

TODAY'S CHURCH

Not "Can we?" but "HOW can we?"

by Father John Dresko

Budgeting, Vision, and Stewardship

The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. (2 Cor 9:6-8)

As we move into the new year, we begin to plan and implement budgets in our parishes and families. There are three common misconceptions about church life and budgeting:

- Our budget drives our programs.
- People will give if they understand what the Church needs.
- The best way to budget is on an annual basis.

Our budget drives our programs

One way of looking at the budget process, whether it be a modest family budget, a small parish budget or the budget of the Church, is to simply project income for the coming year and say, "What can we do with that money?" Certainly, no one can stay solvent for long by spending more than is coming in. That's true whether the amount is \$25,000, \$250,000, or \$2.5 million!

The problem with this approach is that it doesn't take into account what **needs** to be done. There are two basic approaches to meeting needs that can be followed: first, we can decide that we have maximized our income (there is no more income *anywhere* to find), so we bite the bullet and slash staff and programs, even though all might be vital to performing our mission. Or second, we decide that the programs and staff already working are important and probably even inadequate, so we invest time and effort into developing new streams of revenue, different from those that we might consider tapped out in order to expand and deepen our work.

If a family knows that college expenses are coming up and there is no money for it, the choice must be made: either expand income to meet the needs or forego college. If college is important, a second job might be taken, or loans applied for, with a payment plan that fits into the budget. If a parish knows that it is moving from a part-time pastor with a secular job to a full-time pastor devoting every effort to the growth of the parish, it challenges the parishioners to give generously so that the needs of the parish might be met. If the Church needs to develop programs, hire staff and be ready to meet the responsibilities of an autocephalous Church, we must devote efforts and current resources towards generating the necessary future resources to do that work.

People will give if they understand what the Church needs

Another approach to giving is the attitude that "if they only understand what we are doing and why we are doing it, they will give." This approach is based on the assumption that people give in response to *information*, not *inspiration*.

The problem with this approach is that it ignores the basic principle of Christian giving. That principle is that we give from our blessings to the Church and others because God gave first. His gifts to us are unconditional and to reflect Him, we must be unconditional givers also. When we try to get people to give *simply* by explaining how the budget meets the needs of the Church, we do not inspire anyone. We run into serious problems when others do not agree with the priorities that we have established for the Church. We can spend time and effort trying to convince others of the budgeting priorities. But if they remain unconvinced, the budget suffers.

This approach might work for special projects (building programs, etc.), but it can cripple annual budgeting and normal day-to-day needs. When people are inspired by the Church, great things happen (i.e., the church-wide initiatives), but when we simply try to sell people the budget (i.e., another raise in the assessments to meet our

BUDGETING TO 8



O.N.E. (ORTHODOX NEW ENGLAND)

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

His Beatitude, Metropolitan HERMAN, Locum tenens
His Grace, Bishop NIKON, Administrator
The Very Reverend John J. Dresko, Editor

Advertising: This publication will accept advertisements. However, we reserve the right to refuse any advertising that we find unacceptable for a publication of this type. **Rate:** \$50.00 per quarter page, \$100.00 per half page, \$175.00 per full page.

Subscription: Distributed free of charge to diocesan members. \$10.00 per year or any part thereof for others. Subscription outside of U.S.: \$15.00 (U.S. Currency).

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Hardware: This issue was composed on an Apple Power Macintosh G5 with 1.5 gb RAM, a Umax Astra 3450 scanner, and a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 5MP laser printer. **Software:** Microsoft Word X & PageMaker 6.52. Reproduction done at GT Graphics, Forestville, CT.

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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.

- January 3, 2005
ONE Stewards Meeting, 6:00 P.M.
Sturbridge, Massachusetts
- February 2, 2005
Diocesan Council Meeting, 6:30 P.M.
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT
- February 3, 2005
Connecticut Deanery Meeting, 7:00 P.M.
Ss. Cyril & Methodius Church, Terryville, CT
- February 25-26, 2005
Pre-Lenten Retreat
St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church, Clinton, CT
- March 14, 2005
GREAT LENT BEGINS
- March 20, 2005
Connecticut Deanery Orthodoxy Vespers, 4:00 P.M.
Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT
- March 27, 2005
Connecticut Deanery Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.
St. Alexis of Wilkes-Barre Church, Clinton, CT
- April 3, 2005
FORCC Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.
TBA
- April 10, 2005
Connecticut Deanery Mission Vespers, 4:00 P.M.
Nativity of the Holy Virgin Church, Waterbury, CT
- April 17, 2005
Connecticut Deanery Holy Uction, 4:00 P.M.
Three Saints Church, Ansonia, CT
- April 24, 2005
Connecticut Deanery Bridegroom Matins, 4:00 P.M.
Ss. Cyril & Methodius Church, Terryville, CT
- May 1, 2005
THE HOLY PASCHA

Around the Parishes

Hartford, Connecticut

It was a November to remember at All Saints Church, Hartford, which celebrated its 90th anniversary and held its 31 annual Russian Tea Room and Bazaar.

