthodoxy is too provincial or backward for people of modern-day North America. Still others, fearing the kind of oppression we once faced in our ancestral homeland, believe that it is best to "mind our own business" so as not to attract undue attention to ourselves and risk further persecution.

As difficult as it is to read these words, we have to understand that such scenarios are occurring every day in our UOCC parishes throughout the country. It has been said that Orthodoxy is the best kept secret in North America. All of the fears about our faith that we face are placed before us by the enemy as stumbling blocks. The devil is absolutely convinced of the truth and the power of Orthodox Christianity, and so he works all the harder to discourage its members from speaking up about the great treasure which they hold in their hearts.

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The Truth of the Matter

Orthodoxy would not have lasted 2000 years if there really was nothing to it; just because someone does not know an answer to a question, does not mean that one does not exist. Far from being a "back-water" religion, Orthodox Christianity has the beauty of a multifaceted jewel. We have been, and still are, the official state religion of whole nations, kingdoms and empires. Most, if not all, of our greatest teachers and leaders were great scholars of the secular "sciences" of their times, and were highly regarded by the wider society. While it is true that many were persecuted for their faith, let us not forget that our pioneers came to Canada to embrace the exact freedom offered by this country to believe in what one chooses. In fact, in today's world, our greatest threat is not persecution, but seduction — the seduction of a popular secular philosophy which says, "it doesn't matter what you believe" which then immediately transforms into, "So why bother believing in anything?".

Always we have to remember that Orthodoxy is a faith tradition that is not exclusive to any one nation. Along with Ukraine, Greece and the other historical European centres of

Orthodoxy, there are indigenous (i.e. non-immigrant) Orthodox communities in Alaska, Africa, China, Korea, Finland, France, Great Britain, Lebanon, Mexico and Palestine to name but a few. In other words, you don't have to be a Ukrainian to be Orthodox. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is the Orthodox Church which expresses Her faith through the traditions and culture of the Ukrainian people — but not exclusively through (or for) the Ukrainian people.

Our Gift to non-Ukrainians

What does our expression of the Orthodox Faith through the Ukrainian culture offer a non-Ukrainian? The most important offer is a spiritual legacy. As God is progressively written out of our North American social fabric, we must look elsewhere for examples of nations that have been founded on Christ and His Gospel. Our people's 1000-year grounding in the Faith offers a wealth of guidance to the North American interested in the Orthodox Church.

The Ukrainian ties of community offer people of our contemporary society a blueprint for understanding how Orthodoxy is lived in concrete, day-to-day ways. This blueprint has held fast for more than ten centuries; as mentioned earlier, it has withstood the test of foreign invasion, civil unrest and the militant atheism of the USSR. Surely anything that has stayed standing through all of that has great intrinsic value.

We have a great deal of offer to the non-Ukrainian seeking a deeper understanding of the Orthodox Christian tradition. However, if we are to see such people commit to our parishes, we must make them feel welcome — and remember, we are not just talking about our own in-laws, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, spouses and children, but also about total strangers. One of the great marks of Ukrainian Orthodoxy is hospitality. It should be natural for us to receive our non-Ukrainian guests as kin, saying *"bud'te yak v doma!"* ("Make yourself at home").

At the same time, it is not unreasonable to expect that our non-Ukrainian members honour the fact that we have a great respect for our heritage and for the people who brought the Faith with them, making it possible for us to be Orthodox today. While it will be important to make the faith accessible to these people by offering programming and ministry in a language they understand (be it English or

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French), we will also be able to teach them hymns of praise and glory in the tongue of our ancestors — words that have been passed from generation to generation for a millennium.

Such an approach is evident in the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church. On the one hand we have the example in translated worship into the language of the people given by, among others, Saints Cyril and Methodius. These Greek brothers, who were the first missionaries to the Slavs, did not expect the Slavic people to worship and preach the Gospel in Greek. They learned the Slavonic language and went about translating the Divine Services and Holy Scriptures into the language of the people. On the other hand, we see in our Tradition a value in maintaining a connection with our past through language. Thus, we sing the Hebrew word "Alleluia" and not "Praise the Lord." We call out "Amen," not "So be it." Both realities can exist together, and it is up to each parish to find a balance that suits their needs best.

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A Hidden Blessing

In making our non-Ukrainian family, friends and guests feel welcome in this manner, we will find an interesting "fringe benefit": we will be generating a whole new cadre of people sympathetic to our Ukrainian interests. This has been just the case in the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America. Back in the 1980's, the Antiochian Archdiocese (historically connected to the Arabic world) received literally thousands of converts from Protestantism. In addition to finding a spiritual home in Orthodoxy, their reception by the Antiochian Orthodox has made them more sensitive and sympathetic to Arabic causes in world politics. For example, in the area of Arab-Israeli relations, converts speak of having been completely behind Israel before becoming Orthodox; after converting and being exposed to the Arabic side of the issue, they have done a complete turnaround. Such could also be the case for non-Ukrainians becoming members of our Church regarding Ukrainian issues in Canada and beyond.

Making our parishes accessible to non-Ukrainians will require us to face some changes. In the end, though, the benefits will far outweigh the sacrifices, as we see our parishes with a whole new generation of faithful living the Gospel in the spiritual heritage of the Ukrainian people. We will offer them our spiritual and cultural treasures, and their presence among us will add to those treasures.

Chapter 4

Why do people come to church?

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, a parish lives by a specific approach or paradigm, which "speaks" to a certain group (or certain groups) of people. Such a dynamic has been part of Church life since the time of the apostles. The very first Church council was called to determine what type of "paradigm shift" was necessary to address the reality of Gentiles who wished to be members of the Church (see Acts 15). While this makes the community attractive to newcomers who fit within the paradigm, it also makes it inaccessible to those who do not. In examining how to develop an effective ministry to newcomers, a parish must consider what it is that people might be seeking as they visit their community.

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Making the Gospel accessible in such a way is part of the "incarnational" nature of Christian ministry. The message does not change but the media for its delivery - in the case of this discussion, paradigms for parish life - must be flexible enough to reach out to as broad a range of seekers as possible. Understanding the varied reasons that people attend church can help parishes in developing effective newcomer outreach initiatives.

Searching for Roots

Some people come to church to get connected — or stay connected — with a particular community or faith tradition. For example, in churches that have specific ethnic or national ties such as the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, people often come to church to stay connected with their ethnic heritage and with the spiritual roots of their ancestors. In this category, we also find those who attend because it is the parish that their forebears founded, or the one in which they were baptised, married, etc.

For people who seek a Church to meet such needs, it is important that the community have direct and visible links to its "heritage". This may come many different forms:

- liturgical services;
- the accommodation in parish life of the historic language of the community;
- regular parish events such as dinners or festal celebrations which cultivate the values, heritage and traditions of a particular ethnic group; and/or
- long-standing parish groups/committees (parish sisterhood, choir, etc.) whose role is not merely to provide resources but also a place where one can learn the customs and traditions of the community.

All of these offer the seeker a sense of "connectedness," that is, a tangible means of embracing and expressing the "faith of the fathers."

"Making the Gospel accessible in such a way is part of the 'incarnational' nature of Christian ministry. The message does not change but the media for its delivery must be flexible enough to reach out to as broad a range of seekers as possible.

A Need for Healing

Another group of seekers looks to the Church to find healing and nurture. People go through life with many wounds, some physical, some psychological, emotional, and/or interpersonal. All of these wounds have a spiritual component. In the face of guilt, isolation, regret, torment, these lost sons and daughters of the world come to the Church looking for healing from the spiritual pain with which they are afflicted. Finding deliverance, they then seek to be nurtured and nourished so that they may build up their emotional and spiritual fortitude.

It has been said that the Church is a spiritual hospital; all of the disciplines within it may be understood as a therapeutic regime for healing the soul from the ravages of sin and death. To reach out to those who seek healing and nurture, a parish must make the "therapeutic system" of the Church available to them through worship, counselling, support groups, spiritual direction, and other initiatives designed to help build up one's inner life. Such outreach must address both the need to heal the wound and to nurture the person along the continuing "therapeutic" journey of spiritual growth.

A Hunger for Truth

A third group of seekers are those who attend church looking for learning and growth. The quest of these seekers is for the truth. Such people live by the promise of Jesus: "You will know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Bible studies and other catechetical programs are important for these individuals as are informative homilies and other learning opportunities in parish life.

For such people, however, it is important that what they achieve is not simply an academic knowledge of the faith but rather a personal experience of the truth of Christ's Gospel. Communal worship and other activities around the parish should provide the opportunities to learn and apply the teachings of Christ and His Church. In this Orthodox Christian context, learning is an act of formation. Through studies, coupled with prayer and the other spiritual disciplines, each person is formed by the grace of God, into a living icon of the Living God.

A Desire to "Do My Part"

We also find those whose motivation for attending church is founded on a desire to "do their part". For some, this is manifested in work for the inner affairs of the community such as cantoring, administration, special events planning, etc. Others want to work with the parish on outreach initiatives like pastoral visitation teams, food banks, or missionary outreach. In each case, the person perceives that "something needs to be done" and that he or she is duty-bound to do their part in carrying out the work.

Sometimes, this sense of duty is learned from parents and other forebears. In other cases, it emerges as a response to something they feel that God has done for them, or that they need to do for God. Still others are motivated by an inability to endure a given situation as it currently exists. In all cases, the needs of such people must be met with programming that allows them to invest their time and resources thereby enabling them to feel that they are fulfilling their duty to God and community.

What must be stressed to these people, however, is that such activities should not be regarded as a way to "earn" them a place in the Kingdom. Rather, they are concrete expressions of the selfless love which God models for us in the

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incarnation of His only-begotten Son, and through which He calls us to share with others.

Looking to "Fit In"

"Parishes that desire growth must be prepared to examine the scope of the outreach provided by the paradigm(s) in which they function. If this scope no longer meets the needs of seekers coming to the parish, the community must be prepared to make the necessary 'paradigm shifts' in it's life either to broaden or alter this scope."

Finally, there are those who seek a Church community in a desire for affirmation. Such people have a deep need to feel that they "belong". They turn to the Church with its message of mercy and acceptance to find a place for themselves. For people such as this, the parish must offer activities which allow them to connect with other members; activities such as fellowship/study groups, social events, or "work bees" can offer this opportunity.

In all parish initiatives, such people must find the congregation to be warm and welcoming. Often this type of person comes bearing deep personal wounds, and many times it is the psycho-social "symptoms" of these wounds that are a cause of their sense of isolation. Consequently, the community must always be compassionate with such seekers while, nevertheless, maintaining firm boundaries regarding what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in an interpersonal setting.

The reasons that people seek out a Church community are numerous and multifaceted. If in their efforts to attract newcomers, parishes focus only on one paradigm, thinking it archetypal, they run the risk of not reaching a great number of other people who approach its doors. One component of effective parish growth is that members must be aware of the various expectations/needs that seekers have in coming to their parish. Likewise, they must be ready to help them meet these needs as much as possible in that community.

Realistically, not every parish will be able to address the needs of all seekers. Although a community can have multiple paradigms for its parish life, it is impossible simultaneously to give every type of need equal attention. Nevertheless, parishes that desire growth must be prepared to examine the scope of the outreach provided by the paradigm(s) in which they function. If this scope no longer meets the needs of seekers coming to the parish, the community must be prepared to make the necessary "paradigm shifts" in it's life either to broaden or alter this scope.

Chapter 5

Making the Parish More Inviting

I. "Life-Giving" Worship

It has been said that if you want to know what the Orthodox believe, go see how they worship. The name of our Church, "Orthodox", bears this understanding. Often the word "Orthodox" is translated as "correct believing". The prefix "ortho" comes from the Greek word meaning "straight", "upright", or perhaps "proper"/"appropriate". The suffix "dox" comes from the Greek "doxa" which means "glory". The Orthodox Church is literally the Church engaged in the "proper glorification" of God. Knowing this, we can see how important worship is in our self-understanding.

Since worship is the focal point of Church life, we must take care that we are celebrating our services properly and in good order. There is nothing more difficult to endure than a worship service that drags on, in which celebrants and participants seem to be only "putting in time", and which completely "goes over the heads" of those present. When people look into a parish community, they will eventually - if not initially - come to a worship service. Often it is these services that present the extremely vital first impression of that community. For worship to be a "life-giving" experience, several things should be taken into account.

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Understandable

First and foremost, the service must be understandable to participants. Obviously, this involves language. A parish must consider the "target" of their outreach initiatives, and make the necessary changes to allow their worship to be accessible to these people. For most of our communities, this will mean incorporating English into their services.*

There are probably very few parishes in our country that do not use some degree of English in their worship services — at least in services like baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Here, though, we are speaking about using English in

the regular liturgical life of the parish: special services throughout the year (like the blessing of water on Theophany), Vespers, matins, and the Sunday and festal Divine Liturgies.

Sometimes, the "language debate" becomes very polarised: it is looked upon as one way or another — "a" or "z". In this debate, people tend to forget that between "a" and "z" there are 24 other options ("b" through "y"). A parish does not necessarily have to go "all English"; rather it can simply weave enough English through the service so that a visitor will not feel lost. Because it can be difficult to know how much English to use and where to use it, some ideas are provided in Appendix Three of this guide.

