

## February is “Missions Month”

Every February, the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America are asked to consider making a special offering for the specific purpose of mission work. The envelope for this offering should be in your house in the newest issue of *The Orthodox Church*. Please be generous.

Why make an offering to this annual appeal? More than anything, mission work is both global and local. Global, because mission is the charge that our Lord Jesus Christ gave to His apostles (and hence, through the ages, to us) when he sent them forth to “baptize all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” Local, because mission work allows the Church to blossom in our midst. All of us, in the newest parish, and in the oldest parish benefit from missionary work in our lives.

Each dollar donated to this appeal will help found new missions where a parish did not exist before. Each dollar will help support current fledgling missions and the pastors who work so hard for their growth. Each dollar also helps in the investigation of areas prime for mission work and the establishment of new parishes in those areas.

Missions in the Diocese of New England have been assisted in many ways through the generosity offered in the Missions Appeal. Our diocese has seen in recent years the establishment of new parishes throughout New England, the reopening of small parishes that had been dormant, and the financial assistance to pastors that allow them to continue working in parishes that cannot pay full-time salaries. All because of the Missions Appeal.

Each and every member of the diocese belongs to a parish that either is a current mission, was founded as a mission years ago and flourished, or has been reawakened after missionary work. Everyone of us belongs to and has been given a mission – to propagate the word of God and make the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church present where we live. Won't you help make this possible by providing resources for this work?



### TODAY'S CHURCH

## Man as Curse or Blessing

Presented by His Eminence,  
Metropolitan Nicholas, of Johnstown, PA

My Brother Hierarchs, Reverend Fathers and Clergy gathered here, along with all the beloved Faithful who are with us this day: Glory be to Jesus Christ!

Whenever we give consideration to the issue of the environment, we end up dealing with the area of ecological ethics. We do not discuss environmental issues like zoology and climatology as much as we discuss the issue of how man *deals* with the environment, and how he *uses* the elements of the environment.

At the outset, we should state clearly that there certainly is an Orthodox Christian ecological ethic. It is an ethic that is not an option for Orthodox faithful. It is not a mere theological “specialty,” that is, a subject area of interest only to those who have academic and professional reasons to be interested. The Orthodox ecological ethic proceeds directly from our doctrine. St. Cyril of Jerusalem said that, “the method of godliness consists of two things – pious doctrines and virtuous practice.” Without any doubt, virtuous practice demands right attitude and action toward the environment, for our Holy Tradition demands nothing less.

As such, the Orthodox Christian ecological ethic is *ecclesial*: it proceeds from our life in the Church, the Body of Christ ... and it is ultimately comprehensible only within the context of the Church. here is where the main distinctions exist between our ecclesial ethic, and the ecological ethics we find especially in secular society.

We focus today on an issue that sets these differences in sharp distinction. This issue pertains to how the environment is viewed: is it a great reservoir of untapped riches, waiting to be exploited for profit? Or is it an untouchable sanctuary, where nothing should be used? Should we view the environment as a living, almost divine being? Or is the environment God's Creation, where man is set with a profound, symbiotic relationship, and a definite, holy purpose?

Of course, the question begs preference for the latter. It should be obvious from Holy Tradi-

ENVIRONMENT TO 4

O.N.E. (ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND)

Diocese of New England, Orthodox Church in America  
Published monthly except for July-August

*His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, Administrator  
The Very Reverend John J. Dresko, Editor*

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**Editorial Office:** V. REV. JOHN DRESKO, Editor  
E-MAIL: [jdresko@cox.net](mailto:jdresko@cox.net)

FAX: (860) 620-0739  
US MAIL: 95 Butternut Lane, Southington, CT 06489

ONE Online: <http://members.aol.com/johnd3/ONE>

ONE STEWARDS: PO Box 2995, New Haven, CT 06515-2995

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YES, I enjoy the articles, correspondence and editorials of *O.N.E. (Orthodox New England)* and would like to contribute towards the expenses of publishing this periodical. Find enclosed my check made out to "Diocese of New England."

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## ON THE DOCKET

A listing of upcoming events in the Diocese.  
Please forward any dates you wish to be included to the Editor.