Highlighting the 90th observation was a Hierarchal Liturgy with His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman and His Grace Bishop Nikon. They were joined by guests, Fr. Robert Kondratick, our national chancellor; Archdeacon Alexei Klimitchev and Subdeacon Peter Ilchuk, along with Fr. William and Fr. Joseph Irvin. Also worshipping with us were John Mindala, OCA photographer and webmaster, Matushka Elizabeth Kondratick, Matushka Mary Dirga and her children, Matushka Diane Pelesh and Peter Dirga. Fr. Michael Dirga was pastor of All Saints during the building of our current Church edifice on Scarborough Street.

At the Liturgy, Fr. William DuBovik was elevated to Archpriest by His Beatitude who blessed Michael Andrzejewski, son of Dr. Chet and Kathleen Andrzejewski; and John Medynski, son of Nicholas and Jan Medynski, to

OUR DIOCESE

PEOPLE
PLACES
EVENTS

wear the orarion of a subdeacon. In recognition of their work on behalf of the Church, His Beatitude presented Gramotas to George Bugai, and Peter and Olga Malick. Icons were presented to the recipients of the Gramotas, along with Fr. Joseph, Fr. William, and Michael Stenko, choir director.

The weekend began with Great Vespers Saturday followed by a dinner for guests and Church Council members and their families. They were all treated to a delicious meal prepared under the supervision of Chris Evans, chief chef at the Polytechnic Club in Hartford. Sunday following Liturgy the dinner focus moved to Avon Old Farms Inn, where the parish was joined by other guests including Fr. Michael Westerberg, New England chancellor; and Fr. John Dresko, Dean, and Matushka Elizabeth Dresko. The gathering was treated to a slide show, talks, and a concert by members of the All Saints Choir, under the direction of John Holobinko. Another highlight of the event was the presentation of a large Pysanky egg, created by Susan Ranstead, an expert at Pysanky creations, to His Beatitude. The egg in a glass display case depicted All Saints and commemorated our 90th anniversary. Those attending the dinner were each given a pewter ornament depicting All Saints as a keepsake of the event.

Combining to make the event a success were the 90th anniversary committee: George Pawlush, chairperson; Andrea, Alexis and John Lichatz; Cathy Vargas; Chris Evans; Joan Holobinko; Michael Stenko and Fr. William.

And, as if by design, the handicapped ramp long in planning was completed in time for the event—with Edward Liptak, a long-time member of the parish, becoming its first user. The ramp and a handicapped bathroom on the main floor of the Church are part of an accessibility project, which eventually will see access opened to the auditorium for those for whom stairs are a problem.

Just a week before the parish hosted some 1,000 persons who attended the Russian Tea Room and Bazaar, which grossed close to \$35,000 from the sale of some of the best ethnic foods available, religious and ethnic items, gifts, plants, games, mouth-watering baked goods, Russian tea of course, and more. Coordinating the Bazaar were Joan Holobinko and Susan Ranstead assisted by booth chairpersons and an enthusiastic cadre of volunteers. Church tours again proved inviting to the attendees.

Some of the special activities will be on view at our new website, www.allsaintshartford.org <<http://www.allsaintshartford.org/>> .

In other news, our FOCA-R Club is again sponsoring its Christmas candy sale featuring candy from Gertrude Hawke. Our Altar Sisterhood continues its food collections which help Foodshare feed the hungry of the region.

— submitted by Fr. William DuBovik

New Haven, Connecticut

On Sunday, November 7th, the parishioners helped Father Michael Westerberg celebrate his Name's Day during the coffee hour. Everyone enjoyed eating the large sheet cake with his or her coffee. .

