The Weekly Forerunner

St. John the Baptist Orthodox Church
301 Struthers Liberty Rd
Campbell, OH 44405

JULY Bulletin Sponsor–
In memory of Steve Sveda– Given by Barbara Kolesar

Liturgical & Events Schedule

Sunday, July 12
9:15-9:45 AM: Confessions by app't
9:35 AM: Hours
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Social
11:30 AM: Big Boy Train stopping in Struthers
NOTE: Look for alternate route to church if you come through Struthers

Saturday , July 18
5:15-5:45 PM: Confessions by app't
6:00 PM Vespers

Sunday, July 19
9:15-9:45 AM: Confessions by app't
9:35 AM: Hours
10:00 AM: Divine Liturgy / Monthly Panachida / Social / NOTE: For those who want their vehicles blessed, see Fr. Andrew

Statement on the Occasion of the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America / Issued at the 2026 Spring Session of the Holy Synod of Bishops

To the clergy, monastics, and faithful of the Orthodox Church in America:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. GIVING THANKS TO GOD FOR THIS LAND

As the United States of America marks the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding, we, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, raise our hearts and voices in gratitude to God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift, Who in His inscrutable providence has planted His Holy Church in this land and caused her to take root, grow, and flourish.

We give thanks to Almighty God for the United States of America—a nation that has, by the grace of God, afforded its people the freedom to worship, to follow the way of Jesus Christ, and to bear witness to the Gospel without fear or compulsion. We do not take these granted. They are blessings of divine providence, entrusted to us as a sacred responsibility. The freedom to gather in our churches, to catechize our children in the Faith, to proclaim the Resurrection of Christ openly and without hindrance—these are gifts for which every generation must give thanks to God and remain worthy stewards.

While this statement is offered on the occasion of the United States' particular milestone, we note with gratitude that the Orthodox Church in America spans the breadth of this continent. Our dioceses in Canada and Mexico share with us in this moment of thanksgiving, giving glory to God for the freedom to worship and to serve the peoples of North America in all their diversity. The blessing we celebrate belongs, in different measure and manner, to the whole Church on this continent.

We call upon the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to celebrate this historic milestone with prayers of thanksgiving, offered in your parishes, your homes, and in the quiet of your hearts, for this land and for all who dwell in it.

II. THE CHURCH PLANTED, GROWN, AND ESTABLISHED IN THIS LAND

The history of Orthodoxy in America is itself a testament to divine providence. From the earliest missionaries who brought the light of the Gospel to the shores of Alaska, to the generations of faithful who built parishes and communities across this vast continent, the Orthodox Church has been woven into the fabric of American life. She has welcomed the immigrant and the native-born, the seeker and the inheritor of the Faith, the learned and the simple—all those whom Christ Himself has called.

The granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America in 1970 was not merely an administrative act. It was an ecclesiological affirmation that this land has a Church of its own—a local Church, fully Orthodox, fully catholic, fully apostolic. The Orthodox Church in America is the Church for this land and for the people of this land. We are at home here, rooted in this soil, and the people of America—of every background, every heritage, every walk of life—are those whom Christ has entrusted to our pastoral care.

We embrace with joy the richness of our diversity. The Orthodox Church in America gathers faithful whose ancestors came from Russia, Romania, ***Con't next Pg***

PLEASE KEEP OUR ELDERS OF THE CHURCH & SHUT-INS IN YOUR PRAYERS

Send a "Thinking of You" card or remember their Birthday with a card. If anyone needs to be added, please contact Fr. Andrew.

Mrs. Mary Fredericks
648 Dumont Ave
Campbell, OH 44405

Matushka Helen Psinka
c/o Concordia Villa St. Joseph
1030 W State Street / Room 1B49
Baden, Pa, 15005

Mrs. Dorothy Shirilla
8362 Van Dr.
Poland, OH 44514

Joan Cross
97 Butler Street / Apt 1-rear
Brooklyn , NY 11201

Mildred Wilfong
153 Runnemede Dr
Boardman, OH 44512

Mrs. Audrey Chengelis
c/o Assumption Village
9800Market Street / Room 1402
North Lima, OH 44452

Emilia Yannitto
8017 Salinas Tr.
Boardman, OH 44512-5402

Mrs. Pauline Fesz
488 Harmony Lane
Campbell, OH 44405

George Horodnic, Sr.
c/o Briarfield Manor
461 South Canfield-Niles Rd / Room 101
Austintown, OH 44515

Mrs. Julia Simko
c/o Woodlands @ Hampton Woods
1525 E Western Reserve Rd /
Room 1101
Poland, OH 44514

Carol Ruff
2207 Birch Trail Blvd
Youngstown, OH 44515-4910

Sue Kennedy
593 Hyatt Ave
Campbell, OH 44405-1479

Ann Cvercko
1875 Mallard Land
North Lima, OH 44452

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Bulgaria, and Albania—nations whose ancient Orthodox heritage now finds a new home on this continent—as well as from Eastern Europe more broadly, Greece, the Arab world, Africa, Asia, and the Americas themselves. This diversity is not an obstacle to unity but an icon of the Kingdom of God, where there is "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free" (Galatians 3:28), but all are one in Christ Jesus. We treasure every thread even as we weave them together into a single garment: the local Orthodox Church in America.

