Autumn 2009

The Orthodox American

Witnessing the Spirit, in the West

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Investiture of the Sixth Archbishop of OCCA

Photo courtesy of Rev S. Duncan and Rev B. Martzall

By the election of the Synod of Bishops of OCCA, and the Grace of God Metropolitan Archbishop Peter Robert Zahrt installed by

Patriarch Alfred Lankenau At Crosswood Centre, Auburn, Indiana, USA On the twelfth day of September The Year of Grace 2009

Many Voices, One Song

This was the theme that Archbishop Peter chose for the weekend. The people of God, clergy and lay, gathered from near and far, in our diversity, many voices joined. The different pillars of prayer of the church seemed to surround the 1.00 pm ceremony on Saturday, 12 September. From Friday evening to the Sunday liturgy's conclusion with the ordination of our newest and youngest presbyter, our many voices were joined in one song, a hymn of praise to God for the goodness given to us all and praying for and with Archbishop Peter.

The Chapel of Saint Mary Magdalene was filled to overflowing, with many finding a place only in the vesting area of the entrance. Across from the doorway the ten members of the Synod of Bishops supervised the investing of +Peter with that appearance that only Bishops can have as +Peter learns the ropes quickly. The Liturgy Committee, the Planning Committee, the local Chapter of OCCA Clergy, the Community of the Cross, and the Crosswood Centre staff had done a magnificent job in coordinating the ceremony.

The service booklet had the task of educating those present, especially the laity and clergy of the Western Rite, though many of the Eastern tradition also had never witnessed the multi-layered liturgical garments that an Eastern rite Archbishop wears. As the Introduction in the Service booklet said: "The Orthodox churches, on the other hand, care less about simplicity, and revel in a sensory experience that is multi-layered and complex." And just so were the bright colored brocades and copes which the Eastern Rite clergy wore for an Orthodox Liturgy. The service booklet allowed us to follow in print the various additions in liturgical garments in which +Peter was invested. The layers were certainly not few in number for so a warm an Indiana day.

The Rite of Election and Presentation to the People followed with the Patriarch of Honor leading. All of us in the Chapel when asked if +Peter's was truly worthy of this ministry with one voice we responded with the acclamation: " He is". The Archbishop was led to his cathedra and the Patriarch of Honor to his place.

We have a new Archbishop and Primate, +Peter.
Worthy. Worthy. Worthy.
Let our many voices sing this one new song to our God!

Vicar Kevin Kearney

12 September 2009, Mary Magdalena Chapel, Auburn IN,

Gathering

The Assembly of Israel and the earliest Christian communities were both called εκκλεσια, a gathering and so at the call of the Synod the family of OCCA began to gather in Indiana, arriving worn from long drives and weary from struggles with airlines, delayed flights, and cramped seats, not precisely the mood for joy, but as the footsore gathered all that changed. Like at Pentecost, the Spirit transmuted us into something beyond our fatigue, into more than tired travelers. As Bishop James Gleeson says, "It is difficult to recall a time of greater joy as we each in our own time, arrived from across the breadth of the nation, united in our hopes and positive in our intentions. We were running around with grins on our faces like a bunch of kids." The Spirit worked as we met in small groups, over meals and chatted for three days. Even in so informal a setting, far from the solemnity of liturgy, our sharing showed a growing sense of the Spirit in OCCA

Each liturgy over the three day span contributed to this tangible feeling that the Spirit was there, moving among us, uniting us even in our diversity of styles, gathering us all into the warm embrace of agape. Each liturgy celebrated in different rites drawn from East and West recalled our jurisdiction's own varied history as +Vilatte moved towards his vision of a new Orthodoxy in and of the West until the liturgy culminated in the investiture of the new archbishop, who in receiving the sacred signs of office stands as a personal symbol of our unity.

Investiture

The procession gathered outside the chapel to cross the Centre in ranks. They waited quietly all levels of the clergy of the jurisdiction vested and it was striking to see how solemn and grand we looked, knowing that there was no wealthy established corporate church bearing the expenses. Each one of us there carried the cost of ministry and vestments personally and had no need to apologize to any other for doing their best.

At the appointed hour, we led the archbishop candidate and the Patriarch of Honor into Mary Magdalene Chapel, named for she who was called "Apostle to the apostles." The closeness of the filled to capacity chapel only added to the emotional ties of the moment. The music was magnificent as in any medieval cathedral as our many voices were lifted in sacred anthems. The readings brought the gathering to focus, centered in the Word of God. Then it was time for +Peter to receive the approval of God's people and the symbols of his sacred office.