February 5, 2003

*Diocesan Council Meeting, 6:30 P.M.  
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT*

February 6, 2003

*Connecticut Deanery Meeting, 7:00 P.M.  
Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT*

March 10, 2003

*GREAT LENT BEGINS*

March 16, 2003

*Orthodoxy Vespers, 4:00 P.M.  
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT*

March 23, 2003

*Connecticut Deanery Vespers, 4:00 P.M.  
Nativity of the Virgin Mary Church, Waterbury, CT*

March 30, 2003

*FORCC Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.  
TBA*

April 6, 2003

*Connecticut Deanery Vespers, 4:00 P.M.  
Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Springfield, MA*

April 13, 2003

*Holy Unction Service, 4:00 P.M.  
Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT*

April 20, 2003

*PALM SUNDAY  
Bridegroom Matins, 4:00 P.M.  
Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Meriden, CT*

April 27, 2003

*THE HOLY PASCHA*

## Electronic O.N.E.

Anyone wishing to receive Orthodox New England in Adobe Acrobat format (pdf) can send an e-mail to the editor

[jdresko@cox.net](mailto:jdresko@cox.net)

requesting the electronic version. Please include your name and address and the parish to which you belong, to verify your eligibility and confirm the address in our diocesan database.

# Around the Parishes

## Ansonia, Connecticut

Here at Three Saints Church, we have been very busy. On October 20<sup>th</sup>, a free-will offering breakfast was held, followed by a presentation on fair-share giving.

The annual Food & Craft Fair was held in November, also, our Poinsettia Plant Sale. Our parish council president, Nina Kosowsky, was elected president of the Fellowship of Orthodox Churches in Connecticut (FORCC).

December 22<sup>nd</sup>, our school children presented a Christmas Program, which was coordinated by Matushka Jennifer Kruge and Debbie Egan. Musical direction was under the guidance of our choir director, Veronika Surkhaykhanova. Sandwiches and dessert were served following the program.

The Senior Group prepared Christmas packages for our shut-ins and sent two boxes of caps and lap robes to Alaska for Christmas.

December 29<sup>th</sup>, Father Nicholas, assisted by Lew Nescott, gave a talk and slide presentation on fair-share giving. Pamphlets were handed out to the parishioners

## OUR DIOCESE

PEOPLE  
PLACES  
EVENTS

showing the various biblical verses that covered tithing.

– submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

## Bridgeport, Connecticut

Our Food Fair was a great success. Thanks to the many women and men who helped us make our famous goodies, poppyseed and nut rolls, piroshki, piroghi, cheese filled blintzes, halushki, borscht, stuffed cabbage, and bean soup. Much of the ingredients used were donated by members of the parish. It was a time when members worked together and got to know each other.

The Annual Yolka was held on December 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Sunday School children enacted the story of the birth of Jesus. A live lamb was in the cast but would not cooperate. Santa visited later and presented each of the children with a bag of goodies.

On December 8<sup>th</sup>, Chris Savisky and Lydia Garasimowicz attended services at St. Alexis Mission in Clinton. His Grace, Bishop Nikon, celebrated the liturgy. Fr. Steven Voytovich, pastor of the parish, concelebrated with His Grace. At the end of the service, His Grace presented certificates to those who attended the Diocesan

Choir Directing Program, at which time we received ours.

The Myrrhbearers sent poinsettias to our shut-ins. As part of the Outreach Program, the PTO members and children prepared and served meals to the residents at the Beth El Homeless Shelter. They socialized with the residents. This project was a rewarding experience for the children.

On Veterans Day weekend, the names of our deceased veterans were read during the liturgy and then at the end of the service, when Memory Eternal was sung.

The installation of the newly elected officers of Holy Ghost Parish was held during liturgy on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Elected were: Joseph Curran, Sr., President; Peter Hristov, Vice President; Mary Kowalchuk, Secretary; Sophie Rogers, Assistant Secretary; Marion Gulash, Treasurer; David Lepesko, Assistant Treasurer; Susan Maugeri, Financial Secretary.

The Maintenance Crew did a beautiful job of decorating the church for the Nativity of Christ. The poinsettias looked beautiful in the sanctuary, adorning the iconostasis, and around the church.

Our Bell Tower has been restored. There were problems with water seepage which needed to be corrected.