III. THE GREAT COMMISSION AND OUR PARTICULAR CALLING

As our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven, He entrusted to His disciples—and to His Church in every age and every land—a mission that admits of no exception and no delay: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19–20). This is not a mission given to us in the abstract. It is a mission given to us here, in this place, among these people, at this moment in history.

The early Christians understood this calling with a simplicity that still instructs us. As an anonymous disciple wrote in the second century, in the Epistle to Diognetus:

"They dwell in their own countries, but only as sojourners; they bear their share in all things as citizens, and they endure all hardships as strangers. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers."

We find in these ancient words a description of our own vocation. The Orthodox Church in America is at home in this land, fully engaged in its common life—and yet her citizenship is ultimately in heaven, her culture the culture of the Kingdom. It is precisely from this position that she can offer something to American society that no merely political or ideological force can provide—the presence of the living God.

The Orthodox Church in America accepts this calling with humility and with urgency. We are called to be the presence of Jesus Christ in American society—in its cities and its rural communities, in its universities and its prisons, in its hospitals and its institutions, among its poor and its prosperous. We are called not to retreat from the complexity of our times, but to illumine it with the light of the Gospel. We are called to be, as our Lord taught, salt and light—preserving what is good and true, and shining in the darkness without being overcome by it.

IV. OUR COMMITMENT TO THIS NATION AND ITS PEOPLE

We, the Holy Synod of Bishops, ***Con't Next Page***

JULY Candle & Bulletin Sponsors

NOTE: If anything is missing from the Sponsorships please contact Fr. Andrew ASAP

Bulletin: In memory of Steve Sveda– Given by Barbara Kolesar
Wine: In memory of Frank & Marion Zwinski- Given by family
Incense: In memory of my family and friends– Given by AP Andrew Bartek
Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light: In memory of my husband George Kolesar– Given by Barbara Kolesar / In memory of my husband Andrew Cvercko– Given by Ann Cvercko
Altar Candles: In memory of my dad Harry Sveda– Given by Barbara Kolesar
Tetrapod Candles: In memory of my family & friends– Given by AP Andrew Bartek
St. Herman Candles: Commemorating all who participate in the maintenance of the church, the teachers, singers and those who participate in social events. Praying for everyone to love one another.– Given by Anonymous
St. Panteleimon Icon Candles: In celebration of Sue Kennedy's 93rd Birthday– Given by Children & Grand children
Protection Icon Candles: Im memory of the Ruff Family– Given by Carol Ruff / In honor of my Son Eugene Kennedy– Given by Sue Kennedy
St. John the Baptist Candles: In memory of my mom Jennie Rudiah– Given by Sue Kennedy
Monthly Flowers: In memory husband Kurtis Shunk – Given by Mrs. Athanasia-Trudy Shunk-Ellmore

$50 per month	$30 per month	$25 per month
*Wine	*St. Herman candles	Incense
*Bulletin	*St. Panteleimon Icon candles	Flowers–
*Iconostasis Candles & Eternal Light	*Protection Icon candles	
*Altar Candles	*St. John the Baptist candles	
*Tetrapod Candles		

Holy synod statement con't from previous pg

reaffirm the commitment of the Orthodox Church in America to the well-being of this nation and all its people. We are committed to the cultivation of peace, the promotion of human dignity, the practice of charity, and the witness of reconciliation in a society that stands in great need of all these gifts.

In this regard, we recall with appreciation the aspiration expressed at the very founding of this republic. President George Washington, writing in 1790, articulated a vision of civic life that went beyond the mere tolerance of religious difference to something more generous:

"All possess alike liberty of conscience and immunities of citizenship. It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights."

This aspiration—that religious liberty is not a concession granted by the powerful to the weak, but an inherent right belonging to all persons equally—has made it possible for the Orthodox Church to take root and flourish in this soil. We receive this gift with gratitude, even as we acknowledge with honesty that the distance between founding aspiration and faithful fulfillment has often been great, and that this very tension is itself a summons to continued repentance and renewal. The Church does not exist at the pleasure of the state, nor does she seek dominion over it. Rather, she stands within society as a witness to a Kingdom that exceeds all earthly kingdoms, illumining the civil order with the wisdom of the Gospel and the witness of holy lives.

In a moment of rapid and, at times, unsettling change, we offer the unchanging Christ—the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). Our parishes are to be places of genuine welcome, of profound worship, and of selfless love where our Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ is always manifested. Our contribution to America is not power, not politics, but the presence of the living God among His people.

V. A CALL TO REPENTANCE AND HUMILITY

Gratitude, however, is not the Church's only word on this occasion. The prophets of ancient Israel—those whom God raised up precisely because they loved their people—never ceased calling rulers and people alike to repentance and humility before God. It is a mark of genuine love for this nation that the Church, too, must speak this word.

Two hundred and fifty years is a span of time sufficient to accumulate both great achievements and grave failures. This nation—like all nations under God—has known the heights of generosity and the depths of injustice; the nobility of aspiration and the tragedy of betrayal. The Church does not pretend otherwise, nor would it serve this nation's good for her to do so. We bear witness to a God before Whom no nation and no person stands without need of mercy.