To those who present the objection that without the Ukrainian language there can be no Ukrainian Church, it is necessary to consider the history of our Church. Liturgical texts were translated into Ukrainian only in the 20th century and this was done so that people could understand the services. For the first nine centuries of our existence, the language of worship of the Ukrainian people was Church Slavonic; that is, for the first 900 years of our history, the Ukrainian Church existed without Ukrainian as its language of worship.

A second important part of making our services understandable is the explanation of the various symbolic articles and gestures. Our liturgy has a 2000-year history; many layers of symbolism have developed over that time. In all these layers, though, everything is there for a purpose. Explaining to people what we are doing and why will help show that our worship is very systematic and intentional. Nothing is superfluous ritual "for the sake of ritual".

Finally, services will be understandable if they are easy to "navigate"; this is particularly true for Vespers, Matins and special seasonal services. The faithful present should have booklets either with the full text of the service (and even music, if possible), or at least a general outline of the order. Such booklets should offer, not only the text, but also a brief explanation of the rite. If a service is celebrated very infrequently e.g. the Great Blessing of Water on the Feast of Jordan, the priest should take a bit of time before the service to "introduce" people to the rite: what is going to happen, what are the major symbols or hymns, why is this important. Such explanations, verbal and/or in print, will help insure that people do not feel lost at the service and it will, there-

"Since worship is the focal point of Church life, we must take care that we are celebrating our services properly and in good order."

fore, make the celebration more meaningful for them individually and, by extension, for the whole congregation.

Engaging /Participatory

It has been said that in Orthodox Christianity when it comes to worship, there are no "tourists." The Orthodox term for worship is "liturgy," from a Greek word meaning "the work of the people". The very term we use to denote our worship gives us an indication of how it is to be celebrated — as a "group effort".

A good way to keep worship as participatory as possible is to encourage congregational singing. If your services are led by a cantor, all the people should be encouraged to join him or her. If you have a choir, make sure that at least selected parts of the service are done by the whole congregation. In Ukraine today, it is the practice during the Divine Liturgy that the Creed and the Lord's Prayer are sung by the whole congregation and when a deacon serves, he actually faces the people and leads the singing. Parishes with choirs can also invite the full congregation to join in the singing of responses ("Lord, have mercy", "And with your spirit.", etc.) and refrains (such as the Prokeimen, or the Alleluia after the Epistle reading). It should be noted here, by the way, that the original function of a parish choir was not to replace the people singing the service but to lead them.

For congregational participation in services, it is necessary to select music that is easy to follow. The two traditional Church chants (Kyivan and Galitian/Halytsky) are both reverent, pleasant to hear and simple enough for everyone to join in with. When choosing other arrangements for a choir, the same dignified but straightforward principle should be taken into consideration. Some compositions, while sounding wonderful in concert or on recordings, are simply too complicated for congregational singing and can end up taking away from the service rather than enhancing it.

Beyond singing the hymns, it is necessary for people to be doing other things within the service as well. Lay liturgical ministries form an important component of the liturgical participation of all worshippers. Men and boys should be encouraged to serve at the altar as palamars and acolytes. Women should be encouraged to serve in the parish sisterhood assisting with handing out candles and other activities.

"There is nothing more difficult to endure than a worship service that drags on, in which celebrants and participants seem to be only 'putting in time', and which completely 'goes over the heads' of those present."

"All teaching should focus on helping the people to 'take the faith home'. The teaching that people receive in Church must help them to look at their world through Christian eyes."

Men and women both should be encouraged to read the Epistle, the Hours or other prayers, and also to serve as Greeters. Having these opportunities to actively take part in worship is most important for the younger members of the congregation. Youth and young adults, if not encouraged to participate in the liturgical life of the community, will come to church always feeling like observers rather than participants.

Indeed, such participation is important for the whole parish. When people are taking part in a service, they develop a greater sense of ownership in the process and the community. The old adage is true: the family that prays together, stays together — whether this family be people living under one roof or the members of a parish family.

A Relevant Message

A professor of homiletics (the art of preparing and delivering a sermon) once said to his students, "When you preach, don't just repeat everything that was read in the Gospel. Dragging the people through the streets of Jerusalem will not help them. Make the message relevant for them today." This same advice applies for all the types of teaching that go on in the parish: sermons, Church school, adult education, informal discussions. People begin to think of their Church as irrelevant only when it fails in this vital work. All teaching should focus on helping the people to "take the faith home".

The last words of direction in the Divine Liturgy are, "Let us depart in peace." The essence of these words is that we are to take the peace which Christ offers us through the Liturgy — a peace surpassing all human understanding (Philippians 4:7) — into the world with us. We do this not to keep it to ourselves but to be ministers of this peace to others. This has been called the "liturgy after the Liturgy". In order to be effective ministers of Christ's peace-bringing presence, people need to have something to take with them. The teaching that people receive in Church must help them to look at their world through Christian eyes.

More than "Sunday only"

Ask a person who grew up in the Orthodox Church and later left for another faith tradition, why he or she left and one answer you often get is that they wanted a faith that was more than just "Sunday only". Assuming Orthodoxy is a "Sunday only" religion is a mistake which has come from historical circumstances in North America. These circumstances have given people the wrong impression about our faith.

Both in the earlier days of our Church's history and today, many of our parishes were served by priests who were "circuit riders", visiting three, four and often more parishes over the course of a several weeks. Because of this, all aspects of ministry were severely limited. A major result of this limitation of ministry was that frequency of services centred solely on the celebration of the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Growing up in this situation, people just assumed this was the norm. Actually, one look at our Church calendar will show that holy days of feasting and fasting are woven throughout the year, making us anything but "Sunday only". Among these services are the following:

- The Daily Cycle: Vespers & Matins (or combined as the All-Night Vigil)
These services are important because the majority of the "teaching hymns" in the church are found here. At the very least, these services should be part of the Sunday and festal liturgical celebrations of a parish.
- Feast Days & Services particular to Liturgical Seasons (Presanctified Liturgy, Great Blessing of Water, the Kneeling Prayers of Pentecost, etc.)
Through these services, one lives according to the Church's rhythm of life; without this, the experience of the faith cannot be complete.
- Services for specific needs [Sacraments, Moleben', Panakhyda, etc.]

These services give liturgical expression to every aspect of our lives. Likewise, prayer and worship must also be woven into all parish activities: study groups, meals, coffee hour, etc. This is one of the ways that we tangibly live out the invitation that we hear in every divine service to "commend our whole life to Christ our God".

In all our expression of prayer and praise in parish life,

"One look at our Church calendar will show that holy days of feasting and fasting are woven throughout the year, making us anything but 'Sunday only'."

"Our churches first and foremost are houses of prayer; prayer must be the essential activity in all parish life. Likewise, Christians are first and foremost called to be people of prayer."

formal (liturgical) and otherwise, we must see to it that we take the time and effort to make our worship as meaningful and edifying as possible. In times of persecution throughout the centuries, when the Church's ministry was limited exclusively to worship, it was this meaningful, liturgical expression of the Faith that kept Orthodoxy alive and well in the most adverse of situations. When approached with proper reverence and attention, our worship can also be a spring of life-giving water today as well.

Whether we have a church packed with people, or just the priest and cantor, is irrelevant in the eyes of God. Jesus promised that where even two or three (not 20 or 30) were gathered in His name, He would be with them. Liturgy is about the quality of the prayer, not the quantity of those praying. Our churches first and foremost are houses of prayer; prayer must be the essential activity in all parish life. Likewise, Christians are first and foremost called to be people of prayer; all else that we do flows out of this communion with God.

Chapter 6

Making the Parish More Inviting

II. Parish-based Initiatives

Orthodoxy is not so much a system of beliefs as it is a way of living our lives. It is a way of living in an intimate, personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. This fact is attested to in the Book of Acts where we read that in its earliest days, the Church was referred to simply as "The Way" (see Acts 9:2; 19:9,22; 22:4; 24:14; 24:22).

The WAY of Christ's Gospel can be studied and taught, but such pursuits can only take a person so far. Ultimately, "The Way" must be experienced. There is no one single aspect of a parish's life that can create an inviting and meaningful experience. Rather, a number of factors must be in place to create an atmosphere that draws newcomers to form a deeper commitment to the parish community.

Parish programming is important because it involves the wider life of the community. In a manner of speaking, the "true beliefs" of the community are found in the type of programming that it offers. As a parish grows, program development becomes more and more important for maintaining a sense of fellowship; the original small group of parishioners grows into several groups of program participants each of which becomes a source of intimacy and togetherness within the larger parish.

In the divine services of our Church we are called to commend "our whole life to Christ our god". Christ, then, must be present in the "whole life" of the congregation. Ultimately, programming should model for people how to make Christ a part of their "whole life" — in other words, how to live the faith beyond Sunday morning.

"Orthodoxy is not so much a system of beliefs as it is a way of living in an intimate, personal relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. "

Christian Formation (Education)

The first type of programming that is important is that

which addresses the spiritual formation of all “seekers”. Such programming includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Church School
- Youth Group
- Adult Bible studies
- “Speciality” Groups: “Inquirers’ Classes”; Marriage Preparation...

An important thing to bear in mind about this type of programming is that it does not simply involve filling people with facts and ideas, but focuses on the formation of the person as a believer. In Orthodoxy, we believe that it is our fundamental calling to grow by the Grace of God, more and more like Christ each day. Christian education has to involve our formation as icons of the Lord.

Fellowship

Another type of programming necessary in parish life is that which builds up a sense of community and fellowship. This programming can include things such as sports tournaments, dances, dinners, and special fellowship groups (senior's group, "Moms & Tots", Brotherhood, etc.).

Some people criticise such activities as taking away from the "spiritual" life and work of the Church, making the parish nothing more than a social club. To be sure, parishes should always be on guard that their social programming does not become the central activity of community life. Always, the primary focus must be the spiritual well-being and growth of the faithful and seekers who come through the church doors. Nevertheless, the cultivation of Christian brotherly love between the members is an important concern for parishes.

Because these bonds help underpin the basic unity of the parish, the development of fellowship-oriented programming can be said to have a spiritual component. Let us not forget that Jesus performed His first miracle at a social function, a wedding banquet (see John 2). Again, what is important is that the social activities do not take precedence over the religious life of the community. Rather, social events whose essence is spiritual provide the means for people to create

"A number of factors must be in place to create an atmosphere that draws newcomers to form a deeper commitment to the parish community."

and strengthen the ties that bind them and to do their part and by doing this, to find a comfortable, integral and valued place for themselves in parish life.

When planning social events, parish leadership should always consult to Church calendar first to determine dates and times for events. For example, having a pig roast between August 14 and 27 is out of the question, as this is the time of the Dormition Fast; the parish can either postpone the event to after August 27, or, if time does not permit, then they could have a fish fry instead. The same principle holds true for feast days. Scheduling social events on Sunday mornings is obviously not possible. The same should be true for the mornings of holy days when Liturgies are (or at least should be) celebrated in the parish. Again, if it is hard to find any other day but a feast day, then begin the event with the service (on the eve of a feast have Vespers first, and on the morning have an early Divine Liturgy), and then begin the social event. We can apply these same guidelines to fundraising events.

Humanitarian Work

A third type of programming that is very important for the parish involve initiatives that offer humanitarian aide to the wider community. By "wider community", we should include the community in which the church is located, the province and nation, and the world (for faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, this third category will naturally involve outreach to Ukraine, as well as other countries). Such programming includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- food banks, youth shelters, domestic violence awareness groups, etc.
- programming through the OCMC (Orthodox Christian Missions Centre)
- initiatives sponsored by IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities)

Where parishes do not have the means or resources to run a regular humanitarian programming themselves, the parish can organise teams to work in community programs, or donate to, or raise money for, particular ones in the neighbourhood.

"Parish programming is important because the 'true beliefs' of the community are found in the type of programming that it offers. "

"To large large extent, making our parishes inviting involves creating conditions in our communities in which people will have a meaningful experience of Orthodoxy."

Taking part in such activities not only helps the recipients but it also shows our people to be open-minded and generous in caring for the whole community in which they live. Our participation shows that we are ready and willing to live what we believe. Saying that we have faith in God and that we follow His ways is an empty statement if it is not backed up by concrete actions that embody this faith. In the epistle of St. James, we read the following about faith in action:

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead (James 2:14-17).

This aspect of Church life is of particular importance for young adults. Younger generations have grown up in a world that teaches them that Christianity has no substance, that it is just empty words. Likewise, they live in a world with very strong awareness of social, interpersonal, and environmental needs. If the Church does not address these issues, then the words of our critics are given credence in the eyes of our youth and young adults. To keep these people in the Church, we must invest time, energy and material resources into such philanthropic activities.

To a large extent, making our parishes inviting involves creating conditions in our communities in which people will have a meaningful experience of Orthodoxy. Christ's Way is centred in the faithful gathered together "in one place", professing the same faith, and journeying together towards the blessed Kingdom of God. The Eucharistic community – the parish – is where Orthodoxy is ultimately learned and lived, and where it is fully experienced and celebrated.