– submitted by Lydia Garasimowicz

## Hartford, Connecticut

A visit by His Grace, Bishop Nikon, highlighted a busy Nativity season at All Saints Church. His Grace served a Hierarchal Divine Liturgy at the Church with Fr. Joseph Irvin, Fr. William DuBovik and Fr. Deacon Sergius Halvorsen from our sister parish, Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Meriden. During the Liturgy, Bishop Nikon bestowed the Gold Cross, previously awarded by the

## PARISHES TO 7



(L-R) Fr. William DuBovik, His Grace, Bishop Nikon, Paul Stenko and Christian Holobinko as the kids present flowers to the bishop at All Saints Church, Hartford (Photo: Cathy Vargas)

## ENVIRONMENT FROM 1

tion that the environment is better understood as *creation*, and that man is not a separate entity, independent of the rest of nature. All this, to be sure, *should* be obvious. But society, along with many Christians, seems to have turned aside from the obvious testimonies of Christian doctrine, and has adopted instead other beliefs.

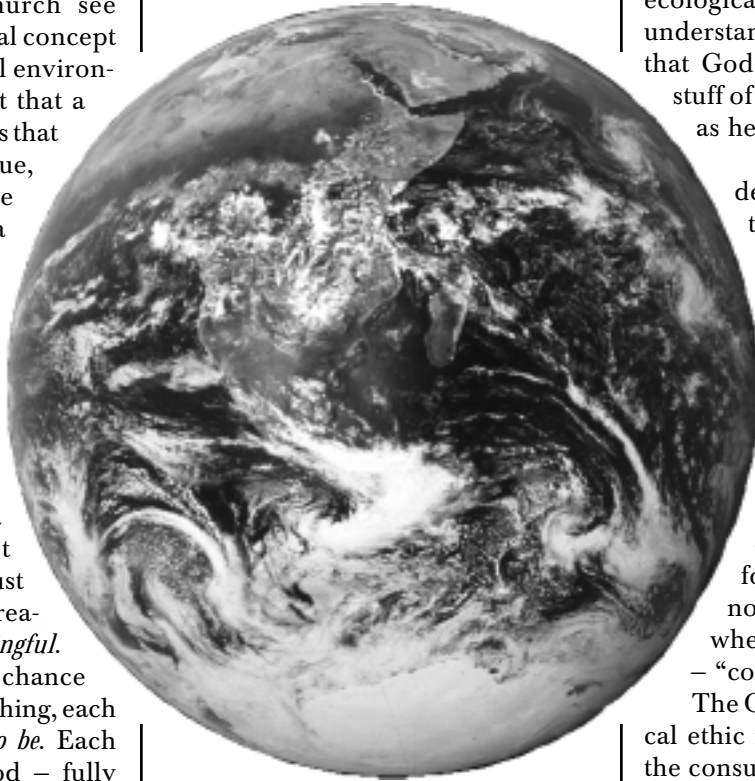
Take, for example, this statement: “the environment is created by God.” While you and I accept this as commonplace, this statement is certainly not accepted by most in the present-day ecological dialogue. But we in the Orthodox Church see Creation as the foundational concept by which we understand all environmental issues. It is the fact that a creature is created that gives that creature meaning, and value, and purpose. This is true whether that creature is a human person, an animal, an insect, a plant, a tree, a geological formation or an astronomical body.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of creation as a foundational concept. It means primarily that we must accept the reality of every creature as essentially *meaningful*. Nothing exists as a result of chance encounter. Truly, for everything, each creature was *fully meant to be*. Each creature is created by God – fully intended by God to exist, conceptualized from eternity and realized in time. God alone gives meaning to His Creation. In our Orthodox ecological ethic, we insist that man adopt a humbler, more honest and scientific outlook, in which he seeks to discern meaning in Creation – a meaning, or *logos*, that already exists.

The proper apprehension of a creature’s *logos* must begin with the simple affirmation that it exists by God’s *fiat*. This is a profound recognition that a creature is most essentially and basically a “creature,” in the fullest sense of the word. It

does not appear by its own determination. It does not exist in and of itself. Its life, or reality, is the result of God’s decision and continued provision.