The promise spoken to Solomon rings out across the centuries with undiminished urgency:

"If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

It is in this spirit that we call the ***Con't next pg***

JULY Celebrations

Birthday

1- Julia Simko
3- Eugene Kennedy
4- Stephen Holly / Georgiana Lukehart
5- Pani Stacey Mihaly
11- Joan Cross
12- Pauline Fesz / Justin Stokley / Joe Stokely / Ann Kristian
14- Nicole Marianni
15- His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon
17- Jonah Bremer / Kathleen Jesko
19- David Konik / Adam Rusnak / Diane Marie Ruff
23- Mat. Helen Psinka
30- Mat. Christine Hryb / Maureen Koval / Gabreille Kalantzis / Ann Bufalini

Anniversary

3- Bob & Elizabeth Willison (94)
6- Ron & Mary Luthern (69)
8- Nick & Monica Vansuch (72)
13- Marcus & Marcia Kubancsek (03)
24- Frank & Lori Batura
25- Andy & Michelle Basile (92)
27- Dennis & Kim Konik / Ken & Lynn Krause
30- James & Sandra Bufalini

Names Day

10- His Grace Nikodhim of Boston & the Albanian Archdiocese
17- Tony Jesko, Jr. / Tony Jesko, Sr.
20- Eli Arvan / Lynn Polewan
24- Matushka Christine Hryb / Elaine Johnston
26- Jacob Hryb
31- AB Benjamin of San Francisco & the West

JULY READER SCHEDULE

July 12– Sub-deacon Donald Tamulonis
July19– Reader Nick Vansuch
July 26—Reader Matthew Vansuch

JULY CHARITY

OFFICE OF PASTORAL CARE

Social Schedule: JULY

July 12– Sisterhood
July 19– Council
July 26– Open

ATTENDANCE: A Comparison - *JUNE*	2025	2026
1st– All SAints		
Vespers	6	7
Liturgy / Communion	56 /37	34 / 28
2nd Week– N. Am. S.		
Vespers	9	7
Liturgy / Communion	50 / 36	44 ./ 34
3rd Week– 3rd Sunday		
Vespers	5	8
Liturgy / Communion Nativity Vespers St. John Nativity Liturgy	58 / 30 9 7 / 6	45 / 28 20 18 / 12
4th Week – 4th Sunday		
Vespers	No Vespers	6
Liturgy / Communion Peter & Paul Vespers Peter & Paul Liturgy	59 / 29 No Record Canceled	35 / 27 Canceled Canceled
5th–		
No 5th Week in June		

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faithful of the Orthodox Church in America—and, through their witness, this nation—to repentance: repentance for injustices past and present; for the idols of wealth, comfort, and power that seduce every generation; for the divisions and enmities that tear at the fabric of common life; and for the ways in which we have failed to love our neighbors as ourselves. A true commemoration of a nation's founding is not mere self-congratulation; it is a moment of sober examination, of honest confession, and of renewed dependence upon God.

The Church does not speak this word from a posture of superiority. We acknowledge our own failures—in charity, in unity, and in the fullness of our witness to the Gospel. We, too, stand in need of God's mercy. But it is precisely because the Church has known the healing power of repentance that she cannot withhold this word from the world she is called to serve.

VI. A CALL TO THE DIOCESES

We encourage all dioceses, parishes, monasteries, and institutions of the Orthodox Church in America to mark the 250th anniversary of the United States of America in a manner befitting the occasion. Special services of thanksgiving, educational programs, civic engagement, and acts of charity are all fitting ***Con't next Pg***

JULY Reposed List / © Parishioner

1- Veronica Graban (1998) © / Ann Zastany Crowi (2019) © / Mike Smyrnios (1960) ©
2- Vasil Fecik (1921) ©
3- Andrew Cvercko (2017) © / John Kaschak (1920) © / Jenny Rudiak
4- Alice Sutko (2020) / Helen Arvan Kusmanov (2013) © / Anna Gozur (1957) ©
5- George Hostal (2001) © / George Vavlas (1945) © / Andrew Harvischak (1951) ©
6- Steve Sveda (1928) © / Nick Galouzis (1961) ©
7- Luba Raseta (1929) ©
8- Marian Shepelevich (2020)
9- Mary Zanios (1926) ©
10- Anna Roman (1926) © / Robert Kennedy (1994) © / Pete George (1939) © / Nick Despetarich (1959) ©
11- Ruth Libertin (2008) ©
12- Anna Berdy (1980) © / John Bolescak (1926) ©
13- Marilyn Fasiline (1972) © / John Borsic (1987) © / Andrew Holubauich (1930) ©
14- Edward Gorol (1961) ©
15- Catherine Harvischak (1977) © / Floyd Dweesy (1985) © / Mary Sykola (2005) © / Betty Ewenish (2024)
16- Mary Macala (1971) © / Julian Marsteler (1920) ©
17- Mary Bartek (1984) / Eleanor Graban (1986) © / Elizabeth Zelena (1991) ©
18- Steve Paroh (1979) © / Still Born Cmur (1923) ©
19- Helen Bohish (1988) © / Helen LIvosky (2015) © / Mary Balak (1925) © / Mike Olsavsky (1931) ©
19- Margaret Bilehik (1955) © / Walter Litzie (2023)
20- Joseph Sirilla, Sr (1979) © / Fr. Dc. John Youhas (2012) / Anna Zavada Bartek (1924) / Nicholas Papas (1949) © / Maria Karas (1956) ©
21- Anna Tsagros (1929) © / Maria Michaels (2024)
22- Elizabeth Zilena (1985) © / Mary Kennedy (2000) © / Stephen Kalafut (1956) © / William Petrosky (2020) © / George Vansuch (1996) ©
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Holy Synod statement con't from previous pg