PARISHES TO 7



Fr. Michael Westerberg and Christopher Piccolo

2005 Diocesan Budget

INCOME	03-04 Budget	03-04 Actual	04-05 Budget
OCA Fair Share	207,825.00	208,766.42	
Diocesan Fair Share	83,875.00	81,183.76	
Total Fair Share	291,700.00	289,950.18	294,925.00
ROLL Radio/TV	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00
OCA Mission	4,000.00	3,405.04	3,000.00
Assembly Income	-	4,732.00	
ONE Stewards	21,000.00	20,000.00	25,000.00
Rental Income	8,700.00	8,700.00	9,300.00
Youth Rally	7,000.00	6,278.82	6,500.00
Misc.	500.00	560.00	500.00
Interest/Dividends (8/31/04)	2,000.00	520.39	2,400.00
Total Budget Income	337,500.00	336,746.43	344,225.00
EXPENSES			
Bishop			
Bishop	14,000.00	15,166.71	14,700.00
Social Security	2,142.00	2,320.50	2,250.00
Health Insurance	3,000.00	3,250.00	3,000.00
Housing	7,800.00	8,450.00	7,800.00
Pension	1,680.00	1,820.00	1,764.00
Life Insurance	950.00	1,029.21	950.00
Disability Insurance	62.00	67.09	62.00
Credit Card (Travel, etc.)	2,500.00	1,963.44	2,500.00
Misc.	366.00	-	174.00
Total (Bishop)	32,500.00	34,066.95	33,200.00
Diocesan Administration			
Chancellor	6,250.00	6,250.00	6,250.00
Secretary	500.00	500.00	500.00
Treasurer	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Met. Council	500.00	500.00	500.00
Deans	1,800.00	1,800.00	1,800.00
OCA Personal Assist. Prog.	1,350.00	1,350.00	1,350.00
Diocesan Travel	1,000.00	1,006.16	1,000.00
2005 14th AAC	-	-	2,000.00
Computer Expenses	1,200.00	1,269.40	1,200.00
Diocesan Insurance	2,750.00	3,759.00	2,750.00
Office Expenses & Misc.	1,300.00	1,100.50	1,300.00
OCA Fair Share	207,825.00	209,738.34	207,825.00
Total (Dio. Admin)	225,475.00	228,273.40	227,475.00
Diocesan Activities			
ONE Newspaper	21,500.00	21,784.96	22,500.00
ROLL Radio/TV	2,600.00	2,600.00	2,600.00
Assembly Expenses	6,500.00	5,268.23	6,300.00
ONE Stewards	2,500.00	2,102.08	2,200.00
Total (Dio. Activities)	33,100.00	31,755.27	33,600.00

	03-04 Budget	03-04 Actual	04-05 Budget
ONE Stewards			
Youth	12,000.00	13,153.03	16,000.00
Youth Director	2,000.00	1,500.00	2,000.00
Charity & Discretionary	6,500.00	5,850.00	6,500.00
Scholarships	5,500.00	4,250.00	8,000.00
FOS	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
Mission Support	14,400.00	14,400.00	14,400.00
Total (ONE Stewards)	42,400.00	41,153.03	48,900.00
Maintenance			
Maintenance Projects	1,000.00	505.00	750.00
Furnace Maint. Contract	275.00	313.00	-
Property Manager	2,400.00	2,400.00	-
Misc.	250.00	89.29	200.00
Total (Maint.)	3,925.00	3,307.29	950.00
Bonds			
Interest	100.00	100.00	100.00
Surrenders	-	-	-
Total (Bonds)	100.00	100.00	100.00
Total Budget Expenses	337,500.00	338,655.94	344,225.00
TOTAL Income/Expense		(1,909.51)	

2005 Diocesan Council

His Beatitude,
Metropolitan Herman,
Locum tenens

His Grace, Bishop Nikon,
Administrator

Archpriest Michael Westerberg,
Chancellor

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Archpriest John Dresko,
Dean, Connecticut Deanery

Archpriest Mark Sherman,
Dean, Northern Deanery
Priest John Kreta,
Dean of Missions

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Priest Vladimir Aleandro
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David Rodgers
Joan Skrobat
Ann Sovyrda
Timothy Tassmer
Cindy Voytovich
Laity-at-large

Marion Gulash
Lawrence Johnson
John Winkleman
Auditors

The Embryo and the Bible

by Fr. John Breck

The ancient Hebrews understood that we are created in the image and likeness of God.

Christian anthropology is firmly grounded in the Old Testament understanding of the origin and destiny of the human person. It makes its greatest departure from Hebrew teaching with its proclamation of Christ's resurrection and ascension. These momentous events provide the conditions for the general resurrection of humankind "at the last day," and for the glorification or deification of those who dwell "in Christ."