Obviously, this is not the case in other ecological beliefs. In these other perspectives, the meaning of creation is usually limited to theories on “how it all came to be,” and “how it continues to run.” Outside academia, most ecological beliefs are “anthropocentric,” or “man-centered.” In these perspectives, nature is practically meaningless until it enters a relationship with man. Then, man invests it with meaning. That meaning may be



religious, as is true of primitive societies and some of the modern neopagan cults. But more often than not, that meaning is usually economic. In our technological age, nature is seen as a reservoir of potential economic value, as something to be mined, or harvested, or drilled, or developed. A forest, for example, is meaningful in terms of board-feet that can be produced. A river is meaningful in terms of how many kilowatts can be generated by a dam. In our technocratic culture, nature is meaningful *insofar as it is useful*.

This is an interesting point. It is

also a crucial one for us to understand, and to defeat. Aside from the obvious fact that it is supremely materialistic and secular, it is a point that has garnered a lot of Christian sympathy, especially in the West. To this end, a passage from Genesis is often quoted: “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Genesis 1:28).

Many people have taken this verse, along with other passages, to fashion a supposedly Christian ecological ethic of “dominion.” They understand these passages to mean that God has given man the entire stuff of creation *en masse* to do with as he sees fit.

But it should be self-evident that such an ethic is utterly foreign to Christian piety. Christians, by their very nature, should recoil from such a wanton manifestation of the passions of pride, avarice and gluttony. Unfortunately, we have become so familiarized and habituated to this ethic that we no longer recoil. We no longer find it foreign. Why is it that we are not insulted, as we should be, when we are called – everyday – “consumers”?

The Orthodox Christian ecological ethic is one that protests against the consumeristic ethic. The truth of “dominion” in Holy Tradition is very clear: man was given primacy in Creation, to be sure; but he was given primacy with the responsibility of *stewardship*. A good steward uses the resources of his Master, but he does not merely “consume.” A good steward is careful to protect the things of his Master’s house: he protects against destruction and decay. He would never permit pollution, rainforest burning, extinction of entire species. He would be alarmed by global warming, ozone depletion, and loss of wetlands.

We say this while believing firmly in the primacy of man in God’s

creation. We cannot agree with radical environmentalists who oppose human dominion ... some of them even go so far as to oppose any human place within the environment. The Orthodox Christian ecological ethic would never countenance the theories of Malthus and Sanger, who believed that the main ecological problem is "human over-population."

Mankind was given, undeniably, dominion over the world. He has been given the resources and the cunning to take things from Creation for his own benefit. He can hunt and kill animals for meat and skins. He can harvest plants for food and resources. He can fell trees for shelter and fire. He can dig holes to mine the earth. All this we do not deny in the Orthodox Church: truly man has been given this right by God.

But man must use the things of Creation while fully acknowledging that these things are *created*. It is impossible to make such a full acknowledgment and to exploit the environment at the same time: one cannot be, simultaneously, a mere consumer and a Christian steward, a steward who uses and enjoys the things of God's creation responsibly, and with great care.

But the Orthodox ecological ethic goes beyond responsible stewardship. "Stewardship" is an ethical concept that is readily accessible to all, even to those outside the Church. Its themes of responsibility, balance, and prudence are amenable to common sense. Aristotle and Plato have articulated ethics that cohere with this concept. For that matter, the best of the secular ecologists also reflect the ideal of stewardship in their statements. Anyone who is fair-minded, whether Christian or not, is able to condemn the wanton misuse of nature.

The ideal of stewardship is not enough. The Orthodox ecological ethic is also *ecclesial* – and it is this particular dimension of our ethic that is especially needed today. What is especially ecclesial in the Orthodox ecological ethic is the revelation that man is a source of blessing for the entire natural world. Mankind has a priestly role, a eucharistic vocation,

in mediating God's grace to Creation.

This emphasis is reflected time and again throughout the year in Orthodox ecclesial life. The *euchologion* frequently calls for man's interaction with the things of Creation in the Holy Mysteries. Palms and willow branches are blessed on Palm Sunday. Flowers and herbs are blessed on Dormition. Fruit is blessed on Transfiguration. Basil and flowers are blessed at Holy Cross. There are prayers of blessing for new fields to be planted, wells to be dug, beehives and orchards and gardens to yield great bounty and harvest. And through all this blessing, there is the constant theme of man gathering God's creatures, and bringing them into higher participation in Grace.

Man is the only creature in Creation that is a *person*, that is both body and soul. Thus, man has the task of harmonizing and uniting the world of the soul with the world of the body and of matter. This task is the task of blessing. It is a task that is comprised of the right use of the world. But it is a task that also calls for man to be transformed. Here we do not expect secular ecologists to follow; but the Orthodox ecological ethic calls for nothing less than for the ecologist himself to pursue the spiritual life.