expressions of our gratitude to God and our love for this country and this continent.

VII. CONCLUSION

We close with a prayer offered in both gratitude and penitence—that this nation, conceived in aspiration toward freedom and formed through the struggles and sacrifices of many generations, may yet heed the ancient call to humility before God, and so continue to be a place where the Church of Christ flourishes, where the Gospel is proclaimed, and where all people are able to seek the face of God without fear.

To Him Who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Issued by the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America at its 2026 Spring Session, in the two hundred and fiftieth year of the independence of the United States of America, and in the year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty-six.

Detroit Cathedral Feast gathers Local Clergy and Faithful

On the Feast of St Peter and St. Paul, Monday June 29, St. Peter and St. Paul Cathedral, Detroit, MI, celebrated its Feast Day with Divine Liturgy.

Celebrating the Divine Liturgy were Priest Phillip Dage, Dean, Archpriest Michael Butler, Archpriest John Baker, Archpriest Mikhail Volzhanskii, Priest John York, Priest Juxhin Shkurti, Priest Nicola Nunu, and Deacon Lazarus Der-Ghazarian.

Faithful gathered to worship together in the Cathedral representing at least seven Orthodox Churches in the Metro Detroit area. At the conclusion of the service, all gathered for a meal at a local restaurant.

Annual Tikhvin Icon Feast Welcomes Visiting Hierarch

The Diocesan Feast of the Wonderworking Tikhvin Icon of the Mother of God was celebrated by His Eminence Archbishop Daniel of Chicago and the Midwest on June 25 and June 26 at the Diocesan ***Con't Next Pg***

PRAYER LIST

PARISHIONERS: Achiles Arvan / Audrey Chengelis / Joan Cross / Ann Cvercko / Pauline Fesz / Mary Fredericks / George Horodnic / Gianna Hryb / Sue Kennedy / Matushka Helen Psinka / Nadine Sabo / Dorothy Shirilla / Julia Simko / Reader Nick Vansuch / Mildred Wilfong

CLERGY: Fr. Basil Duesenberry / Fr. Andrew Gall / AP James Gleason (Fr.) / AP Emil Hutyan / AP Michael Rustic / Fr. Peter Simko / Fr. Theophanes Kamau & family & parishioners at St. Joachim & Anna in Nairobi, Kenya

FAMILY & FRIENDS: Mat. Melanie Adamcio / Becky Baxter (Fr.A) / Mary Ann Bozichovich (Kennedy) / Diane Caban (Sirilla) / George Caban (Sirilla) / Donna Chiarelli / Karen Debiec / Erin (Willison) / Thomas Hull, Jr. / Ron Hryb / Paula Kennedy / Joe Kollar (Fr.) / Ginny McCay (Fredericks) / Matushka Raisa (Nicoloff) / Conner (Sabo) Chris Quotap (Fr.) / Bob Smrek (Sirilla) / Matt Turner (Sirilla) / Emilia Yanitto / David (Willison) / Drew (Willison) / Eleanor Marie (Vansuch) / Katherine (Steffaro) / Richard (Tusinac) / Miranda & her unborn baby / Lindsey & her unborn baby

MILITARY FAMILY & FRIENDS: Cory Deaton (Fr.) / Alena Grabavoy (Fr.) / Kyle Grabovoy (Fr.) / Liam Garrity (Zelinsky) / Kenneth (Simko) / Brandon Rader (Middle East)

MISCELLANEOUS: The UN & IOCC humanitarian aid workers around the world / Those suffering persecution in Syria, Iraq, Israel, Egypt, Ukraine and around the world.

Orthodox Church in America Publishes Service in Thanksgiving to Almighty God on the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America

The Orthodox Church in America has published a new Service of Thanksgiving to Almighty God on the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America in response to the Holy Synod of Bishops' Statement on the Occasion of the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America, issued during the Holy Synod's Spring 2026 Session.

Prepared for use throughout the anniversary year, the service is offered to the dioceses, parishes, monasteries, seminaries, and institutions of the Orthodox Church in America as a means of giving thanks to Almighty God for His abundant blessings and providential care, while also praying for the continued well-being of the nation and all who dwell within it.