The ancient Hebrews nevertheless understood that we are created "in the image and likeness of God" (Gen 1:26-27). Our life-breath is the Breath of God Himself (Gen 2:7). This divine "inspiration," identified by the Church Fathers as either the soul or the Spirit of God, animates human life from its beginning, that is, from what we would call fertilization or conception. Therefore, the psalmist can declare: "They hands have made and fashioned me" (Ps 118/119:73), and "thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb" (Ps 138/139:13). Job reminds God that His hands have fashioned him "from clay" and "knit [him] together with bones and sinews" (10:8-11). God creates the "heart" of all persons and animates them with His own life-breath (Isa 33/34:15; Ps 32:15, etc.).

The Septuagint or Greek translations of Exodus 21:22 makes a distinction between the "formed" and "unformed" fetus (we might say, between the fetus and the embryo). Yet both live by virtue of God's indwelling Breath or Spirit. And they do so from the moment of creation, that is, from fertilization. New Testament authors took up these basic notions and developed them into a distinctively Christian view of the human person. If Rebecca's twins

could struggle with one another in their mother's womb (Gen 25:21ff), John the Baptizer could, from his own mother's womb, recognize and rejoice in the presence of Jesus, borne in the womb of Mary (Lk 1:44). These are not "fetuses"; they are conscious, sentient human beings who relate to one another as persons.

A great many other passages from Hebrew and Christian Scriptures could be cited to make the point that God animates His human creatures from the beginning of their existence and sustains them throughout the period



of their earthly life. One of the most interesting is found in the Wisdom of Solomon 15:11. Here the author speaks of those who fail "to now the One who formed them and inspired them with active souls and breathed a living spirit into them." For those who do know God, Christian witnesses will later affirm, that inspiration or in-breathing of the life principle is the necessary condition for achieving their ultimate purpose. If God creates the soul together with the body, as Christian tradition affirms, it is so that the human person might participate from the very beginning in God's own life.

For the sake of convenience—and perhaps also to camouflage what really happens in an abortion—we make a distinction

between "embryo," "fetus" and "child."

From a Biblical perspective, these distinctions or divisions in the human growth process are artificial. There is complete continuity from one stage to the next. The act of creation itself produces a living, "ensouled" human being, a bearer of the divine Image, whose entire existence is given for one fundamental purpose: to grow in holiness from conception, through maturity and physical death, to full participation in the very life of God.

"As for man," St. Irenaeus declared, "it was necessary for him to be created; then having been created, to grow; and having grown, to become an adult; and having become an adult, to multiply; and having multiplied, to become strong; and having become strong, to be glorified; and having been glorified, to behold the Lord" (Against Heresies IV.38). © Copyright 2001

The Very Rev. John Breck was Professor of New Testament and Ethics at St. Vladimir's Seminary from 1984-1996. He is presently Professor of Biblical Interpretation and Ethics at St. Sergius Theological Institute, Paris, France and with his wife Lyn he directs the St. Silouan Retreat near Charleston, SC. His published works include, *The Sacred Gift of Life*, *The Power of the Word*, *The Shape of Biblical Language*, and *God With Us* (St Vladimir's Press) This article is reproduced with permission.

January 22nd is the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision legalizing abortion on demand in the United States. The Sunday before that date (this year January 16, 2005) is "Sanctity of Life Sunday" in the Orthodox Church in America.

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

March Issue

February 1st

April Issue

March 1st



Stremsky Family Children's Choir in New Haven, CT

PARISHES FROM 3

That day was also a proud day for Christopher Piccolo, serving in the altar for the first time. Congratulations on a good job. Christopher is the son of Barbara Pope Piccolo Padro.

On a clear fall evening (Monday, November 15) we were privileged and honored to host the Stremsky Family Children's Choir from Saraktash, in the Orenburg region of Russia.

Susan Lickwar was coordinator for the event and the bountiful hospitality table. Susan, assisted by Tatiana Len, prepared a delicious supper for the children and their adult chaperones before vespers. Children from our parish (many of whom speak Russian) joined the Stremsky children for an enjoyable visit. The children were presented with gifts of stationery items, treats, and small games. They also were given gifts to take home to the children who are not on tour.

Susan is an elementary (2nd grade) teacher in the Orange school system. Her students, assisted by Dmitry Klimenko, have been corresponding with the children for the past year.

The concert was held at 7:00 P.M. followed by a reception. The auditorium was packed and the children's voices sounded like little angels as they sang. Proceeds from the concert (over \$4,000.00) will aid the children and the residents of Mercy House.