This should not be surprising. The man or woman who enters a life of repentance, seeking spiritual purification, will win freedom from the passions that inflame consumerism, and other forms of environmental exploitation. The one who continues in the spiritual life, who seeks illumination, will discern in each creature its *logos*. He will discern the meaning and purpose that creature has received from God, and he will seek to fulfill this purpose.

Finally, the one who seeks first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness will acquire the Holy Spirit. He will thus become a conduit for the very presence of grace and God's Uncreated Energies. The unifying and restorative energies of God Himself will flow through his life, and will accomplish much salvation for the created world. Have we not seen this in the life of St.

Sergius of Radonezh? Or in the life of St. Seraphim of Sarov?

It is the Saint, and nothing less, that is the image of the Orthodox ecological ethic, for the environment needs now, more than ever, such a source of Divine Grace. "Creation waits with eager longing for the sons of God," St. Paul wrote in his Epistle to the Romans (8:19). Creation waits for man to take his rightful role in the natural scheme of things. For too long, man has been a "curse" to Creation. It began with Adam and Eve's destructive declaration of autonomy at The Fall, and the curse continued through aeons of warfare, pollution and unbridled waste.

But the Orthodox ecological ethic testifies that the long legacy of the ecological curse can be stopped by the moral freedom of each person. It can be stopped, and things can be put right again, when a Christian thanks God for every gift, and prays so that its use may be true to grace.

In this way, and this way *alone*, man can be a blessing, and not a curse.

*(Delivered at the Orthodox Christian Environmental Ecological Conference, June 15, 2002 at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA. Reprinted with permission from the January 2003 issue of The Word.)*

[His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas, is head of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. His see is Johnstown, Pennsylvania.]

## PUBLICATION DEADLINES

April Issue  
March 1<sup>st</sup>

May Issue  
April 1<sup>st</sup>

## FORCC elects officers

The Fellowship of Orthodox Churches of Connecticut (FORCC) recently elected the following officers for 2003-2004.

*President:* Nina Kosowsky from Three Saints Church in Ansonia

*Recording Secretary:* Lydia Westerberg from Holy Transfiguration Church in New Haven

*Treasurer:* Marion Gulash from Holy Ghost Church in Bridgeport

*Assistant Treasurer:* Richard Kendall from Christ the Savior Mission in Woodbury

*Corresponding Secretary:* Lydia Dorsey from Holy Trinity Church in New Britain.

Thanks to a grassroots committee (Heidi Crosby, Natasha Filyaw, and Susan Lickwar of Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church in New Haven) the concept of establishing an Orthodox parochial school is once again being discussed. This group is circulating an exploratory survey to measure the viability of a faith-based school. If you have any questions or comments regarding the establishment of an Orthodox Parochial School, please contact Father Michael Westerberg of Holy Transfiguration Orthodox Church in New Haven. Telephone 203-387-3882. FORCC has agreed to promote the fact-finding portion of this project.

FORCC has mailed the following letter to public school superintendents highlighting the fact that Orthodoxy is officially recognized by the Connecticut state legislature as one of four major faiths (along with the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths). We requested that the schools be sensitive to scheduling of events during our Holy Week and Paschal season and that the date of our Easter be printed on the school calendars. We would appreciate if clergy and parents would follow up in their respective school districts to ensure our holidays are respected and included in the local school calendars.

– submitted by *Barbara Ann Dixon*

### Letter to Superintendents

Date

Superintendent's Name  
Address

Dear Superintendent Name

This letter is to advise you of the important holy days celebrated by members of the Orthodox Churches

**LETTER TO 8**

### PARISHES FROM 3

Holy Synod of Bishops, on Fr. William. In receiving the award, Fr. William spoke of his unworthiness, and the fact that it is only through God's Grace, love and mercy, that we can receive such honors from His Holy Church.

A delightful Lenten dinner prepared by our talented professional chef, Chris Evans, with the assistance of Tom Denisky, Sam Wecal, David Vargas, Nick Medynski, and many other volunteers who helped with set-up and clean-up, was held in the bishop's honor. The traditional gift of Bread and Salt was prepared by Stephanie Hendewich, and presented by Nick Medynski, Council President. Roses were presented by two of our children, Christian Holobinko and Paul Stenko.