The service booklet includes the Holy Synod's statement marking the 250th anniversary of the United States. In that statement, the Holy Synod called upon the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America to observe this historic milestone through prayer, gratitude, repentance, charitable works, and renewed dedication to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The text of the service itself has been adapted from a service published by the Orthodox Church in America in 1976 on the occasion of the bicentennial of the United States. Slightly revised, it preserves the spirit of thanksgiving that marked the Church's observance of the nation's 200th anniversary while addressing the present moment in the life of the Church and society.

The Holy Synod encourages clergy and faithful throughout the Orthodox Church in America to make use of this service in their parishes, monasteries, institutions, and homes during the anniversary year, joining together in thanksgiving to God for His many blessings and in prayer for the nation, its leaders, and all its people.

The service booklet is available as both a PDF for digital distribution and a print-ready file for those wishing to reproduce copies for their faithful.

Tikhvin Feast con't from previous pg

Cathedral, Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL.

The feast began with the celebration of the All Night Vigil on the Thursday evening. The Archbishop was joined by clergy from the Chicago Deanery. The Chicago Deanery Male Choir sang the responses under the direction of Reader Philip Sokolov.

On Friday, June 26, at the invitation of Archbishop Daniel, the Hierarchical Liturgy was presided over by His Grace Bishop Spyridon of Chicago adn Mid-America (ROCOR). Serving with the hierarchs were Archpriest Herman Kincaid, Chancellor, Priest Alexander Koranda, Cathedral Dean, Mitered Archpriest Vladimir Kovalchuk, Priest Nikolai Lochmatow, Priest Jacob VanSickle, Priest John Kennerk, Priest Anthony Saunders, Protodeacon Alexander Kichakov, Deacon Paul Garklavs, and Deacon Timothy Heinbokel. The choir was directed by Reader Vladimir Lymar.

Following the Divine Liturgy, a prayer to the Mother of God was read.

The Archbishop welcomed Bishop Spyridon and expressed his gratitude to all who came to keep this important feast. Following the Divine Liturgy, a reception was held in the Cathedral Courtyard.

Metropolitan Theophilus, First Bishop of Chicago, Anniversary of Repose

On June 27, 1950, Metropolitan Theophilus, the first Bishop of Chicago, reposed in the Lord. His Eminence served as the ruling hierarch of Chicago from 1922-1931. He remained in Chicago until he was transferred in 1931, to become Bishop of San Francisco. After Metropolitan Platon's death in 1934, Bishop Theophilus was elected jointly by the council of assembled bishops and the full Council as the new metropolitan by the Fifth All-American Sobor that convened in Cleveland, OH, on November 20, 1934.

A memorial service will be held at the Diocesan Cathedral, Holy Trinity Cathedral praying for the reposed hierarch. May Metropolitan Theophilus' memory be eternal.

Theodore Nikolayevich Pashkovsky was born on February 6, 1874 in the village of Belichi, near Kyiv, where his father was the priest. He pursued seminary studies in Kyiv at an early age. Due to his reserved, gentle, humble and prayerful demeanor, he was nicknamed "the monk" by his fellow students. In 1892, while playing sports, Theodore sustained a leg injury, which led to a painful lingering bone disease, deemed incurable by doctors. When Saint John of Kronstadt visited Kyiv in 1893, Theodore received his blessing along with the saint's counsel to pray fervently for healing. As he was quickly restored to good health, Theodore vowed in gratitude that he would consecrate his life to the Lord at the famed Monastery (Lavra) of the Caves in Kyiv, and in 1894, he was admitted to the novitiate there. That same year, he completed his seminary studies and was assigned to teach at the monastery's parochial school.

Some months later, Bishop Nicholas (Ziorov) of the Aleutians and Alaska, who was looking to enlist talented recruits to serve the Church in America, visited the monastery. Perceiving in young Theodore the qualities necessary for such service, the bishop invited him to come to San Francisco to serve in the North American diocese. Among other missionaries recruited by Bishop Nicholas during his sojourn in the Russian Empire in 1895 were three future saints – Raphael (Hawaweeny), Alexander Hotovitzky and John Kochurov. After obtaining a release from the monastery, Theodore arrived in San Francisco, then the diocesan see of North America, with Bishop Nicholas in late 1895, taking up administrative duties in the diocesan chancery and serving as reader, sacristan and church school teacher at the city's cathedral. Less than two years later, he was named the diocesan secretary. While serving in these capacities, Theodore met young Ella Dabovich, niece of Hieromonk Sebastian (Dabovich), the first American-born Orthodox priest, who was then serving at the San Francisco Cathedral. On November 8, 1897, Fr. Sebastian officiated at the wedding of Theodore and sixteen-year-old Ella Pashkovsky. Less than a month later on December 3, Theodore was ordained a deacon and to the priesthood just two days later by Bishop Nicholas. He was immediately assigned to the San Francisco cathedral, where he would remain for the next fifteen years.