It is surprising in seeing it, how simple, the ancient ceremony is, the recognition that a new generation has taken on the responsibilities of the apostles in leading Christ's flock and speaking the good news. Then the investiture began solemnly intoned with responses through the changes of vestments until the archbishop stood in the mantle of his new office, viperous staff in hand, and mitre upon his head as he received the homage and kiss of peace of the family he now guided. The ceremony was all enclosed within the Sacred Liturgy which is the purpose and focus of all Christian ministry. When it was finished followed by dinner agape as we all gathered at the Centre's refectory.

On Sunday with the new archbishop at Liturgy, we shared more signs of renewal and the continuing life and growth of the People of God as new ministers, deacons, presbyters, and vicars answered the call to ordination or were elevated to greater responsibilities within their ministries.

Departure

As we packed our vestments and airline tickets and auto keys were found, Bishop James again reiterates the sense that the Spirit was moving, "We were leaving, the ceremony was done, but what we had begun in the Spirit was far from finished. We each felt the call, the tug of our summons to go forth into the world." And as Christ commissioned the apostles so are we, 'Go forth to all nations,' east and west, speaking the good news of the realm of God and baptizing them. Amen

From an interview with Bishop James Gleeson

Round'n About

Notes from the Dioceses & Vicariates

Chicago

Spring Time
Straight and Gay Alliance ministry

Dear Br. Michael,

I was getting wasted the night before my seventh DUI court date. I left the last bar after my fight. You kept on eye on me as my condition worsened. You spent the night listening to me with stillness that I can't forget. I remember Morning Prayer which helped relax me. You went to court with me.

I was hung over and peed my pants. You suggested we go to a changing room. You knew I was facing life in jail, so you invited me to exchange pants with you. "You wore my dirty and wet pants." No one is like a foot soldier for God like you. Because of you, I only got probation and community service.

Today, I am 3 months sober. I am back with my wife. I am not drinking away my excuse to cover my own gay hatred.

Sincerely,
Harvey Lott

Thank You,
Br. Michael C. Oboza
Straight and Gay Alliance ministry 1999-2009

Great Lakes and South

Vicar Kevin Kearney+ was blessed to attend the archbishop's installation. These days he is much busier teaching with his wife for the community college at the Toledo Psychiatric Hospital.

Father Chris Zeller has just completed Crisis Intervention Training for police officers for dealing with mentally ills persons and is now certified as a "CIT" officer. Due to his overwhelming workload, he was unable to be at Auburn. He reported that Sandie and the children are all fine.

Mother Linda Vining regretfully couldn't attend the Installation. She is still trying to increase her work-hours and is now regularly scheduled as a Registered Respiratory Therapist at a nursing facility for ventilator dependent patients while also working as an RRT at another hospital. She expects that her work will increase when the flu season arrives. Mother Linda feels fortunate that her ministry of nurturing God's breath of life in others is so readily combined with her daily job. When not at work, she has been busy in the garden which has been bountiful this year so, she has been putting up vegetables in her kitchen, to keep the food budget in line.

Father Tommy Stadler is relieved to be working as the layoffs at work were postponed till December. However, with the heavy demands of overtime and the anticipated layoffs tempers are short and nerves are frayed. In this grim situation Father Tommy strives to be a light in the darkness. Jim also continues to work.

New York and Atlantic States

In August, Bishop Elizabeth was in Chicago to give a presentation on intimate partner violence at a health conference, which was attended by Brother Michael Oboza. While there, she had the opportunity to enjoy dinner and good conversation with the very hospitable Vicar for Chicago, Father Donn Mielke and Brother Mike Kierpiec. The high point of this quarter was, naturally, the Installation of Archbishop Peter.

Several of the clergy from the Atlantic Diocese traveled out to Auburn for the celebration, and returned refreshed and inspired, ready with renewed vigor to continue our work in this corner of God's world.

We're pleased to say that after many months of search, the Parish Community of St John has found a home. Mother Francesca located a chapel at the ELCA Church of Our Savior's Atonement (OSA), located in Inwood, at the upper end of Manhattan. The pastor is delighted that we will be joining their neighborhood and community, and we're grateful for their hospitality. The parish will end its activity at the Spark Center in September, and move to OSA in October.