Chapter 7

How to Welcome Visitors*

More often than we would like to think, people speak about visiting an Orthodox parish and feeling like they were invisible. People say the same things, again and again: "No one said 'Hello.' No one even acknowledged that I was there!" Young families with small children can experience even more uncomfortable situations when met with stern glances if their child(ren) begin acting up. People who have such experiences will leave at the end of the service and not come back.

If there is one area of parish life to which we must devote a great deal of attention, it is the art of welcoming visitors. In life, first impressions are very important. There is nothing more important for attracting new members than to ensure that visitors receive a good impression of their first visit.

"If there is one area of parish life to which we must devote a great deal of attention, it is the art of welcoming visitors. "

The Role of Parish Clergy

Studies in parish growth have shown that most new members to parishes have come to the community as a result of being invited by a family member or friend. This tells us that the general membership of the parish plays a vital role in getting newcomers **to** church. When they are **in** church, however, the parish clergy play a critical part in making people feel welcome.

As mentioned earlier in this Guide, one important part the parish clergy play in creating an inviting atmosphere is to make sure that the services are spiritually edifying and to present messages that the people can "take home" with them. Parish priests must also maintain an attitude of approachability. People need to feel comfortable in approaching the priest with questions, comments or just to say hello. This does not mean that the priest must be overly outgoing or put on airs. He must, simply, be himself and treat visitors to the parish as he would treat friends visiting his home.

This chapter is based on information found in "The Resource Book for Orthodox Evangelism", by the Very Rev. Fr. Constantine Nassr, Theosis Publishing Company, Oklahoma City, OK, pp. 17, 18.

The Importance of a "Formal" Welcome

At the end of the service, during announcements, the priest should welcome all of the guests who have joined the congregation for worship. If someone in the congregation knows of a specific guest at church that day, it is a good idea to send a note with the visitors' names up to the priest; this way, the priest can welcome these guests publicly by name. If there is a "coffee hour" after the service, the priest should invite all the guests to stay for the fellowship time.

Some parishes take the welcome one step further by having special new member appreciation Sundays periodically throughout the year. At a special luncheon after Sunday Liturgy, new members are formally welcomed to the parish by the priest and parish executive president, and are given a small gift (usually an icon) as a token of appreciation for the new members choosing to become part of the parish family.

Take Advantage of "Invitation Opportunities"

Give people who call the parish or stop by the church a warm welcome. Make sure the contact person takes down their names, addresses and telephone numbers. Offer visitors to the church a short tour, and a brief outline of service schedules and parish events. Give the visitor one or two brochures about the parish and/or about Orthodoxy in general. When such inquiries happen during the week, the contact person can also invite the visitor to Liturgy on the following Sunday.

Use Ushers During Services

Ushers are parish ambassadors; they provide the "first impressions" of the worshipping community. Being greeted by a warm, cheerful, hospitable person has a great, positive effect on visitors to a parish (and on "regulars" as well!).

When greeting newcomers, welcome them to the parish, have them sign the guest book, and give them a copy of the prayer book, the parish bulletin and/or newsletter and any other available handouts or leaflets. Ushers could also make a list of visitors and pass it on to the parish priest so that he can welcome these people at the end of the service. If there is anything special going on at the service that day (for example the blessing of willows on Palm Sunday, or a visit from the bishop on "*khram*"), the ushers can also let the

"There is nothing more important for attracting new members than to ensure that visitors receive a good impression of their first visit."

visitor know about this so that they know what to expect.

Help Visitors Follow the Service: An usher's work does not end after greeting the visitor. Ushers should position themselves close enough to visitors so that they can help them follow along in the prayer book. It is hard enough being new to a parish community, without also having to deal with the frustration of not knowing where you are in the service. If the newcomer looks lost (flipping pages, etc.), the usher can help them find their place in the service. This is particularly important if there is a change in the service that day that is not apparent in the prayer book (for example, on a feast day of our Lord when the three antiphons are different than the regular ones).

What to Do after the Service

Coffee Hours are an invaluable tool in parish missionary work. If your parish does not have a coffee hour, consider initiating one. It does not have to be anything fancy — simply coffee/tea, juice and a light snack will suffice. What is most important is that the congregation has the opportunity for further fellowship after the service.

Immediately after the services ends and announcements are finished, ushers should invite newcomers to Coffee Hour. At Coffee Hour, ushers can begin a conversation with the visitor using the "Three Things to Ask Visitors" at the end of this chapter.

"All of us know what it feels like to go into something as a newcomer. When someone new comes into your parish, it is good to think back and ask, 'What did I need then?'"

Remember to Follow up with Newcomers

Follow-up is vital in making sure a visitor will return. Before visitors leave, make sure you have their names and addresses. As they are leaving, let them know how happy you are that they joined you in worship, and let them know they are welcomed back any time. Later that week, send them a card thanking them for coming and again letting them know they are welcomed to come back.

People that express an interest in the parish can be followed-up with a phone call or personal visitation, as well as with a card. This call/visit could come from the parish priest or from an "Outreach Team" of lay volunteers.

No one wants to feel unwelcome or invisible in a new situation. The best way to remember how to treat newcomers to your parish is to put yourself in their shoes. All of us know what it feels like to go into something as a new-

comer — the concerns, and misgivings. When someone new comes into your parish, it is good to think back to a time that we were new in some situation and ask, "What did I need then?" Use this as your guide for approaching visitors to your congregation. As old biblical adage says: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Three Things to Ask Visitors

Here are three questions that anyone can ask a newcomer at the end of a service. They are very general questions and fit almost any situation:

- 1. "Did you enjoy the service?":** On their very first visit to an Orthodox service, most newcomers have either a "love" or "hate" reaction. Some are so inspired by it that (like the emissaries of St. Volodymyr) they "know not whether they are in heaven or on earth". Others find it so foreign to anything they have seen before that they find the whole thing quite overwhelming. Whether the person say "Yes, I loved it!", or "No, not really," go on to number two.
- 2. "Do you have any questions?":** Don't be intimidated by this question. You might not know a great deal about the intricacies of our worship but, odds are, you still know more than your visitor. Whether you can or cannot answer the questions, go on to number three.
- 3. "Would you like to meet our priest.":** It is very important that the visitor have an opportunity to meet with the parish priest. Some parishes even have special a special table set up at coffee hour for the parish priest and any visitors that day. Any questions you cannot answer can be taken to father when you introduce him to the visitors.

Chapter 8

Organising Missions-Related Parish Events

In order for a parish to grow, it has to bring people in from outside its membership. While worship services are a natural thing to invite people to, they are not the only "point of entry" for someone into parish life. There are any number of parish activities that can be used as opportunities for welcoming visitors into the community. To attract a broad range of people, parish programming should be diversified as possible, offering varying topics, approaches and speakers.

In fact, all public events can have a missionary outreach component to them. At a bake sale, for example, people working as cashiers should have a handful of literature to place in each customer's bag (e.g., a listing of upcoming parish events and/or a small assortment of pamphlets on the parish, or the Faith in general).

"To attract a broad range of people, parish programming should be diversified as possible, offering varying topics, approaches, speakers."

Workshops, Retreats and Seminars

While every event can be an opportunity to witness the faith, special programming should also be organised several times a year with the specific intention of drawing in potential new members. Sessions should be held in a comfortable setting conducive to the nature and purpose of the gathering. Small groups might want to meet in a classroom or perhaps in participants' homes; larger groups would meet more suitably in the parish hall or even the church itself, depending on the topic and who is speaking.

The Program: The design of each program and/or event will depend on the time at your disposal and on what you wish to accomplish. Generally, there are three types of programs you can run:

(a.) Seminars: Seminars are the easiest type of missions/education programming to organise; they can run half a day, or an evening, or even over a meal. A seminar is a lecture-type session in which the speaker delivers a presentation and, at the end, there is time for discussion.

A seminar session should involve a presentation which is no

more than 40 to 45 minutes and a discussion period of about 10 to 15 minutes. If your program has more than one seminar, make sure you schedule a break (usually 15 minutes) between them.

A good duration for a seminar aimed at newcomers or potential members is a total of 90 minutes to two hours. Such an event should begin with a short welcome of about 5 minutes, followed by a member of the parish giving a 10-minute talk about why she or he is Orthodox; this is a "warm-up" that sets the stages for the main speaker. The main presentation should run about 40 to 45 minutes followed by about 15 to 20 minutes for questions and discussion. The remainder of the time is for fellowship.

(b.) Workshops: Like a seminar, workshops involve sessions with a presentation and a question-answer period. Additionally, worked into each session is time for people to do some type of "hands-on" activity. This might come in the form of breaking down into small groups each with its own task. For example, a workshop on the Divine Liturgy might have a session explaining the three antiphons with three working groups, each examining one antiphon. Participants would then come together to share their discoveries with the other participants.

Alternately, the hands-on portion of the session might involve an activity. In the same Divine Liturgy workshop, a discussion about prosphora (the bread used in the Divine Liturgy) might end with participants actually baking the bread.

Workshop sessions should involve a presentation of about 15 to 20 minutes, discussion time of 15 to 20 minutes, and "activity" time of 15 to 25 minutes. Depending on the topic of the session, you can have the general group discussion first and then the activity (as in the prosphora example above), or the activity followed by the group discussion (as in the antiphon example).

In addition to taking more time than a seminar, workshops also require more space since there has to be enough room for the activity portion of the session. The strength of a workshop is that the teaching is reinforced through the "hands-on" work which helps people retain what they have learned.

(c.) Retreats: Of the three types of programs, retreats require the most organisational effort. However, they also offer the greatest potential for spiritual edification. Retreats,

"All public events can have a missionary outreach component to them."

as the name suggests, offer participants an opportunity to step out of their normal, day-to-day routines for a period of more intensified focus on their spiritual life. While you can do a retreat at your parish, it is better to hold it in some other location removed from the regular sites and sounds of one's life. In Ukraine and the other Orthodox "old countries", the place to go for a retreat is a monastery; such is also the case here in North America where parishes are in close proximity to a monastic community. Holding a retreat at an Orthodox monastery would be the best choice for a location, if this is at all possible regarding availability and logistics. Without a monastic community of our own, then a camp, one of our Ukrainian Orthodox residences (if it is not during the school year), or a local retreat centre are also alternatives.

Retreats can offer sessions of both the seminar and workshop variety. In addition to these sessions, two things make the retreat experience completely different from seminars and workshops. First is increased participation in the liturgical life of the Church. Whereas a seminar or workshop might begin and/or end with worship, liturgy is an integral part of a retreat and is woven throughout the program, between sessions and meals. For example, the liturgical schedule for a weekend retreat might include the following:

Friday Evening

- Vespers or Moleben' (to open retreat)
- Evening Session(s)
- Compline or Evening Prayers

Saturday

- Matins or Morning Prayers
- Breakfast
- Morning Session(s)
- Sixth Hour
- Lunch
- Afternoon Session(s)
- Supper
- Vespers
- Evening Session(s)
- Compline with Communion Prayers

Sunday

- Matins (if no Vigil served Sat.), 3rd & 6th Hours
Divine Liturgy
- Brunch & Wrap-up

The other unique feature built into the program of a retreat is the "quiet time" for personal reflection. As impor-

"Special programming should be organised several times a year with the specific intention of drawing in potential new members."

tant as what is said to them is offering participants an opportunity for saying nothing, allowing them to reflect quietly on what they are learning, and letting the Holy Spirit stir their hearts in this prayerful atmosphere.

Out-of-Parish Speakers

All three types of events mentioned above can be presented by local people — the parish priest, someone else in the parish, or clergy and/or laity from a neighbouring parish. From time to time, however, it is also beneficial - though more costly - to bring in someone from out of town. There is an old saying that the term "expert" actually means "out-of-towner". A similar saying tells us that a person's "expertise" increases in relation to the distance they are from their home town. Although these two statements are made in jest, they bear much truth. In the Gospels, Jesus Himself points out that "a prophet is not without honour, except in his own country." (see Matthew 13:57) More than once, parish priests have said to visiting speakers, "I've told my parishioners exactly the same thing you just said, but from you, they're more willing to listen."

When exploring the possibility of booking an out-of-town speaker, it is important to make arrangements well in advance of the date you want to hold your event. Speakers should be booked at least three months in advance — six months is even better "lead time". If the parish wishes to book a speaker who is not part of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, it is necessary to receive the blessing of your bishop before making any arrangements.

As far as budgetary concerns go, the parish should be ready to cover the speaker's travel expenses, accommodations and provide him/her with some kind of monetary remuneration. The matter of honoraria should be discussed with the speaker in advance. If the person is coming on his/her own time, it will be appropriate to give him/her an honorarium; if the speaker is coming representing a specific organisation, it might be appropriate to present him/her with an honorarium and/or a donation for that organisation. Even local speakers who are not part of the parish "staff" (whether paid or volunteers) should be given an honorarium/donation for their time.

"A seminar is a lecture-type session with a presentation and discussion. Workshops involve presentations with a question-answer period, along with some type of 'hands-on' activity. Retreats can offer sessions of both the seminar and workshop variety; also there is an increased participation in the worship and programmed 'quiet time' for personal reflection."