In late 1898, Bishop Tikhon (Bellavin) succeeded Bishop Nicholas as diocesan hierarch. As one of Bishop Tikhon's most trusted aides, Fr. Theodore managed the day-to-day affairs of the North American Diocese in San Francisco, while the bishop made extensive archpastoral journeys throughout the continent, until the diocesan see was relocated to New York in 1905. After organizing the orderly transfer across the country of the diocesan files, documents and archives, Fr. Theodore was appointed dean of the San Francisco cathedral and district dean of the Western States Deanery. The great earthquake of 1906 and ensuing fire demolished San Francisco's Orthodox cathedral. With the fire approaching, Fr. Theodore himself salvaged many precious items from the cathedral. He then oversaw the timely construction of a new church there by 1909, which still stands and is now the cathedral of the OCA Diocese of the West. In recognition of his tireless labors, he was raised to the rank of archpriest in 1910. In 1912, Fr. Theodore petitioned Archbishop Platon (Rozhdestvensky), Saint Tikhon's successor as diocesan hierarch of North America, to return to Russia, much to the disappointment of his parishioners in San Francisco. Fr. Theodore left San Francisco with his family, which by this time had grown to include four children, in late 1912. While arrangements for his transfer to the Diocese of Warsaw (then still part of the Russian Empire and Church) were being finalized, Fr. Theodore served as temporary pastor of St. Michael's Church in Newark, NJ for a few months.

When he arrived in Warsaw in the spring of 1913, Fr. Theodore was pleased to serve again under the hierarch who had ordained him, Archbishop Nicholas (Ziorov), by then archpastor of the Warsaw Diocese. Fr. Theodore was assigned as second priest of Warsaw's Holy Trinity Cathedral and to various administrative, educational and charitable ministries.

With the German occupation of Poland in World War I, most of the Russian state functionaries and clergy of the diocese were evacuated eastward into Russian held territory in 1915. Many of Warsaw's Orthodox churches were soon turned into Roman Catholic churches, including Holy Trinity Cathedral where Fr. Theodore had served. Fr. Theodore and his family found refuge in Vilno (today – Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania), where Archbishop Tikhon, formerly of North America was the diocesan hierarch. Here, Fr. Theodore was assigned as rector of the Church of the Sign of the Theotokos. While he would hold this position for some time, he eventually relocated his family to Moscow due to the increasingly precarious wartime situation in Lithuania. He soon undertook service as a military chaplain along the frontlines in Belorussia (today – Belarus) and Ukraine, for which he was decorated. In the midst of the raging war and revolution, both Fr. Theodore's beloved wife Ella and their eldest daughter perished from disease. ***Con't Next pg***

Metropolitan Theophilus con't from previous pg

Meanwhile, after serving under the white banner of anti-Bolshevik forces during the Russian Civil War, Fr. Theodore's two sons were forced to flee Russia.

While in Moscow during the Civil War, with Patriarch Tikhon's blessing, Fr. Theodore was active in distributing aid to the city's needy and hungry population, often at great personal risk. He likewise aided the educational and famine relief efforts of the YMCA and the American Relief Administration (ARA), particularly along the Volga River in Russia, serving as translator, mediator with the frequently hostile Bolshevik authorities and spiritual leader. During this period, he pastored St. John's Church in the village of Tikhomirovka near Tsaritsyn (currently called Volgograd).

Eventually, Patriarch Tikhon blessed Fr. Theodore to return to America and in April 1922, the Holy Synod in Moscow elected Fr. Theodore to be the first Orthodox Bishop of Chicago. In early May 1922, not long before his departure from Russia, Fr. Theodore served as translator for a historic meeting in which E.T. Colton, an American YMCA representative in Russia, conveyed to Patriarch Tikhon a request for the appointment of Metropolitan Platon (Rozhdestvensky) as head of the Church in America. While the Patriarch expressed full support for this appointment, he deferred final decision to the Higher Church Administration Abroad (later to become ROCOR), though just days later, a directive from the Patriarch, issued under pressure from the Soviet government, dissolved the Church Administration Abroad.

After returning to the US with his youngest child (ten-year-old daughter Ljuba) in July 1922, Fr. Theodore quickly reacclimated to the American ecclesiastical situation. With the departure of Archbishop Alexander (Nemolovsky), the burgeoning schismatic activity of the Living Church on the North American continent, led by John Kedrovsky, and other ecclesiastical divisions in the shadow of the upheaval in Eastern Europe, this was indeed a chaotic time for the Church in America. Following confirmation of Metropolitan Platon's primatial leadership at the 3rd All-American Sobor in September 1922, arrangements were made for Fr. Theodore's episcopal consecration. On November 25, he was tonsured a monk with the name Theophilus, and on December 3, his nomination to the episcopacy took place. He was consecrated on December 10, 1922 at St. Nicholas Cathedral in New York by Metropolitan Platon, Bishop Aftimios (Ofiesch) of Brooklyn and Archbishop Panteleimon (Athanassiades) of Neapolis, a hierarch of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem who had very recently arrived in America for an extended stay.

As Bishop Theophilus began his archpastoral service, the Metropolia was still structured as a single diocese. While his episcopal authority was that of an auxiliary bishop, he energetically undertook his hierarchal duties, tirelessly visiting Midwestern parishes and providing them with archpastoral oversight. His labors laid the groundwork for the eventual establishment of a diocese in the Midwest. He oversaw renovation of Chicago's historic Holy Trinity Cathedral and produced publications in both Russian and English. He also made archpastoral visitations to Canada during this period to aid in providing episcopal supervision there.