Our clergy continue with their good works in Baltimore-Washington, New Jersey, and Western New York. Some of us will attend Orthodox Education Day at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood in early October; the conference this year will focus on the religious implications around the care of the environment.

Great Plains

Many of the priests from the Diocese of the Great Plains attended the installation of the new Archbishop. Fr. Marty Baskin and Fr. Michael Sherbert were kind enough to assist Bishop Edmund Kubiak with the very long drive to Auburn.

At that event (with the kind assistance of Fr. Stephen Duncan). Fr. Francis Fortenot was ordained Archimandrite for the Diocese of the Great Plains. Bishop Kubiak was also honored to assist at the same ceremony with the ordination of two new archpriests (not of Great Plains): Fr. Ken Weibel and Fr. John Neubauer. Bishop Kubiak greatly appreciated being part of the ordination all of these fine servants for Our Lord. He also extends his thanks to Fr. Stephen for all his hard work, to Fr. Marty Baskin who read the Gospel, Fr. Michael Sherbert who served during the liturgy, and finally to Fr. Richard Cleaver who also generously assisted in the installation of the Archbishop. Bishop Kubiak is pleased that the OCCA is blessed with so many fine priests to labor in the fields.

The Pacific Coast

Bishop James Gleeson and Bishop Jerry Hegarty ret., and Fr Michael Cabler were pleased to represent the Diocese at the archiepiscopal installation at Auburn in Sept. As head of the vocational team, Bishop James has ongoing communication with four clergy candidates who are interested in OCCA.

Among the diocesan clergy, Bishop James is pleased to note that there is a strong connection of four members, +James, Ralph+, Basil+, and Anne+, with veterans and veteran services and hopes the ministry to this group grows.

The San Francisco Bay area clergy will again be participating along with representatives of all the major churches in the capital city, Sacramento, at the PFLAG interdenominational Service of Remembrance for victims of hate crimes. This Service, held since the murder of Matthew Shepard, rotates annually among the Sacramento churches and synagogues.

Father Ralph Curtis was elevated to Archpriest in May. In July he attended the annual Correctional Institution training. In August, he and James Junkin celebrated their first wedding anniversary and Ralph completed fourteen years of service in the jail ministry.

Mother Laura Emerson is currently occupied full time with the custodial and spiritual care of a close relation.
Deacon Mother Anne French and Father Basil Donadio are both working on their spiritual formation while employed at hospitals in the San Diego area.

OCCA Contact Information

Chancery Office
5355 CR 35
Auburn, IN 46706-9717

PO Box 5481
Fort Wayne, IN 56895-5481

Administrative Assistant Mother Maria
Email anytime; contacts by phone after 1 PM CTZ
Cell 260-385-3707
Phone 260-485-3707
Email maria.alene@juno.com

Footnotes in History

The Twelve Sacraments?

Peter Damian, 1007-1072, a cardinal and Doctor of the Roman Church wrote that there were twelve sacraments including the solemn vows of monastics, hermits and nuns and the coronation of kings.

The Bookshelf

Bradshaw, Paul, The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship, sources and methods for the study of early liturgy, Oxford University Press, 2002

Paul Bradshaw is Professor of Liturgy at Notre Dame, chief editor of the journal *Studia Liturgica*, and former president of the North American Academy of Liturgy. This most recent volume follows his earlier works, Daily Prayer in the Early Church, 1982 and Ordination Rites of the Ancient Churches of East and West, 1990.

Dr. Bradshaw in a very readable style lays out the issues of research into the origins of Christian worship and surveys the conclusions of the past two decades which have unsettled some of the 'established' ideas on early worship, probably the most significant being that first century Christian worship did not evolve directly out of Rabbinical Judaism. Rather both developed out of the broad mix of diverse Jewish practices and traditions of the Post-temple period before coalescing into the more documented forms found in the 3rd - 4th Centuries.

In sources, Dr. Bradshaw examines the earliest preserved liturgical documents, such as the Didache, the Apostolic Tradition, and the Canons of Hippolytus, analyzing their relationships in structure, composition in the various languages in which they've been found, and their meaning for development of the liturgies of East and West.

This book is a major contributor to the initial chapters of the Oxford History of Christian Worship and is highly recommended for those interested in a look back into how the earliest Christians worshipped.

Ralph Curtis+

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