That was but one of the dinners held during December as the parish gathered for its annual St. Nicholas/St. Andrew day program. Following liturgy, parishioners came together to enjoy a program of holiday material presented by the Church School children. Marsha Coombs, a music teacher by profession, and Church School teacher by love, coordinated the program, assisted by teachers and volunteers. Everyone delighted in the solo musical performances as well as the students' performance of a play on St. Simeon. Once again St. Nicholas, "assisted" by Dr. Chet Andrzejewski, made his appearance, reminding all of the meaning of the holy days.

Following the program, a delicious dinner of baked salmon, prepared under the watchful eye of John Holobinko, assisted by members of the FOCA-R Club and other volunteers, was served. A fun event was a Russian auction. Proceeds from all the activities benefited the Accessibility Fund.

The Church edifice took on a seasonal look inside and out through the efforts of several volunteers and donations. Outside and inside trees were adorned with lights; wreaths hung in and outside the Church and rectory; and poinsettias graced the Church. Thanks go to the Vargas family, Susan and Mark Ranstead, Anita Karsky, Joan Holobinko and George Bugai for their efforts. Many Years!

We also had an opportunity to welcome the minister and a confirmation class with their parents from Rocky Hill Congregational Church. The group attended Liturgy and then heard a presentation on icons given by Dr. Chet Andrzejewski during the Church School program. The visit was coordinated by Cathy Vargas, Church School coordinator.

– submitted by *Fr. William DuBovik*

*Meriden, Connecticut*

We have been busy at Ss. Peter & Paul Parish during the fall and early winter. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, we held our Bazaar. Chairperson Helen Kasperovich and her busy crew ran a very successful event. Weeks before the Bazaar, the cooking crew got together at several 'workshops' and baked pies, made blintzes, cooked borscht and bean

soup, and pinched piroghi. Doris Brittany and the Instant Winner table had many neat prizes. We saw many friends from around the Diocese and many of the local folks showed up with Tupperware containers to take home a dozen or more delicious stuffed cabbage. The Kitchen Crew was busy from the moment the doors were opened until the last person left our Community Center. All the stuffed cabbage, kielbasi, hotdogs, and soups and most of the blintzes were sold so there was not much left for the Kitchen Crew to eat. It was much work to prepare for the event but in the end, it was a lot of fun.

On November 10<sup>th</sup>, the parents of our Church School sponsored the Fifth Annual Thanksgiving Feast. All Parishioners were invited and once again, we had a large turn out. All present enjoyed turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, sweet potatoes, corn, squash, carrots, salad, baked breads, muffins, apple pies, and pumpkin pies.

The Church School once again donated Thanksgiving Dinner Baskets to needy families who live in the area of our Church. The Church School students also bought gifts from the "giving Tree" at the Meriden Square for people in need.

We held our Annual Parish meeting on December 1<sup>st</sup>, discussed a number of topics related to the health and well being of our Parish, and elected our Council and Trustees. Congratulations to President - Helen Kasperovich, Vice President - Alexia Tassmer, Treasurer - Irene Zavednak, Secretary - Father Deacon Sergius Halvorsen, and Trustees - Helen Barone, John Barone, John Herbert, Donna Leonowich, Sarah Massaro, Timothy Tassmer, Ellen Uliase, Valerie Wigglesworth, and Margaret Zahariadis. Officers were installed on Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup> after Divine Liturgy.

December also saw the final meeting of the St. Mary's Sisterhood. After more than 80 years of dedication and support of our Parish, the members of the Sisterhood decided to settle up their accounts and donate their remaining funds to the Parish.

We are planning many events for the upcoming year. Come and join us; you're guaranteed to have a fine time.

*- submitted by John S. Nighyew*

### *New Haven, Connecticut*

Father Michael administered the Sacrament of Chrismation of Elizabeth Hansberg on December 14<sup>th</sup>. We are pleased to have her as a member of our parish and choir. God grant you many years.

December 15<sup>th</sup>, Stu and Robin Milberg hosted a potluck luncheon at their home in Westport. We thank all the talented cooks for sharing their meals. As usual, our "eyes were bigger than our stomachs" and we all ate too much, but we had a great time.