In 1931, Bishop Theophilus was transferred to the see of San Francisco. Here he proceeded to renovate and expand the structure of Holy Trinity Cathedral that he had built a quarter century earlier. He would soon be charged with even greater responsibility. When Metropolitan Platon reposed in April 1934, Bishop Theophilus was immediately elected locum tenens of the Metropolitan's see and soon elevated to the rank of Archbishop. It was clearly perceived throughout the Church that there were only two possible candidates to accede to the primacy: Archbishop Theophilus and Bishop Leonty (Turkevich), who, though consecrated a hierarch just a year earlier, was a proven church leader. When the 5th All-American Sobor convened in Cleveland in November 1934, the North American Metropolia did not yet have an established procedure for electing her primate. In an effort to conclude prolonged discussion at the council on how the election should be conducted, Bishop Leonty suggested that the Sobor should simply acknowledge the senior hierarch – Archbishop Theophilus – as Primate. The council participants responded by singing "Axios". Archbishop Theophilus was touched by this acknowledgment but asked that the hierarchs express their will in a canonical vote. The hierarchs immediately caucused in the sanctuary of Saint Theodosius Cathedral and announced their choice of Archbishop Theophilus as Metropolitan, canonically electing him on November 23, 1934.

At the time, the evolution of the several episcopal sees in the Metropolia into full-fledged territorial dioceses continued to develop. In some ways, the Metropolia was still governed as a single diocese with only the Metropolitan having the full hierarchal authority normally ascribed to bishops. While each bishop was assigned a particular territory, the structures usually found in dioceses were just beginning to be established. Throughout the years of his primacy, Metropolitan Theophilus would remain Archbishop of San Francisco, but as the Metropolia's administrative headquarters were in New York and many parishes on the east coast were subordinated directly to him, he often traveled across the country to fulfill his archpastoral obligations.

His duties also necessitated travel abroad. In 1935, Patriarch Varnava of Serbia invited the senior metropolitans of the Russian diaspora to travel to Sremski-Karlovci in Yugoslavia where they signed an agreement reconciling their sometimes conflicting relationships. This agreement forged harmony and peace between the Metropolia and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) and unified their parallel jurisdictions and hierarchies in North America from 1935 until 1946. Con't next pg

Metropolitan Theophilus con't from previous pg

The 6th All-American Sobor in 1937 approved the initiative of Metropolitan Theophilus in signing the agreement in Serbia but also reaffirmed the preservation of the autonomous governance and structure of the Metropolia that had been in place since 1924.

By decision of the same Sobor, St. Tikhon's Pastoral School (later: Seminary) and St. Vladimir's Seminary were opened in 1938 for the training of clergy. This filled a significant void in the clerical-formational needs of the Metropolia, as the previous theological school in America had closed in 1923. As the Church's Primate, Metropolitan Theophilus took an active role in the founding and initial development of these new theological schools.

Due to the loss of Saint Nicholas Cathedral to the schismatic "Living Church" in civil courts, the Metropolia's Primatial cathedral and chancery in New York had been stationed in a temporary locale for nearly two decades. However, in 1943, a permanent venue was acquired – the Cathedral of the Holy Virgin Protection. The following year, Metropolitan Theophilus presided in the new cathedral over the 150th anniversary celebrations of Orthodoxy in North America. In the decades following its acquisition, the cathedral was the site of numerous All-American Councils and other significant historical events. With the transfer of the Primatial see to Washington, DC in 1981, it is now the episcopal see of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey.

In the Metropolia's continued pursuit of ecclesial peace and unity under the leadership of Metropolitan Theophilus, a decision of the 7th All-American Sobor in 1946 sought reconciliation with the Church of Russia by recognizing the spiritual authority of the Patriarch of Moscow while maintaining a broad autonomy in the governance of the Metropolia. This overture towards relations with the Patriarchate in Russia caused a relapse in the relations between the Metropolia and ROCOR, as those hierarchs, clergy and parishes who could not accept any relationship with the Patriarchate reconstituted a separate ROCOR jurisdiction in North America. However, the Metropolia's subsequent negotiations with the Moscow Patriarchate towards reconciliation were unsuccessful, as the Metropolia could not accept the Patriarchate's insistence on its prerogative of confirming the Metropolitan's election, including the right of naming another hierarch should the Patriarchal Holy Synod in Moscow deem the candidate nominated by the All-American Council unsuitable. Due to the failure of these negotiations, caused in part by the adamant avoidance by Metropolitan Theophilus of meeting with Patriarchal representatives sent to America to conduct talks, the Patriarchate reactivated a previously imposed, but briefly provisionally lifted, ecclesiastical suspension of the Metropolia's hierarchs. Thus, in accordance with Metropolitan Theophilus' own position and vision, the Metropolia's autonomous governance would continue unfettered.