Sunday Education

Because most seekers will come first to a service, some parishes capitalise on their Sunday time by holding adult religious education classes before or after the Divine Liturgy. These classes could be held as formal lectures, short presentations, or informal question and answer sessions. The above course outline could be used as a program of studies for Sunday morning teachings.

This type of programming is good not only for newcomers and seekers. Many parish members are also interested in learning about the Faith but have very little time during the week to attend classes or Bible studies. It makes sense, in this situation, to use the time when they are at church (Sundays) for this kind of educational work.

"Many people are searching for an expression of faith that they have not found in the 'mainstream' religious communities of North America."

Inquirers' Classes

Parishes that find they have regular "seekers" coming to their church asking questions about the Orthodox Faith might want to organise a series of "Inquirers' Classes". These classes are designed as surveys of Orthodox Christian life and belief. Here is a sample outline of an Inquirers' Course:

1. Our human journey: our creation in the image and likeness of God; our goal of "theosis"/deification – growth in God's likeness.
2. The problem of sin: the Ancestral Sin; death as a result of sin; sin's effect on our spiritual ("noetic") health; temptation and the passions.
3. Christ as the healer of sin and death: incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection; ascension; descent of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Church as Christ's "agent" for healing: Liturgical Life; the ascetic struggle (fasting, almsgiving, stewardship)
5. Eschatology: The Last Things - Death and Judgement, The End of This Age, Heaven and Hell

If held biweekly over the course of two months, the course presents to the "seeker" an overview of the key elements of Orthodox Christian faith and life.

A follow-up series for those interested in further learning can involve a wider survey of beliefs and practices such as the following:

1. An Overview of Church History: The Early Church (1st to 3rd Centuries); The Byzantine Church (4th to 15th Centuries); Slavic Orthodoxy (9th century to today); the Church in North America (18th century to today)
2. Orthodoxy and the Bible: the Bible's Origins, and the Church's Approach to Scriptural Interpretation; Scripture and Tradition
3. Orthodox Worship: Why We Worship the Way We Do; the Sacraments; the Daily Cycle of Services; Services of Need (*Treby*)
4. The Seven Ecumenical Councils: Doctrinal Statements and Canon Law
5. Orthodox Iconography and Church Architecture
6. The Role of the Saints in Orthodox Spirituality

"It has been said that Orthodoxy is North America's best kept secret. The types of programming outlined in this chapter are designed to 'let the cat out of the bag'."

Because newcomers will come through your parish's door at different times of the year, it is a good idea to schedule Inquirers' Course throughout the year. Parishes with a smaller number of seekers can run this programming as a series of home visits rather than a formal course. Alternatively, when working with only a handful of people, the parish priest or lay teachers can set up a series of meetings with a family and go to them with the same learning material.

General Tips

Advertising*: As much as possible, both special events and regular parish activities should be advertised in the local newspaper, radio and TV if possible. Advertising should be kept as simple as possible: short, clear, and to the point; make sure you cover **what** the topic is, **who** is speaking, **when** and **where** it is taking place. If there is a registration fee, this should be advertised. But keep in mind that with

educational programming, it is best to offer as much free of charge as possible; rather than set a fee, an acceptable alternative is to ask for a free-will offering. Advertising should also offer a contact name and/or number.

Be "Resource-ready": It is very important that visitors have access to free information about the Orthodox Church. Also, make sure that the main presenter has handouts to give to the people. This gives them something to reflect on later.

In addition to free material, you can also set up a table of kiosk of literature, icons, crosses, and tapes for sale; this is particularly important if you live in an area that is not close to an Orthodox book store — your parish is then the source, in your community, for information about Orthodox Christianity.

Be Visitor-friendly*: First impressions are important. When you have advertised an educational/outreach event, or personally invited people to attend, it is important that the first thing they experience when walking through the door is a warm and sincere welcome. It cannot be said often enough — first impressions are vital. Making sure your visitors have a positive memory of the first time they came to your parish will ensure that they will come back again... and they'll bring others too!

Record Presentations: Any time a special educational event is held in the parish, it should be recorded either on audio tape, video tape or both. These tapes can be kept in the parish library, or given out, or sold to interested individuals. Before taping, however, make sure you have the speaker's permission to do so.

Many people are searching for an expression of faith that, so far, they have not yet found in the "mainstream" religious communities of North America. It has been said that Orthodoxy is North America's best kept secret. The types of programming outlined above are designed to "let the cat out of the bag". Orthodoxy offers a system of belief and a way of life that can feed people's deepest need for spiritual sustenance. This is a message that is good for all to hear,

"Orthodoxy offers a system of belief and a way of life that can feed people's deepest need for spiritual sustenance."

including long-time parish members – familiarity can sometime lead us to taking our great spiritual treasures for granted. For seekers and new members, this programming can be a "first course" in the abundant spiritual banquet that is our Holy Orthodox Faith.

Chapter 9

Parish-based Small Groups

A. General Principles of Small Groups in Parishes

Since the earliest days of Christianity the small group has been a staple of Church life. The very earliest Christian churches were very small groups of people. When St. Paul writes to the "Church" in Corinth, Philippi, etc., he is writing to a group of 30, 40 or perhaps 50 people. In areas of religious persecution, it has been the small group that has kept, and continues to keep, the Church alive.

Small parishes are essentially one "big" small group. In large parishes, it is small groups that maintain a sense of intimacy/family. In parish growth small-group work is vital because as the parish grows, it is these groups which maintain a sense of closeness among members. The secret of those thriving Evangelical Protestant "mega-parishes" that we see popping up in suburban communities throughout the nation is that they minister to their members through small groups focussed on every possible need/demographic group in the community. The larger the parish, the more important small-group work is.

Successful parish growth depends on small group work. It is possible to have many different kinds of groups in a parish, each with its own purpose, constituency and structure. In general, though, we can speak of four basic types of small groups:

Service Groups: "Service Groups" are also known as "Task Groups" or "Action Groups". These groups gather for a specific purpose/ministry in parish life. Some examples of service/action groups are:

- Lay pastoral visitation volunteers
- Parish Ladies' / Men's Association
- Parish Choir

"Since the earliest days of Christianity the small group has been a staple of Church life."

"In parish growth small-group work is vital because as the parish grows, it is these groups which maintain a sense of closeness among the members."

Study Groups: The "Study Group" meets to learn more about the Church's beliefs and practices, or about the social/cultural context in which the faith is expressed. Among study groups a parish can have the following:

- Church School
- Inquirers' Class
- Bible Studies

Supportive Groups: Also called "Inspirational Groups" these groups usually consist of people who are on a similar "journey", a similar stage in life, or who share similar experiences. Such a group is designed to help people find support, edification and/or guidance through their interaction with others in a common situation. Some examples of supportive groups are:

- Bereavement Group
- Young Mothers' Fellowship
- Teen-Parents Encounter

Growth Groups: A Growth Group is a combination of groups two and three. Growth Groups focus on members finding support from one another while on a journey of growth in faith and life. Growth groups include:

- Youth Group
- Marriage Preparation
- Adult children of ageing parents

Principles of Effective Parish Groups

Anyone who has done any kind of group work in a parish will know that such initiatives can go one of two ways. They either become sources of great inspiration and fellowship, or they slowly dwindle to a small handful of disappointed people wondering where everyone went. In order to help a study group succeed, group leadership and organisers must keep in mind several important principles.

1. Prayer is a key factor: Jesus promises that where two or three gather in His Name, He will be present also. Gathering in the name of Jesus should begin with prayer to Him, His Eternal Father, and His Life-Creating Spirit, asking that the Holy Trinity bless, guide and enlighten all who take part in the group.

Keeping spirituality a major component of group focus is important. Orthodoxy is not a religion of "theory" but of practice. We are on a spiritual journey seeking that Christ would nurture in us an Orthodox heart which serves as the filter and guide through which all our experiences, attitudes and behaviour pass. Thus, all parish group efforts must be done in a prayerful fashion, always open to the guidance, inspiration and challenges that the Holy Spirit gives us in our lives, that we can grow day by day into the fullness of our humanity as God created it.

2. The Group must respond to people's identified needs: The key in this principle is the word "identified". Parish leadership might feel that their members have one type of need; however, if the membership do not also feel that this is a need, they will not respond to initiatives aimed at meeting this need.

People will get involved with a group if they feel it will in some way help them in their personal lives. If people do not feel that a group is going to be of any personal benefit, they will not take part. Therefore, the goals of the group must be stated in such a way that people will feel that it is meeting their identified needs. This means that a group must be "packaged" in such a way that people will feel that there is something in it for them.

A priest, for example, might feel that his parishioners need to develop more of a Eucharistic consciousness, taking part more frequently in Holy Communion. If, in the first place, the membership of the congregation does not understand the importance of the Eucharist in Church life, they will not necessarily commit to a study group that deals with Eucharistic renewal. On the other hand, most of our faithful do feel they would like to understand the Divine Liturgy better. The parish could offer a study group to examine the meaning of the Liturgy, and could use this as the context for

"The secret of those thriving Evangelical Protestant 'mega-parishes' is that they minister to their members through small groups focussed on every possible need and/or demographic group in the community."

a discussion on the importance of the Eucharist — since the Eucharist is the central event of the Divine Liturgy. The point is not deception; rather it is to use people perceived needs as a starting point or a "spring board" for a wider range of reflection and growth.

3. Selected group participants are invited personally by priest/lay leader: A parish group should not be elitist or exclusive. The purpose for inviting some participants is to develop a core of committed people. The parish priest and/or lay leadership of a community will know what the interests and concerns are of the various members of the parish. This knowledge provides a base of identified needs that can be translated into study group activity. Knowing that there are people in the parish with a particular interest means there is a better guarantee that the group will "get off the ground". This core does not have to involve a great number of people, perhaps only four or five; however, once it is in place, it will help to ensure that others who visit will see something they feel is worth the investment of time.

4. The group's size enables communication among participants: The group's size must be such that it allows frequent participation and face-to-face communication among participants. If a group is too big, there will not be the level of solidarity needed for such groups to successfully complete their mandate. A good group consists of around nine to twelve people. A maximum number would be around 20, in which case, time should be worked into the program for small group, break-out sessions in addition to plenary sessions. If more than 20 participants regularly show up, it is time to break the group into two smaller sessions.

5. At the first session, the leader outlines topics and process and asks participants what they expect: As the advertisement says, "There's nothing like clarity." People will be more willing to invest themselves in a group if they have group goals, schedules, and expectation laid out right from the beginning. This would also be the time to go over "ground rules" for group participation.

"The larger the parish, the more important small-group work is. Successful parish growth depends on small group

Another important thing to do early on is get from par-

ticipants what they expect from the group. Here we come to the idea of meeting people's identified needs. Group leadership should be flexible enough in their programming to incorporate into the program suggestions or requests from group participants. This tells those taking part that their opinion and interests are valid and valued, which, in turn, encourages personal investment and input into group activities.

6. Timelines such as start and finishing time, and duration should be clearly articulated and followed:

This is another clarity issue. People live busy lives and generally tend to shy away from open-ended commitments. Make sure timelines are clearly outlined.

When planning sessions, keeping a shorter timeline will attract more people than something that is drawn out over many months. For example, we can take advantage of the seasons of the Church year as good time for which to plan a study group e.g. over the weeks of Great Lent or Advent.

If you want to organise a longer program, break it down into small units; for example, a year-long Bible study of the Gospels can be divided into four units each covering one of the Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Such an approach keeps tasks and/or information in "packages" that are easier for people to manage in their schedules, and also allows people who come into the group mid-way through not to have to wait too long before they start up a new topic with the rest of the group.

Another issue in time-management is making sure group sessions start and finish at the times you advertise or announce. Punctuality will help to keep people committed. While you might start late or go overtime every now and then, having consistently irregular start and finish times will only frustrate and discourage people.

7. Supply participants with handouts and/or other resource material:

Participants should be given enough primary and supplementary resources for each member to have on-hand. These handouts can include an outline of group goals, important dates or topics to be discussed at sessions. Outlines give people something to work with in the

"A parish-based small group gathers not simply to share their personal opinions/agenda, but primarily to serve and follow Christ through His Holy Church. Always, the Church's Scriptures and Sacred Tradition must be our guide in group activities."

"It is of utmost importance that the parish priest play a part in the group. The selection of study material as well as the selection and training of leaders must be done under the direct supervision and with the blessing of the parish priest."

session, and further reading allows them to "take the group mandate home" and consider it further later on.

One thing study group leaders have to be careful of is not to "over-resource" participants. If they get too much material they might feel overwhelmed by the process and might be discouraged from further participation in the group. Also, too much information runs the risk of not allowing participants fully to invest their personal talents or interests into the group.

Another important point for study groups is that participants should be encouraged to take notes during sessions. Getting things on paper helps people to remember what was discussed, and can be valuable for personal reflection at another time. It is also good to encourage people to write down their questions; all too often a person can have a good and important question that gets forgotten while waiting for an opportunity to bring it up. This is a loss to the person and to the rest of the participants who may have benefited from it.