December 22<sup>nd</sup>, luncheon and Christmas Cookie decorating workshop, coordinated by Alexis Swan, was held for the youth. The children enjoy this event and look forward to this annual workshop. The same day, the

Ladies Auxiliary held a successful bake sale. Lots of great goodies were made for the holidays.

Congratulations and God's blessings to the Mosher family on the joyous occasion of Ephraim's Baptism and Chrismation on December 28<sup>th</sup>. Ephraim is the infant son of Joshua and Jenny and brother to toddler Elias.

The congregation enjoyed the December 29 Yolka presented by the church school children. All the children took part in the festivities; those who did not have a direct role in the pageant were dressed like angels. No child was left behind.

A special collection of food for the area's needy and homeless was well received and donations surpassed expectations.

Heidi Crosby, Natasha Fillyaw and Susan Lickwar presented their concept of establishing an Orthodox parochial school in Connecticut. They are circulating an exploratory survey among the various parishes to see if this is a viable endeavor.

The "R" club held their annual Christmas luncheon on January 12 at the Rusty Scupper. Thanks to Martha Asarisi for coordinating the party. Great food, fellowship and view of New Haven Harbor.

Condolences were offered to Lloyd and Daria Kirjanov Mueller on the loss of their beloved father and father-in-law, Charles Mueller. Memory Eternal!

*- submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon*

### *Woodbury, Connecticut*

December was a busy and exciting month for us at Christ the Savior Mission.

Throughout the advent weeks, the children of our community adopted a special "advent friend" to pray for each day. The children also collected change to purchase a special gift and mounted a Nativity icon for their friend. As Father Vladimir visited with the ill or shut-in members of our community during the last two weeks of December, the children accompanied Father to their special friend's home to bring communion and to deliver gifts, love and laughter.

St. Nicholas came on his annual visit to our community on December 8. During that visit he reminded us all once again of the importance of giving and sharing love to our neighbor. As always he brought plenty of apples, cookies and gifts!

Donald Cole, my husband (and therefore Father Vladimir's favorite son-in-law!), was chrismated on December 22 after nearly a year of catechumen classes and studying. Don chose St. Ephraim the Syrian as his patron saint. Paul Filipowich was his sponsor for the chrismation, which was followed by a delicious Lenten feast.

St. Theresa's Catholic Church, also in Woodbury, celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary with a multitude of events throughout December. In recalling and studying

**PARISHES FROM 7**

their beginnings, the parish community discovered their seed money was originally a gift from the local protestant church. In response to this discovery, and in honor of their anniversary celebration, Father Bob and the parish collected \$13,000.00 in free will offerings. Through the generous matching gift offer extended to our parish by an anonymous donor, this amount was doubled to add \$26,000.00 to our building fund. To the parish of St. Theresa we extend sincere, heartfelt gratitude and love. The selfless love and generosity of this group of people has strengthened and nurtured our community in many ways.

*- submitted by Sarah Cole*



*His Grace, Bishop Nikon, is greeted by children at Christ the Savior Mission in Woodbury. (Photo: M. Grzech)*

**LETTER FROM 6**

throughout Connecticut. We hope that you will take these major dates into consideration as you develop your school calendar.

Year 2003: April 25<sup>th</sup> Holy Friday  
 April 27<sup>th</sup> Easter  
 April 28<sup>th</sup> Bright Monday (Easter Monday)

Year 2004: April 9<sup>th</sup> Holy Friday  
 April 11<sup>th</sup> Easter  
 April 12<sup>th</sup> Bright Monday (Easter Monday)

We would especially appreciate your consideration of these dates when scheduling school proms, concerts, dances and field trips. These Orthodox Christian holy days require attendance at church services and time for prayer and reflection.

Some Orthodox Christians may request time to celebrate other holy days throughout the year. We request that student and staff absences be excused and these faith observances be respected.

The Connecticut State Legislature has passed legislation recognizing the Orthodox Christian Faith as one of four major faiths in our state (along with the Roman Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths.) As such we would appreciate your printing these major holy days on the school calendar.

Thank you for your consideration. Kindly address any questions to our mailing address at 472 Stratfield Road, Fairfield, CT 06432.

Sincerely,

Nina Kosowsky  
 President

**ONE-Orthodox New England**  
**P.O. Box 2876**  
**New Britain, CT 06050-2876**  
**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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