In spite of some bouts with infirmity in his last years, Metropolitan Theophilus continued to faithfully fulfill his archpastoral duties, still regularly making arduous cross-country journeys by train as demanded by his responsibilities. In the spring of 1950, he was gravely stricken by cancer. As his condition soon began to rapidly deteriorate, Archbishop Leonty rushed from Chicago to the Metropolitan's hospital bedside in San Francisco to receive the dying Primate's final exhortations concerning the future direction of the Church in America. According to eyewitnesses, the last words spoken by Metropolitan Theophilus were "church responsibility." Early in the morning of June 27, 1950, he reposed in the Lord. His funeral took place at Holy Trinity Cathedral in San Francisco on July 1, 1950, and he was interred at the Serbian Cemetery in the nearby town of Colma.

The son of Metropolitan Theophilus, Colonel Boris Pash, a US military intelligence officer, served as security chief for the Manhattan Project and military leader of the Alsos Mission. After World War II, in 1946, as a foreign liaison officer in Japan on General Douglas MacArthur's staff, Col. Pash was instrumental in facilitating the affiliation of most of the Orthodox Church in Japan with the North American Metropolia headed by his father. This Japanese Orthodox group would remain a diocese of the Metropolia until 1970, when, reunified with a smaller faction under the Moscow Patriarchate, the Orthodox Church in Japan was granted autonomy by the Russian Church concurrently with the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America. In the 1960s, Col. Pash briefly served as a member of the Church's Metropolitan Council.

93RD SERBIAN DAY PICNIC

WHEN: Sunday, July 26 from noon to 8pm @
WHERE: Holy Trinity Serbian Orthodox Church at 39 Laird Ave., Youngstown.

Live Music: Nocne Sove (Night Owls (1-3) / Orkestar Pobeda 3-7

Traditional Foods:

BBQ Lamb & Pork (to pre-order lamb & pork call/ text 330-550-6628 before July 18)
Cevapi (grilled sausages)
Serbian Potato Sald, Rice
Kielbasa & Sauerkraut
Stuffed Cabbage
Donuts, Strudel, Pastries

Bounce House for children / Refreshments / 50-50 Raffle

Free Admission / Everyone Welcome! / Dobro Nam Dosli!

Martyrs Proclus and Hilary of Ancyra Commemorated on July 12

The Holy Martyrs Proclus and Hilarion were natives of the village of Kallippi, near Ancyra, and they suffered during the time of a persecution under the emperor Trajan (98-117). Saint Proclus was put under arrest first. Brought before the governor Maximus, he fearlessly confessed his faith in Christ. The governor decided to compel the saint to submit himself to the emperor and offer sacrifice to the pagan gods. During his tortures, the martyr predicted to Maximus that soon he himself would be compelled to confess Christ as the true God. They forced the martyr to run after the chariot of the governor, heading towards the village Kallippi. Exhausted, Saint Proclus prayed that the Lord would halt the chariot. By the power of God the chariot halted, and no force could move it from the spot. The dignitary sitting in it became petrified. The martyr told him that he would remain unmoving until such time as he would sign a document with a confession of Christ. Only after this could the chariot continue on its way with the governor.

The humiliated pagan took fierce revenge on Saint Proclus. He commanded that Proclus be led out beyond the city, tied to a pillar and shot with arrows. The soldiers, leading Saint Proclus to execution, told him to give in and save his life, but the saint said that they should follow their orders.

Along the way to the place of execution, they met Hilarion, the nephew of Saint Proclus, who with tears embraced his uncle and also confessed himself a Christian. The soldiers seized him, and he was thrown into prison. The holy Martyr Proclus prayed for his tormentors and surrendered his soul to God beneath a hail of arrows.

Saint Hilarion was brought to trial and, with the same courage as Saint Proclus, confessed himself a Christian. After tortures he was sentenced to death. They tied the martyr's hands and dragged him by his feet through the city, wounded and bloody, and then they beheaded him three days after the death of his uncle, the holy Martyr Proclus. Christians buried them together in a single grave.

Romans 12:6-14 (Epistle)

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

Matthew 9:1-8 (Gospel)

So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you." And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!" But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Arise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" – then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." And he arose and departed to his house. Now when the multitudes saw it, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

THANK YOU RECEIVED

Dear Fr. Andrew,

Glory be to Jesus Christ! We pray all of you had a blessed Feast of Pentecost! Summer is off to a heated start in the beautiful mountains of Northeast Pennsylvania. As the excitement of the academic year ends, new excitement is starting! We have workshops, retreats, and certificate residencies in progress—all with the enormous joy of St. Tikhon's Summer Camp on the horizon! (I am even writing this letter to you from our sponsored pilgrimage in the footsteps of St. Nicholai in Serbia!)

In addition to these, we are launching a new website very soon! These will have a brand new Vocation Hub and destination pages for our beloved supporters who are looking for new ways to feel closer than ever before to the action here at St. Tikhons. This and much more will be shared in the Dean's Bi-annual address later this month.

We are ever-grateful for your involvement and life-giving generosity. St. Tikhon's Seminary is a product of the entire Orthodox community nationwide. It takes and entire Church to make a seminary, and you are a crucial part of our vision!

We send our love and our prayers to you, your families, and your parish communities. We thank our Lord and Saviour for keeping us in your hearts, and can't wait to see All the Good we will do together in the months to come!

Yours very gratefully in Christ,

Fr. John Parker
Dean and Chief operating officer