8. Group leaders nurture atmosphere of Christian fellowship: Group leaders must function in a manner that engenders group cohesion, communication — generally speaking an atmosphere of Christian fellowship. First of all, this means that the leader does not "play favourites" with the groups members. They must ensure everyone has an opportunity to share, and feels welcome to do so. Leaders also must watch that no one is trying (whether consciously or not) to monopolise discussion or work through their own personal agenda on group time. On the other hand, no one should feel pressured to participate if they do not want to.

Group leaders must also not use the group for a personal "power trip". Just as they must watch out for other participants working out an agenda, leaders must also be able to differentiate between their own personal agenda and the group's actual mandate. A good way to check if you as a leader are monopolizing discussion is to measure how much you are talking in relation to other participants. Sometimes, even when you want to speak, it is important to hold your tongue and let the other person finish before offering a response.

Finally, while leaders need to stay in control of group dis-

cussion, they must not see themselves as "out of the loop" in the group's dynamics. Leaders can benefit from the learning and growth offered in the group as much as the participants can. As was mentioned in point number one, parish groups gather in the name of Christ, and where people are thus gathered, Christ is present as well. The Lord can use the group to minister to the leaders as much as He can to the participants.

Small group work is absolutely vital for growing parishes. The larger the parish gets, the more important such groups become. However, such work should never be done without guidance. A parish-based small group gathers not simply to share their personal opinions/agenda, but primarily to serve and follow Christ through His Holy Church. Always, the Church's Scriptures and Sacred Tradition must be our guide in group activities.

Similarly, it is of utmost importance that the parish priest play a part in the group. He does not necessarily have to be present at every group meeting. It is possible to have lay-people lead such groups. However, the selection of study material as well as the selection and training of leaders must be done under the direct supervision and with the blessing of the parish priest.

Sample Schedule for a Study Group Session

- Opening Prayer
- Greetings/Check-in
- Follow-up from last session.
- Leader works through study material...
 - Highlighting specific concepts [with note-taking], and
 - facilitating discussion
- Wrap-up comments/discussion
- Closing Prayer
- Fellowship time

Chapter 10

Outreach to Youth and Young Adults

At the regular Sobor of the UOCC that was held in 1970, a report was given by a special committee which studied the needs and concerns of our youth. Since that time, the theme of youth outreach has continued to be a major area of concern for our Church, its dioceses and parishes. Now, a generation later, the youth of the 1970's are parents and, in turn, are concerned with the youth of today — their own sons and daughters. Considering that we have continued this discussion for over thirty years, it would seem that we have not yet resolved the issue of how to best reach out to the younger members of our communities.

What follows is not “the” answer, but simply some ideas to keep in mind when developing parish programming for teenagers and young adults. If we can design this programming to meet them “where they are at”, then we can have a better chance of encouraging their continued involvement in our parishes and our Church as a whole. It is not suggested that we compromise the basic beliefs and practices of the faith. Orthodoxy must be accepted by any given generation for what it is, not for what an individual or a small group of people feels it “should be”. Our task is to offer our young people the Orthodox Faith, unadulterated, in a way that will speak to them as relevant and meaningful.

“At the 1970 Sobor of the UOCC, a report was given by a special committee which studied the needs and concerns of our youth. Now, a generation later, the youth of the 1970's are concerned with the youth of today — their own sons and daughters.”

Teenagers (age 13 to 17)

The teen years are ones both of great joy and great struggle. With a newly budding sense of self-identity and independence, the teenager sees every new day as an adventure of learning and self-discovery. At the same time, as that new identity is still forming, youth sit in an intermediary place between “the child I no longer am” and “the adult I have yet to become”. This place can be subject to intense self-criticism, peer pressure and identity confusion. It is necessary to approach adolescents with a balance of the love

one has for a child but also with the respect one has for an adult.

One of the greatest challenges in working with teenagers is that the further they move into this phase of life, the less influential become the opinions and ideas of their parents and other adult role models. The opinions of the peer group becomes the measure by which everything from clothing to worldview is measured. Today, teens can have more than one such peer group; they have friends that they spend time with at school, fellow members of sporting teams, choirs and/or other involvement in the wider community. Likewise, it is very important that Ukrainian Orthodox teenagers have a peer group within their own Faith with whom they can discuss matters of life, faith, morality and other "big questions" with which they wrestle at this age. Every parish with teenagers should have some kind of youth programming in place.

Youth activities should take several things into account:

1.) Children of this age have a good understanding of the issues and concerns that they face in the world.

Such issues must be addressed in a forthright, open and honest way. Our Church does have answers and responses to the challenges that they face. Therefore, teens must be taught the teachings and perspectives of our Church regarding the various issues and challenges that they face, both contemporary and otherwise, in a way that is uncompromising but compassionate and open. This helps them make sense of their world from the perspective of their Faith.

Teens should feel they have the space to ask questions, and even challenge certain points. Discussions should be based on the ground rule that every person has the right to say what is on their mind and that all things – with the exception of harmful or hurtful comments - will be received openly. Youth workers should not be surprised when teens try and catch them off guard with very direct and/or unnerving questions or comments. They do this to see how far an adult is really willing to go with them. "Playing it cool" when such situations come up will take a youth worker much further with a group of teens than getting flustered or upset.

2.) Youth work should involve several areas thereby helping to form a well-rounded person.

First is Christian formation. Learning about our Orthodox Faith and life must be the number one priority. This learning should take into

"The greatest spiritual need of youth and young adults is to be able to connect to the Faith, first, in a way that teaches them about the glorious legacy of which they are a part, and second, in a way that connects their beliefs with the experiences of their life today."

account the Ukrainian cultural context in which we celebrate our faith. The goal in this learning is not simply a “book knowledge” of the Faith but the integration of the Faith into their worldview and daily life.

Second is community involvement. Youth need to be involved in activities of both in the parish and the wider community. This helps them develop a sense of ownership, or better yet, stewardship over their community. Such involvement should incorporate leadership opportunities for youth whenever, and to whatever extent, possible.

Third, youth should have creative, physical and social activities. Teens have a lot of energy and need to burn it off in creative, safe and positive ways. Likewise, their socialization is aided by offering them opportunities to mix and interact with others, both with their peers and with those younger and older than they.

3.) Teenagers are very interested in learning about their faith but they prefer a less formal setting. Lecture-type programming should be kept to a minimum. The preferred way of doing educational work with teens is in a group setting, perhaps in someone’s family room, or a youth “club house” at the parish. Lessons should offer lots of opportunity for group discussion and sharing. Also, “hands-on” activities and “object lessons” help to keep the teens involved.

“In order to introduce our youth and young adults to a vibrant and relevant Orthodoxy, we must make the commitment to reassess what it is we are handing down.”

Ages 18-25 – “College & Career”

Young adults’ passage out of adolescence usually coincides with their graduation from high school and their moving on to post-secondary training or into the work force. Often this group of young adults is called the “College and Career” group. By this time, the individuals have become much more comfortable with their identity and independence. At the same time, a whole new world is opening before them. As they discover this world, they encounter many new ideals and schools of thought: sociological, political, philosophical and spiritual.

When working with these people, be prepared for much discussion and debate. As with teens, their questions and thoughts must be received objectively, using them as opportunities for continued dialogue and learning.

"The jewels of our Sacred Tradition and Ukrainian Orthodox heritage must be kept – or, in some cases, unearthed once again. The stones of institutionalized bad habits – must be discarded."

Young adults of this age have not lost interest in matters of faith but they do possess a desire to look around and "check out" other perspectives. In this way, they become "wanderers". They look into different parishes, Churches, religious communities, faith traditions and philosophical movements, seeking to integrate new learning and experiences social, spiritual or academic with established worldview and belief system.

How far such people wander from their "home church", and how strongly they still identify with it (in other words, how likely they are to come back) relates largely to their impressions of Church in their preadolescence (10, 11, 12). This is likely the last time for a very long time that the "voice" of their parents and other adult authority figures has some weight. If they enter their early teens with the impression that the Church cares for them, welcomes them and has something of value to share with them, then they will always keep their faith and their parish community as a frame of reference for their "exploring".

Often, such youth will intentionally leave the parish that they grew up in. Sometimes, they go in search of what else is out there. Other times, they have no choice as school or work takes them to another community. It is quite likely that the "College and Career" men and women you will see in your church grew up in another parish. Likewise, another parish will see the young adults who grew up in your parish. Therefore, it becomes very necessary that "home parishes" are able to track their young adults, especially if they have moved to another community to work or study. In these cases, the young person should be given the name of the local parish and priest, and the parish priest should be informed that the young person has moved into his community so that he can get in touch. At the same time, the home parish should not cut the young adult loose; it can be very edifying for such an individual to know that he or she still has a place in the parish in which she or he grew up.

Working with "College and Career" adults requires balance. They must be given enough space to wander around but not so much space that they feel ignored. These people do not want to feel "hounded". However, leaving them completely alone "until they come back when they are ready" might backfire if, in the meantime, they attach themselves to another spiritual home.

Like teenagers, "College and Career" adults prefer more

informal approaches to education. Some parishes offer a “coffee house” setting for their “College and Career” ministry. Every week or two, the parish has an evening when young adults can come by, have a cup of coffee and take part in a discussion about the faith; sometimes these discussions are planned and at other times, the participants’ questions set the agenda for the evening.

A particularly important issue for this group of young adults is that of social concerns. When starting a “College and Career” group in a parish, organisers should make sure that the group’s activities involve some kind of social outreach/ministry. Such activities show the young adult that the parish community is serious about practicing what it preaches. These people want to see a faith which is lived out in concrete ways, not simply talked about in theory.

25 – 30: “Seekers”

As men and women pass into their late twenties, a new phase of life begins to open up for them. Men and women of this age find their lives settling down. Now, their searching becomes more intentional. Rather than just “wandering around” looking at what is out there, they become “seekers”, deliberately in search of their specific place in life. Such seeking affects every aspect of their life: work, home, relationships, social circles and spirituality.

Yet, you may not see “Seekers” regularly in your church. Such people do still move from parish to parish. However, they now come not just “to check things out” but to look for a place that they can call home. They will make their decision based on whether or not they can “connect” with a given parish. The parish has to offer worship, programming and fellowship opportunities that the person feels that s/he can be a part of.

Much of what can be said about ministering to this age group can be found in chapters four and five of this Guide. Nevertheless, a couple of points can be made specifically for these people right here. In doing outreach with “Seekers” in their late twenties, a parish can use more formal approaches. Parishes will find success with discussion groups, “Introduction to Orthodoxy” classes, Bible studies, etc. These people are also ready to use take-home resources such as literature, tapes and videos. Also, parishes that have

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web sites will find that they will have a very successful internet ministry with "Seekers"; try offering on-line discussion groups and faith studies.

Another important factor in parish life for this group is to provide opportunities for fellowship. "Seekers" are looking for a place where they are able to make connections with other people their own age. A parish should do everything possible to keep people of this age that are already attending, and to make sure newcomers have good opportunities to meet their peers who are already involved in the parish.

30-35: "Homesteaders"

By their early to mid-thirties, most people are settling into their lives and careers, and are in the process of establishing a "home" for themselves. This home extends beyond their residence and encompasses their community, social circles, and the place where they will go to church. This, then, is a time when people will begin to actively look for a specific parish to be involved in.

As with people in their late twenties, "thirtysomething" men and women will come to classes, discussion groups and other more formal programming. People who are parents of small children will very intentionally look for a parish where their children are going to be welcomed, where they will receive good spiritual formation and where they will be able to interact with other children of their own age. Often, a child's comfort in a parish will be one of the main factors for the parents' decision to stay in or leave a parish community; in fact, it is not uncommon at this age, to find that it is the children who are "bringing" the parents to church.

In some cases, people this age find themselves returning to the Faith of their childhood after being away for many years - perhaps ever since their early teens. Often, they are brought back by some significant event in their lives which challenges them to consider (or reconsider) their core beliefs. Some come back after a divorce or the death of a loved-one, while others are challenged by the questions posed by their young children. These are only three of the many possible motives. As such people come back, it is important not only to welcome them warmly but also to be sensitive to the fact that they may be returning with some apprehension. Perhaps they left under unpleasant circum-

"When I ask people in our Church, 'Who taught you the most about faith?' they often reply, 'Baba' Baba didn't have a degree in theology; Baba did not attend seminars on youth ministry; Baba probably never heard of developmental psychology. The reason why Baba was so influential was because she showed us how to live the Faith."

stances. Or, perhaps after a very lengthy absence, they are not sure how they, and now also their family, will be received.

Concluding Thoughts

The greatest spiritual need of youth and young adults is to be able to connect to the Faith in two ways. First, in a way that teaches them about the glorious legacy of which they are a part. Second, in a way that connects their beliefs with the experiences of their life in this society, while at the same time challenging them to strive for the glory for which God created them. In the past, we invested much time and many resources into teaching the youth about their cultural origins. Our current challenge is to show them Orthodoxy's connection with the world in which they live today.