Dmitry Klimenko, who moved from Russia to New Haven eight years ago, was our translator. Natalie Melbardis Ronai, who also speaks fluent Russian, assisted church members preparing for the show.

The children's choir was fantastic. They are uniquely talented and make beautiful music. Their repertoire included Russian Sacred and Folk Music, which the audience savored. Everyone enjoyed the two young boys (Denis (15) and Ilia (13) who played the lyres and sang. A very poignant moment when the children (who only speak Russian) sang the Lord's Prayer, Many Years and God Bless America in English.

The annual caravan to see the Fantasy of Lights at the Lighthouse Park in New Haven was planned by our Youth coordinators Martha Asarisi and Alexis Swan. Immediately following Vesper Service, they departed for Lighthouse Park. After the tour, they returned to the Church auditorium and enjoyed a family pizza supper.

On Sunday, December 19, Martha and Alexis once again rounded up all of Santa's little helpers to do some Christmas crafting and cookie decorating. At the same time, the Ladies Auxiliary sponsored a Holiday Bake Sale.

- submitted by Barbara Ann Dixon

Southbury, Connecticut



Fr. Paul Tarazi

As we continue to adjust and grow accustomed to our new home, we are continuously welcoming visitors, friends and well wishers. It is with great joy that we have begun the time of Advent together. We welcome with overflowing hearts our new family members, as well as our new catechumens. During this month the Whitfield family and Michael Austin began their studies.

To begin the month, Father Paul Tarazi was our guest speaker for the Connecticut Bible and Lecture series. Father Paul led a group of approximately sixty-five mission members, visitors and guests on a study of the Book of Psalms. We look forward to his return in May when we will explore the

PARISHES TO 8



Procession of the Relics of St. Nectarios in Southbury.

PARISHES FROM 7

Book of Jeremiah.

Celebration for the feast of St. Nektarios, our patron saint was marked by Great Vespers and a procession with his relics on the evening of November 8. A delicious desert buffet followed the service.

We look forward to Will Kopcha’s court of honor to be held at the mission in January. We are so proud of Will for earning his Eagle Scout award. He continues to be an example of dedication and inspiration to the youth in our community.

Our appreciation and encouragement also are extended to fourth grader Nick Fatse. Nick, along with his classmates, has been collecting money to send footballs as well as letters of care and concern to our servicemen and women overseas.

- submitted by Sarah Cole

BUDGETING FROM 1

“needs”), it fails.

The best way to budget is on an annual basis

It was not so long ago that it was not uncommon for parishes and smaller organizations to “fly by the seat of their pants” without budgets. What came in was spent as needs (electric bills, wine, a new lawn mower) arose. So to speak about annual budgets is a step forward and at least shows some effort at planning.

But the problem with annual budgets is that they tend to be shortsighted, great for immediate needs but lacking in vision and effort at growth and the future needs of a vibrant community. Every dynamic growing entity, whether church or some other type of organization, has one thing in common: a short-, medium- and long-range vision. If our vision is to subsist and survive, then annual budgets are more than adequate for that vision.

Not “Can We?” but “HOW Can We?”

To put energy and focus into our budgeting processes, we must begin with a vision of where we want to be and then not ask, “Can we?” but look at it positively and ask, “How can we get there?” We must begin with long-term budgeting – dream big and clarify goals and objectives. Through prayer, brainstorming and effort ask, “What does God want us to accomplish?”

Then we must prioritize objectives. Despite our best efforts, resources are not infinite. We must, as church leadership, then ask, “If we can accomplish only one of our goals in the next three years, what would it be?” Once we answer that question, we must begin to plan short-term to meet long-term goals. Very little that we do in the Church is for only one year, so why do we plan that way?

Part of visionary planning would be to explore what can be done with more. Instead of just discussing and passing a budget that shows with “a” we can do “b”, we can show future goals by demonstrating that with “c” we can do “d”, and with “y” we can do “z.”

The core of administrative work in the Church is ministry. Lots of good things get done when adequate funding is provided. By not using the budgeting process properly and failing to inspire our faithful, we are indeed “sowing sparingly.” Why should we be surprised when we “reap sparingly”? Trying to fit spending into income is backwards and antithetical to the Gospel. Church budgeting should be visionary, trying to expand income into the spending needed to accomplish the Mission of Christ in the world.

God, through His apostle, has told us that when we give cheerfully, He provides everything necessary so that we can give abundantly. A visionary budgeting process is part of our faithful response to His promise.

(Fr. John Dresko is Editor of Orthodox New England and Director of Stewardship for the Orthodox Church in America.)

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