In order to introduce our youth and young adults to a vibrant and relevant Orthodoxy, we must make the commitment to reassess what it is we are handing down. The jewels of our Sacred Tradition and Ukrainian Orthodox heritage must be kept – or, in some cases, unearthed once again. On the other hand, the stones of convention that merely weigh us down – institutionalized bad habits – must be discarded. We must take on the task of discernment in an informed and prayerful way, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, always remaining open to the Truth which He presents to us. This means accepting both the comforting and the challenging with equal gratitude and joy since both come from the Lord.

Finally, every one of us, whether directly interested in working with young people or not, whether trained in youth work or not, has one vital task in working with youth and young adults. Each of us must show our younger generations how the Holy Orthodox Faith, as expressed by the Ukrainian spiritual heritage, can be a source of fulfillment in their lives. This lesson is taught most effectively, not in a classroom or seminar but by the example of our own lives.

When I ask people in our Church, "Who taught you the most about faith?" they often reply, "Baba – my grandmother." Baba didn't have a degree in theology; Baba did not attend seminars on youth ministry; Baba probably never heard of developmental psychology. The reason why Baba was so influential was because she showed us how to live

"This is what each of us can offer our youth and young adults today – the model of a life filled with the radiance of God's presence every step of the journey."

the faith. This is what each of us can offer our youth and young adults today — the model of a life filled with the radiance of God's presence every step of the journey.

More Things to Consider When Working with Youth

- **Be sensitive to their doubts, fears, needs.**

It does not matter whether their concerns are real or imaginary — they are important to the person. By taking them seriously, we show that young person that s/he is respected.

- **Do not react with fear, revulsion or anger when they say something "off the wall " or outrageous.**

Many times when they do this they are testing to see if it is safe to be themselves around you or not.

- **Be sensitive also to the struggle to live in the reality of two cultures, Canadian and Ukrainian, — and perhaps three.**

Young people need to find a balance and a synthesis of the values and worldviews of their heritage culture(s) and the culture of the land in which they live.

- **Seek out methods of teaching and formation that will be engaging for young people.**

Media today is so engaging (fast, loud, colorful), if we cannot be as engaging in our own way, they will be bored.

- **Incorporate units or programming that helps them develop a social consciousness and a sense of the Gospel of Love in action.**

For example, volunteering to serve food at a Soup Kitchen on Latin Good Friday.

- **Do not be afraid to share with them the boundaries of belief and practice.**

Never be afraid to share our Orthodox Christian parameters on behaviour and attitudes. How can a person make a moral decision without the proper tools?

- **There is no need to try to protect them from the challenges of the Faith.**

Young people are more resilient than we give them credit for being.

- **Encourage youth to take ownership of their Faith.**

Faith cannot simply be put on someone; it must grow from within them.

- **Teach them that, in their lives, Christ and His Church must come first and above all else.**

The youth must be shown how the Faith sanctifies, shapes and transforms our identity.

- **Embrace them for who they are, not for who they will be, or for what they can do for you.**

They are important because they are made in God's image and likeness. Membership in the Church is important for them because it is the path to eternal life.

Chapter 11

Conclusion

Keeping the Correct Perspective

In many of our parishes, one of the fundamental reasons why members want to see new people in their communities is to lighten their load. Desperate for help, for revitalisation and new vision, one can easily regard, and cling to, a new person as a life preserver. As valid as our feelings of over-work and our need for help might be, is this motivation faithful to the Gospel? Is this the reason that Jesus gave us to "Go and make disciples of all nations"? It is not. In the end, this attitude will only push people away and not bring them into our fold. Time and again, Jesus reminds us that being the Church, being His Body in the world is not about being served but about serving. When we see a new face in church, the first question in our minds should be, "How can we serve you?" and not, "How can you be of service to us?" The key is letting the newcomer feel attended-to, cared-for, but not "Shanghaied" into the community.

"In many of our parishes, one of the fundamental reasons why members want to see new people in their communities is to lighten their load. As valid as our feelings of over-work and our need for help might be, is this motivation faithful to the Gospel?"

New people need to have enough space to enter into the life of the Church at their own pace but, at the same time, not feel that they are doing so on their own. This is the "art" of ministering to newcomers: we must not be indifferent to them yet, at the same time, we must not overpower them either. During their first half a year, newcomers may come to church only once every eight weeks; then for another half a year, once every six weeks; and then, perhaps, once per month. Over the course of this time, we will also see them getting more and more involved in the social aspects of parish life.

Once we begin to see newcomers attending services and other parish events regularly and frequently (and we see that they are getting to know more people) it is time to approach them and invite them to help out in some aspect of church life: involvement in the ladies'/men's association, a special project, a "task group" (cleaning team, food bank delivery, youth group, etc.). This involvement shifts the way the newcomer looks at the parish — it is no longer the parish that I go to, but the parish that I am invested in (i.e. not

"the" parish, but "my" parish). At the end of 18 to 24 months, we have a person who is not just a satellite adherent of the parish, but a builder who has invested her/himself in the future of the community.

While this might seem to take a lot of time, we have to resist the urge to rush the process. In God's eyes, a thousand years is like but a day (Psalm 90:4). In a spiritual journey which stretches into eternity, taking a couple of dozen months to make sure a person is on the right track seems like a small investment of time to make.

Bringing Back Former Members

For many who read this Guide, parish growth will mean bringing back former members who have left the community. When Orthodox leave their Church, where do they go? On the rare occasion, they go to another Orthodox jurisdiction. More frequently, they have left for another Christian Church. Most of the time, however, they have gone nowhere in particular. The majority of people who leave our parishes are not at another Orthodox church on Sunday mornings, nor are they at Catholic or Protestant parishes. They are at home, or at the local family restaurant having brunch, or off some place else enjoying a bit of "R & R".

While this situation might not sound too promising, it actually has a "silver lining". Once a person has become involved in another parish community, they are less likely to come back. When a person finds a community that s/he feels is reaching out to them, and when they respond by investing themselves in that community, a very, very strong bond is created. Once a person finds a new parish home, it is unlikely - not impossible, but unlikely - that they will return to their old one. However, since most people do not go anywhere else when they leave, the former Ukrainian Orthodox parish is still an option. This is especially true for Canadians of Ukrainian Orthodox background who have come back specifically to our Church, with their desire to nurture their relationship with God. They do not want to go to the Catholics or the Protestants, nor do they want to go to some other Orthodox jurisdiction. They want to be Orthodox, and they want to express their Orthodoxy through their ancestral Ukrainian heritage.

We must be sensitive to those who are showing an inter-

"Being the Church is not about being served but about serving. When we see a new face in church, the first question in our minds should be, 'How can we serve you?' and not, 'How can you be of service to us?'"

est in coming back to the church. The process of returning to the Faith does not necessarily happen over night. Those who have been hurt in Ukrainian Orthodox settings in the past are going to need time to feel safe again. For those who have not been regular church attendees for years, it is going to take time to get into the habit that Sunday morning is worship time and not newspaper and coffee time. The key factor in drawing a person back into parish membership is giving them a sense of belonging: "You are welcome here"; "There is a place here for you and your family, with all of its needs and hopes and expectations." The person who feels that there is a place for them will feel drawn to the parish.

The "Cost" of Evangelism

It would be safe to say that the vast majority of members in our parishes want to see their communities grow. However, many people expect that new members will simply be carbon copies of existing members. We assume that newcomers who join our parishes will share the same vision, the same interests and the same needs as current parishioners. This, however, is not necessarily the case. More often than not, once newcomers have made the personal investment of themselves in the community, they are likely to voice ideas, observations and needs that are not the same as those of long-time members.

Parish growth has a clear "cost": change — change, not in the fundamental doctrines and acts of the Church, but rather in the means through which these beliefs and practices are lived and shared in any given Church, diocese or parish (teaching media, language, programming, etc.). This fact has been affirmed time and again throughout the history of the Church. In the book of Acts, we read about the first "change challenge" faced by the Church. The earliest disciples of Jesus were Jews; however, as the Church grew, an increasing number of Gentiles embraced the Faith. Rather than say, "We don't want those Gentiles in our Church because they're going to change everything," the disciples accepted them and the changes to their identity that came with these new people.

Some people do not want to see new people in their parish because they are afraid of the changes that newcomers will bring. Such people need to consider this: the one thing that is constant in life is change. It is true inviting new peo-

"New people need to have enough space to enter into the life of the Church at their own pace but, at the same time, not feel that they are doing so on their own."

ple into the community is to also invite change. However, not bringing new people in will also result in changes to the parish: attrition, stagnation and eventual closure when there are not enough people left to support the community. It is better to accept the inevitability (and necessity) of change and help to manage constructive changes, than it is to resist change and helplessly stand witness as loss and deterioration spin out of control.

Parishes that have accommodated newcomers by accepting necessary changes have – quite unexpectedly – discovered a pleasant surprise. When a congregation reaches out to the needs and ideas of newcomers, the newcomers respond by embracing and supporting the fundamental ideals and principles upon which the parish was founded. Our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that: "Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it." (Luke 9:24 — see also Luke 17:33, Matthew 10:39) Thus, communities seeking to preserve their "own ways" by becoming isolationistic die off, and those that are willing to make changes to their ways (i.e. those who are willing to "lose their life") for the sake of the Gospel find that their values are embraced by the newcomers and are not lost at all. In other words, the "cost" of parish growth — change — is actually an investment in the future of the community.

"Those who have been hurt in Ukrainian Orthodox settings in the past are going to need time to feel safe again. The key factor in drawing a person back into parish membership is giving them a sense of belong-

Attitude is Everything

It has been said that there are two kinds of mind-sets that appear in congregations: maintenance or growth. The maintenance mindset is characterised by statements like: "Everything is fine the way it is," "New people will only make things different," or "Things are fine for me, I don't see why we need to change anything." Like the human body, a parish cannot flourish if it becomes sedentary. The minute we say that everything is fine and we do not have to worry about growth any more, we have already begun the process of attrition that will eventually lead to closing the doors of the church for good. In the Church, mere maintenance is not possible. We are either moving closer to Christ or drifting away from Him.

A growth mindset in a parish celebrates both the Faith and the legacy of the early parish to the present, and seeks creative ways to share the Faith with others and to extend that parish's legacy well into the future. One major charac-

teristic of parishes embracing the growth mindset is the prevailing sense of joy in all of their activities. It is clear that the members truly believe in the Faith; they are not just going through the motions. They are truly excited about the spiritual journey that they are on. They are firmly convinced that the "Pearl of Great Price" — the Orthodox Faith — is well worth sharing with others.

People in the growth mindset take immense pride in their community. . . and it shows! The church building and grounds are tidy. Liturgical articles, like the Gospel Book or vestments, are clean. Parish activities are well-organised and well-run, showing that they were not merely thrown together at the last minute, but that someone took the time and made the effort to ensure that everything was in place and running smoothly.

Also, parishes with the growth mindset take great care to insure that the needs of newcomers are considered. First and foremost, they make sure that every newcomer is given a warm greeting and knows that they are always welcome to take part in parish events. They make sure that their parishes are accessible and well signed so that newcomers can find what they need (wheelchair access to church, hall and other facilities; directions to washrooms, etc.; a baby diaper change station in at least one washroom). They also have sufficient programming in place to give newcomers various "points of entry" into community life depending on the needs and character of the new, individual person/family.

Ultimately, the growth mindset is grounded in the realisation that there is only one good and true reason for desiring to bring new members into a parish — in the Holy Orthodox Church, and therefore in our parish, one finds peace, growth, healing and holiness. Having discovered this ourselves, it becomes natural to want to share the blessing with as many people as possible. Newcomers are welcomed not according to their potential to help out with events, but because every visitor gives the parish another opportunity to share the Faith. Echoing the words of the Holy Apostle Andrew to his brother St. Peter the Apostle, all parish initiatives must express the conviction that: "We have found the Messiah [the Christ]... Come and see."

Probably, this Guide offers a great deal to learn and apply; nevertheless, it all can be summed up in one idea. When a people come to a Christian Church, they must sense that the people there are acting like Christians. If a person

"There is only one good and true reason for desiring to bring new members into a parish — in the Holy Orthodox Church, and therefore in our parish, one finds peace, growth, healing and holiness."

does not see other people in that parish who are alive in Christ, if a person does not sense that the community, as a whole, is nurturing spiritual growth, then he or she will not come back. Attitude (mind-set) is everything. To see a positive and dynamic Christian spirit in a parish will draw people like a magnet. This has been the case in countless Orthodox parish throughout North America. . . it can be the case in yours, as well.

Appendix 1

Using English in Services*

Introductory Comments

Currently, the approved use of the English (or French) language in the Divine Liturgy includes the following: Epistle, Gospel, Sermon, Creed and Prayer Before Holy Communion. Any usage beyond this, in accordance with a resolution on liturgical language of the 1995 Sobor, must be presented to the Council of Bishops in writing for their blessing. This resolution recognises that some of our parishes do have a need to offer liturgical services in a bi-lingual fashion — in most cases, this means using English. The resolution also establishes a procedure for meeting this need while taking into account the necessity for all matters of spirituality (and worship is certainly one such matter) to be under the guidance of the hierarchy.

If a parish considers using English in their Divine Liturgies, two questions need to be addressed: 1.) How much English? and 2.) Where in the service? The following are three examples of how English can be used in the Divine Liturgy. Similar principles could be applied to other services such as Vespers and Matins, as well.

Example 1

English in the "Teaching Sections"

Although the whole Liturgy articulates the faith through prayer, hymns and actions, there are certain moments which stand out as clearly pedagogical. This first example places the English in these "teaching" sections, so that they can be most accessible to people of both language needs.

* The 1995 Sobor of our Church passed a resolution which states that any usage of a language other than Ukrainian in parish activities must be blessed by our Council of Bishops. Therefore, if a parish decides to use English in a service the parish Executive must send a request to our hierarchy in writing, outlining how and where they want to use English, and asking for their blessing.

- Third Antiphon/Beatitudes (choir sings verse in Ukrainian, cantor chants same verse in English — this hymn is taken from Jesus "Sermon on the Mount"; it explains what it means to be a member of God's Kingdom)
- Kondak (an ancient form of "teaching hymn")
- Epistle (bilingual)
- Gospel (bilingual)
- Sermon (as needed)
- Creed (bilingual)
- Lord's Prayer (bilingual)
- Prayer Before Holy Communion (as needed)
- The Post-Communion Hymn "We have seen the True Light..." — teaches the fruits of receiving Holy Communion.

Example 2

English "Woven" Throughout the Liturgy

Parishes that perceive a need for more exposure to English in their services while at the same time preserving the Ukrainian character of worship in our Church should consider "weaving" their English content throughout the services. This approach spreads both languages more evenly through the service. In the above example, most English parts belong to the choir/cantor. In examples two and three, some parts belong to the priest while others belong to the cantor or choir (and presumably the whole congregation). In the case of the litanies, it must be determined whether the people are going to respond only in Ukrainian, or in the same language as the priest (i.e., Ukrainian when he uses Ukrainian and English when he uses English).

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English Usage

- Great Litany
- Second Antiphon
- Third Antiphon/Beatitudes (choir sings verse in Ukrainian, cantor chants same verse in English)
- Troparia (especially the Kondak, which is didactic in its very nature)
- Thrice-Holy Hymn (alternating refrains in Ukrainian/English)
- Epistle (bilingual)
- Gospel (bilingual)
- Sermon (as needed)
- First Litany of the Faithful
- Commemorations of the Great Entrance (as needed)
- Litany of the Offering, starting at "That this whole day may be perfect, holy peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord"
- Creed (bilingual)
- Anaphora (the following priest's parts: "Let us stand well, let us stand in fear...(etc.)"; "Take, eat...(etc.)"; "Drink of this, all of you...(etc.)"; "Among the first, remember, O Lord...(etc.)"; "And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be with you all.")
- Litany of the Lord's Prayer up to, and including "Help us, save us...(etc.)"
- Lord's Prayer (bilingual)
- Prayer Before Holy Communion (as needed)
- "We have seen the True light"
- Litany of Thanksgiving
- Dismissal

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Example 3

English "Woven" Throughout the Liturgy in Two "Settings"

This third example is the same approach as example two, but uses two different layouts of English usage. If a parish were to adopt such an approach, it would mean that over the course of two Divine Liturgies, essentially everything in the service would have been done in Ukrainian and everything in English. This increases the people's exposure to both languages.

English Usage Setting "A"	English Usage Setting "B"
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Great Litany 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Antiphon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Second Antiphon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Small Litany before Second Antiphon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Small Litany before Third Antiphon 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Third Antiphon/ Beatitudes (choir sings verse in Ukrainian, cantor chants same verse in English) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Third Antiphon/ Beatitudes (choir sings verse in Ukrainian, cantor chants same verse in English)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tropar and <i>Bohorodychnyi</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Kondak
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thrice-Holy Hymn (Alternating Ukrainian/English) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thrice-Holy Hymn (Alternating Ukrainian/English)

* The 1995 Sobor of our Church passed a resolution which states that any usage of a language other than Ukrainian in parish activities must be blessed by our Council of Bishops.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Epistle (bilingual) ➤ Gospel (bilingual) ➤ Sermon (as needed) ➤ 1st Litany of the Faithful ➤ Commemorations of the Great Entrance (as needed) ➤ Litany of the Offering starting at "That this whole day may be perfect, holy peaceful and sinless, let us ask of the Lord" ➤ Creed (bilingual) ➤ Anaphora — the following priest's parts: "Let us stand well, let us stand in fear...(etc.)"; "Let us lift up our hearts."; "Singing the triumphant hymn...(etc.)" ; "Especially our most holy...(etc.)"; "And grant that with one voice and one heart...(etc.)." ➤ Litany of the Lord's Prayer, up to, and including "Help us, save us...(etc.)" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Epistle (bilingual) ➤ Gospel (bilingual) ➤ Sermon (as needed) ➤ Litany of Fervent Supplication ➤ 2nd Litany of the Faithful ➤ Commemorations of the Great Entrance (as needed) ➤ Litany of the Offering, up to, and including "Help us, save us...(etc.)" ➤ Creed (bilingual) ➤ Anaphora — the following priest's parts: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ...(etc.)"; "Let us give thanks to the Lord."; "Take, eat...(etc.)"; "Drink of this, all of you...(etc.)"; "Among the first, remember, O Lord...(etc.)"; "And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be with you all." ➤ Litany of the Lord's Prayer starting at "That this whole day may be perfect, holy... (etc.)"
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* The 1995 Sobor of our Church passed a resolution which states that any usage of a language other than Ukrainian in parish activities must be blessed by our Council of Bishops.

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|--|--|
| ➤ Lord's Prayer (bilingual) | ➤ Lord's Prayer (bilingual) |
| ➤ Prayer Before Holy Communion (<i>bilingual or only in one language, as needed</i>) | ➤ Prayer before Holy Communion (<i>bilingual or only in one language, as needed</i>) |
| ➤ "We have seen the True light" | ➤ "Let our lips be filled with Your praise..." |
| ➤ Litany of Thanksgiving | |
| | ➤ Prayer behind the Amvon |
| ➤ Dismissal | |

The above three examples are obviously not exhaustive, but they offer an outline of how a parish that so desires may incorporate English into its services. One thing that must be stressed is that such an initiative must be undertaken with a good deal of preparation. If an attempt at bilingualism in a service comes across as confused, half-hearted or aesthetically unpleasant, it will not be edifying for those who want the English and will not help to encourage those who are unsure about this undertaking. Preparation is of utmost importance.

Every parish is different. Each will have its own needs vis-à-vis Ukrainian and English. However, what is most important is that those parishes that do wish to try using English in their services do so in a balanced manner that will be of benefit to all who attend services. Proper preparation (including the singers practising before hand and the parish receiving approval from our hierarchy) is vital.

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Also, make an agreement to implement a bilingual service for a set period of time. Trying a bilingual service once or twice is not enough to let you know whether it will be an effective option for your parish. Agree to a schedule that spans six months or more to get a clearer picture of how effective such an approach will be.

Finally, two more things to bear in mind. First, use of English must be part of a larger initiative that must also include education and newcomer outreach programming as well. Bilingualism alone will not bring people back, but it can go along way in keeping those who do come.

Secondly, to those who say, "English doesn't do anything for me," it is important to remember that being a Christian (that is, a follower of Christ) means doing things for others even when it is an inconvenience to ourselves. Being nailed to the Cross "did nothing" for Jesus... but it did everything for us and for our salvation. Using English in a service is not so much for those who are already there as it is for those who might be there if Church life were made more accessible for them.

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Appendix 2

Some Considerations for Rural Parishes*

While at one time farm parishes were the backbone of our Church, we are now in a situation of crises regarding our rural congregations. The latest numbers show that our Church consists of about 12,000 registered faithful across all of Canada. This number is rapidly decreasing. One rural parish priest reports that he serves an average of 25 funerals a year and has done so for seven years. That is 175 people that he has buried in seven years of ministry to rural congregations. Although this number does not differentiate between those people who are active members of the parish and those who are not "members", the fact remains that the 'base' of our membership in our rural communities (and in most of our urban parishes) is shrinking to the point that only a few are left to struggle along, making sure that there is a church around for the members and non-members from which they can be buried.

Having grown up in the prairies, I know the pride we first, second, third, and even fourth generation Ukrainians in Canada, have in our 'little country cathedrals'. I know of our parents' and grandparents' deep faith in God, and the peace they feel when they hear the familiar melodies, smell the incense and gaze at the icons. I understand the determination of those few who gather in temples that were once full. To let these parishes 'die without a fight' somehow feels wrong inside and we feel that we would be betraying the efforts and memories of our forebears.

However, I also know what it means to watch the parish patronal feast day celebration (*Khram*) dwindle each year because of apathy and funerals over the years that have cut the membership to almost nothing. Seeing graves that have no one to stand over them, or the disappointment expressed by parents explaining how the kids are too busy to come out

* This chapter was prepared by Rev. Fr. Gene Maximiuk. The Office of Missions and Education extend our sincere gratitude to Fr. Gene for his sharing his insights and experiences as a rural parish priest.

this year for the blessing of the graves (*Provody*). I see the hurt in the eyes of parents and grandparents when there is a Sunday Service, one of the 3 or 6 per year, and the kids can't or won't come out and be there with them.

It is true that there are places where there are younger or very active senior members in rural congregations who gladly assume their responsibilities, even if there is only a handful of them. But if what I described above reflects the situation in the majority of our rural parishes, then hard questions need to be asked and important decisions need to be made.

What is Not the Answer

Up to now, the standard way of treating this problem in the farms has been to create ever-growing parish districts, so that whoever is still left in the rural parishes can have a service in their church, at the very least on a quarterly or semiannual basis. One has to question, though, whether the situation of a priest running around serving anywhere from five to 12 or more parishes two or three times a year, is the best use of our resources.

On the parish's side, we cannot think that because we have 3-8 services a year we have a healthy church life. This has been an issue in our Church since the pioneer days when there were not enough priests to serve all our parishes; for many this exceptional situation came to be thought of as the norm. In reality it represented an exception that made the best of an extreme and unfavourable situation. The truth is that that we have always been called to be in church (always needed to be in church) as often as possible — every Sunday being the goal.

Increasing the size of our parish districts, then, does not really help either the priest or the parish. The priest becomes "spread so thin" that he always faces physical fatigue and the emotional pressures of being away from his family for long periods of time (usually at those times of the year when family normally gather together — Christmas and Pascha), and the pressure of knowing that he is "making the best of it" but never really living up to his full pastoral potential. Likewise, the parish suffers because the less people go to church the easier it becomes to decide to not go to church at all.

The Decision to "Move on"

Deciding to close down a parish is a painful choice, which is made only when there is no possible hope of renewing life in a congregation. Such a choice, as difficult as it may be, is not new to the Church. If we look at the lands where Christianity has existed for centuries, we will find that these countries are full of the ruins of ancient churches — buildings long fallen into disuse, because the community which worshipped there moved on (even churches that were once the sites of Ecumenical Councils are today empty ruins!). While this might sound alarming at first it points to the fact that parishes have a life-span: a church building lives and serves the needs of the faithful, but when there is no longer a viable need, then it is closed down.

If a church has served its purpose and is no longer needed, or too difficult to maintain, then the proper decisions must be made based on responsible stewardship of the church, the region and the people — and not based on the personal feelings or agenda of one individual or group of people within the community. Maybe the church can be declared an historic site and the government can help to maintain it, or it can be moved to a provincial museum. Perhaps it can be moved to a location where a church is needed, like one of our Church Camps. Perhaps it needs to be disposed of. Whatever the decision, we have to remember that the one thing we are morally bound not to do is just let them sit and rot.

In the event of closing a parish it is important to remember that just because a person's church has been closed does not mean that his/her life as a practicing Christian has come to an end. The Church (with a capital "C") is more than a building, it is the Body of Christ — the living presence of our Lord in the world. Our membership in the "Big 'C' Church" is not based on the place where we were baptised or where our parents/grandparents attended. Our membership in the Church is founded on our participation in the life of Christ: the sacraments, our personal life of prayer, fasting and responsible stewardship.

In the ancient Church, when a building was closed down, the faithful simply relocated to another Church community; they did not stop being Christians. We must approach the closure of a parish in the same way. If we have to close our

church building, we must do so with a plan in mind of where we and our children and grandchildren will go next.

Two Other Options

Amalgamation: One possible alternative to closing the parish outright is amalgamating a handful of weaker parishes to make one or two vibrant parishes in a given area. The church buildings could remain and be served in on a rotational basis, but the congregation would encompass a larger community of people.

This is a viable option, as long as people are willing to overcome the "geographical hurdle" of attending a church that is "not theirs". Many of our rural churches are less than 30 minutes from each other, each with less than 15 "active" members (not including those who are members on paper only). Many of the members will faithfully attend the two or three services at "their" church, but will not attend services at the Ukrainian Orthodox congregation less than half an hour down the road. If we are to see life remain in our rural parishes, we must set aside the idea that this or that is my church or not my church. All Orthodox Churches belong to God. All Orthodox Christians belong to God. As a result we should feel at home (and should be made to feel at home) in any Orthodox church.

"Hubbing": Parish "hubbing" is a variation of the amalgamation approach. Many rural-area priests speak of celebrating services in farm churches, but doing most of their pastoral work in the larger centres in the vicinity of the rural parishes. It is not uncommon that a priest will travel to a local city to meet with a couple to prepare for a wedding or baptism that will take place in one of the rural churches under his care.

Hubbing would see parishes in larger centres have two or more priests. All of these priests would share pastoral work in and around the city during the week, and on the weekend, one would stay in the larger centre to serve in the parish there and the other (or others) would serve in the outlying rural communities. The pastoral teams of priest would then also share duties for baptisms, weddings, funerals and other sacramental services.

It has been said that there is one thing in life that is constant: change. Life in our rural communities throughout Canada has definitely changed, and we must acknowledge this and work in and through these changes to best serve the spiritual need of our faithful. We may be asked to give up things for the greater good of the whole church, and if we do, we stand to gain much more. We stand to be part of a fuller church life, regular services, more chances to learn and fellowship, feeling part of a vibrant community and the list goes on. These are things that will built us up as the "people of God as the body of Christ", the Church in its truest sense. Only through prayer and open, honest discussion will we learn what God's Will is for each our parishes. And with love, faith, courage and commitment we will embrace this Will for the betterment and future of our entire Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.

Appendix 3

Six Common Questions Protestants ask about Orthodoxy: And How to Answer Them*

1. Does the Orthodox Church place tradition above or equal to Scripture?

The Church sees the Scriptures as inspired and authoritative Holy Tradition: the word of God. The key here is to see how the word "tradition" is used in the New Testament which condemns the tradition of men but calls us to follow apostolic or holy tradition.

Tradition of Men

a. First of all, Jesus warned against holding to the "tradition of men"*** and "your tradition" in the strongest possible terms (see Mark 7:6-16). All Christians agree: The Bible says "no" to the tradition of men.

b. Secondly, Saint Paul warns in Colossians 2:8: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ." Here again, the phrase "tradition of men" stands out, a practice which the Orthodox Church condemns.

* From *Bringing America to Orthodoxy*, by Fr. Peter Gillquist, Appendix E, "Six Protestant Questions Concerning Orthodox Christianity $\frac{3}{4}$ And How to Answer Them From the Bible", published by the Department of Missions and Evangelism, Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of America. Used by permission of the author. Certain footnotes have been made by the author of the Missions Resource Guide for the sake of clarification; these are marked with his initials "AOJ".

** The term "tradition of men" refers to man-made traditions, customs, and practices that are erroneously given the weight of Divine law, and supposed to be central to our salvation. - AOJ

Holy Tradition

c. In distinction to the tradition of men, the Bible calls us to obey tradition which has God as its source. In II Thessalonians 2:15, Saint Paul writes, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle." In contrast to man's tradition, apostolic tradition* is our foundation in the Church.

d. Further, in II Thessalonians 3:6, we read, "But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us." Here again, we are dealing with Apostolic tradition, the tradition which God planted in the Church. Thus the Church is "the pillar and ground (or support) of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15).

e. All true tradition comes from the same source: the Holy Spirit in the Church. The same One who inspired Holy Scripture prompted the on-location teaching of the Apostles, whether written or oral (II Thes. 2:15). Further, it was on the basis of Church tradition that the Biblical canon was determined.

f. Tradition is giving our ancestors a vote. It is walking in the "path of righteousness for His name's sake (Psalm 23:3). Or, as Jeremiah writes, living by holy tradition is a call from God Himself. "Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls" (Jer. 6:16).

Thus, there are two kinds of tradition: that of God and that of men. It is to the former that the Orthodox Church is singularly committed.

2. How does the Orthodox Church view communion? **

Some Protestant groups teach that communion, or the Lord's Supper, is only a sign or symbol. Most all of Christendom, however, believes it is far more. The Orthodox Church has always believed that we, in a mystery, receive the body

* "Holy Tradition" and "Apostolic Tradition" are synonymous terms. - AOJ

** For further insights on the subject, see the article, "The Eucharist" in the Orthodox Study Bible — New Testament.

and blood of Christ. Let us look at Holy Scripture concerning Communion.

a. Jesus said at the Last Supper: "This *is* my body" and "This cup *is* . . . my blood" (Luke 22:19 and 20, italics added). The Lord is clear that His gifts to us are more than just sign or a mere memorial.

b. In I Corinthians 11:29, 30, we read of people who became sick and even died for receiving communion hypocritically. People do not die over something merely "symbolic." The bread and wine is, in mystery, the body and blood of the Lord.

c. In I Corinthians 10, Saint Paul is comparing the manna and water in the wilderness with the true bread and drink of the New Covenant. In I Corinthians 10:4, he writes, "And all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." The question is, was the Rock, Christ? Under laboratory observation, the rock was still most likely granite. But the word of God says, "The Rock was Christ." We do not subject the gifts to chemical analysis, but to the word of God. Its *mystery*, but never magic. Christ was present in the Rock as He is present in the Holy Gifts.

d. In John 6:53 we read, "Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.'" The Church receives this passage at face value — nothing added, nothing taken away. In communion we become partakers of the body and blood of Christ. Just as the new birth (John 3) gives us life through water and the Holy Spirit, so the body and blood of Christ *sustains* His life in us.

e. Christ our High Priest enters the Heavenly Sanctuary with His own blood (Hebrews 9:11-12), and it is in this Heavenly Sanctuary that we worship (Hebrews 10: 19-25). There is only one Eucharist, the one in heaven, and we join in that one feast

We must neither add to nor subtract from the word of God. Therefore we confess with Holy Scripture that the consecrated bread and wine is the body and blood of Christ. It is a mystery: we do not pretend to know how or why. As always, we come to Christ in childlike faith, receive His gifts, and offer Him praise that He has called us to His heavenly banquet

3. Why does the Orthodox Church emphasise the role of Mary?

Let us turn to the New Testament and see what God says about Mary. A key passage is Luke 1:26-49.

- a. The Archangel Gabriel calls the Virgin Mary “highly favored” with God (see also Luke 1:30) and the most “blessed” of all women (Luke 1:28). We must never do less.
- b. In Luke 1:42, 43, Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, also calls Mary “blessed,” and “the mother of my Lord.” Can we make the same confession? For centuries, the Church with one voice has called Mary the mother of God. If God was not in her womb, we are dead in our sins. By “mother of God” we do not mean, of course, that she is mother of the Holy Trinity. She is the human mother of the eternal Son of God. Mary bore God in her womb, and thus we can rightly call her the Theotokos, or God-bearer.
- c. Not only does Elizabeth call her blessed, but Mary herself, inspired by the Holy Spirit, also predicts, “All generations will call me blessed” (Luke 1:48). This biblical prophecy explains the Orthodox hymn, “It is truly right to bless you, O Theotokos.” Tragically, our generation has forgotten to call her “blessed.” Orthodox Christians bless her in obedience to God, fulfilling His holy words.
- d. It is important to secure Mary’s identity as the mother of God to protect the identity of her holy Son, “the Son of the Highest” (Luke 1:32), God in the flesh. If we cannot face up to Mary, we will miss the incarnation of the Son of God.
- e. The Old Testament Prophet Ezekiel writes, “This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut” (Ezekiel 44:2). The early Church Fathers consistently saw this gate as a picture of the womb of Mary, shut after Jesus’ birth.

We do not worship Mary. Worship is reserved only for God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We honor or venerate Mary, the mother of God, as the Scriptures teach.

4. Why do Orthodox Christians honour the saints?

The Scriptures themselves call us to honor other Christians both the living and the departed.

a. In Acts 28:10, St. Luke writes, "they honored us (the Apostolic band) in many ways." The biblical injunction concerning Mary, "All generations will call me blessed" (Luke 1:48), is an example of how we are to honor the saints for all time (see also Heb. 11:4-40).

b. We are to honor all believers and true authorities, not just departed ones. This is why Saint Paul exhorts us to honor one another (1 Timothy 5:17), and why Saint Peter tells husbands to honor their wives (1 Peter 3:7). May we gain back true honor, both in the Church and in the culture.

c. In Orthodox worship, we see pictures or icons of the historical believers all around us. This is, in part, how we honor our forerunners in the faith. In Hebrews 12:22-24 we read that, in worship we join with the heavenly throng to praise and worship God. We come to join "an innumerable company of angels," "the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven" and "the spirits of just men made perfect." And as "in spirit and in truth" we join these angelic and redeemed heroes of the faith, so we give them proper honor as the Scripture teaches.

d. Some modern Christians tend to give notice primarily to living Christian heroes, often newly-believing athletes, beauty queens and political figures. But throughout Church history, honor went to those who finished the race (I Corinthians 9:24-27), not to those who have merely begun or who are still on the earthly track (Galatians 5:7). These saints of old are not dead, but alive in Christ forever!

5. Do the icons of Orthodoxy border on idolatry?

In Orthodox Christianity, icons are never worshipped; rather they are honoured or venerated.

a. The Second Commandment says, "You shall not make for yourself any carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth" (Exodus 20:4-5). The warning here is that we are not to image things which are limited to heaven and therefore unseen, and we never bow down to or worship created, earthly things such as the golden calf. Does this condemn all imagery in worship? The Bible speaks for itself, and the answer is no.

b. Just five chapters later, in Exodus 25, God gives His divine blueprint, if you will, for the tabernacle. Specifically in verses 19 and 20, he commands that images of cherubim be placed above the mercy seat. So true imagery is not condemned in Scripture, only false imagery. Moreover, God promises to meet and speak with us through this imagery! (Exodus 25:22).

c. In Exodus 26:1, Israel was commanded in no uncertain terms to sew "artistic designs of cherubim" in the tabernacle curtains. Are these images? Absolutely! In fact, they are Old Testaments icons. And they are images which God commanded.

From the beginning, the Church imaged heavenly things brought to earth: Christ Himself, the Cross (Galatians 6:14), and the saints of God (Hebrews 11 and 12). Worship is reserved for the Holy Trinity alone. Icons depicting Christ, the primary subject of Orthodox iconography, help make Christ more present. Christ is worshipped, not the wood and paint. Likewise, we honor the great men and women of the faith by remembering them in the Orthodox Church via visual aids, called icons or windows to heaven.

6. What do Orthodox Christians believe about liturgy?

Biblically and historically, true worship consistently has been liturgical*. "Spontaneous" worship is an innovation of the last century or so.

a. Liturgical worship, written Prayers (the Psalms) and feast days were the norm throughout the history of Israel (see Exodus 23:14-19; 24:1-30:38; etc.).

b. The worship of heaven is liturgical (Isa. 6:1-90; Heb. 8:1-3; Rev. 4).

c. The foundations of liturgical worship in the Church are apparent in the New Testament. The most oft-repeated prayer of the Church is there (Matthew 6:9-13). The words we say at baptism are there (Matthew 28:19). The words spoken at Holy Communion are there, with St. Paul repeating Jesus' words (I Corinthians 11:23-26). Further, the believers in Acts 13:2, about 49 A.D., were pictured in a litur-

* "Liturgical" refers to worship with a specific, fixed structure. - AOJ

gical service to the Lord: "As they ministered (Gk: leitourgouaton our root word for liturgy) to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said...." Note, too, in this passage that the Holy Spirit speaks to us during liturgical worship. Thus praise to God must never become dead form, but rather living worship, "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24).

d. Documents like the Didache (70 A.D.), the writings of St. Justin Martyr (150 A.D.) and Hippolytus (early 200s), all show that the worship of the early Church was, without exception, liturgical.

Because of their disdain for Rome, some Protestant groups have reacted by dismissing liturgical worship (though everyone has patterned worship, "spontaneous" or not!) But the Bible and Church history are clear; liturgical worship is the norm for the people of God.

Bibliography

Recommended Reading for Seekers

The following is a short listing of some of the many books available about the Orthodox Faith. The titles below are specifically aimed at those interested in, or new to, Orthodox Christianity. All books listed are available through our Consistory Church Goods Supply. Consistory Church Goods also has many informational booklets and pamphlets available. A full list of these resources can be found in their catalogue or on the UOCC web site <www.uocc.ca>.

Introducing the Orthodox Church

Fr. Anthony Coniaris

An excellent general overview of the beliefs and practices of the Orthodox Church. Written in an easy-to-read style that is perfect for those just starting out in the study of the Orthodox Faith.

The Orthodox Church

Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware

Known throughout the world as the best modern book offering an overview of Orthodox Christian history, faith and life. Written by a noted Orthodox theologian and Oxford University professor, this book is a "must-have" for anyone seeking to learn more about Eastern Orthodoxy.

The Orthodox Way

Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware

An excellent companion to *The Orthodox Church*. This book by Bishop Kallistos examines Eastern Orthodox spirituality, discussing such issues as how we can know God, and the spiritual journey of the human person.

The Pearl: A Handbook for Orthodox Converts

Michael Whelton

The book, by a Canadian Orthodox writer, presents Orthodox thought from the perspective of one either new to Orthodoxy or interested in becoming Orthodox. In addition to examining Orthodox beliefs and practices, the author has two chapters entitled "Frequently Asked Questions from Roman Catholics", and "Frequently Asked Questions from Protestants".