

## **Mississippi**

### **Holy Resurrection Church, Clinton**

Clergy: Fr. Paul Yerger, Fr. Matthew Jackson

We are grateful to God for a good year. In January Fr. Matthew Jackson was placed on our staff as assistant priest, and has added a lot by his preaching and teaching. We had the honor of hosting the Diocesan Clergy Conference in February, and our members enjoyed meeting Metropolitan Jonah, Bishop Mark, and the other Diocesan Clergy. On March 13 we hosted the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers for the four Orthodox churches of the Jackson area. In September we received large murals of the Ascension and Pentecost from Fr. Andrew Tregubov of Claremont, NH. These are on the front walls flanking the iconostas. We decided to try holding Church School monthly on Saturday afternoons rather than weekly on Sunday; the first session was September 17 and was well attended. Our website, [www.holyres.net](http://www.holyres.net), was converted to a WordPress format and improved. We were saddened by the repose of Archbishop Dmitri; he was involved with our church since our founding in 1977 and much loved here. Four of us attended his funeral.

During this period we baptized 2 adults and 4 children and chrismated 5 adults and 2 children. We crowned 2 couples in marriage. There were no deaths. We had 12 adults and 7 children transfer in and 9 adults and 5 children transfer out. We now have about 102 active adult members and 38 children, and 1 catechumen. Sunday Liturgy attendance averages 80-100 adults and children. Finances are better than last year but still tight.

Fr. Thomas Hopko will speak here February 14-16, 2012

### **Christ the Savior Mission, McComb**

Clergy: Fr. Benedict Crawford

At this point our average Sunday attendance is around 20 adults and around 10 children. At Saturday Vespers we typically have 7-10 adults and 8 children.

Our regular schedule of services is as follows:

Saturday, Vespers 6:00 pm Sunday, Divine Liturgy 10:00 am Monday, Inquirers' Class 7:00 pm Tuesday, Matins 8:00 am Wednesday, Vespers 6:00 pm Thursday, Matins 8:00

Once a month the Divine Liturgy is served in Hattiesburg for the benefit of our members there. We also have a class on the faith there once a month. Average attendance in Hattiesburg is around 12 adults and 3 children.

In the past year we have baptized one adult and chrismated one adult. We currently have one young woman who will soon become a catechumen (probably within a week or two), and three inquirers.

Our greatest challenges of the past year relate to the local economic downturn. We have lost about five members during that time due to members moving away to find work. I am glad to say, however, that we've also seen some new members or potential new members arrive in the last month, which may begin to make up for that loss.

Another challenge for our mission has to do with the fact that we are at this point largely a “long- distance” parish for most of our parishioners. To my mind this highlights the fact that there is a real need to see a larger number of people from McComb and the immediate area learn about the existence of the Orthodox Church. Almost every visitor we have drives from a distance. We have one couple who drive nearly two hours to be with us. Another couple is currently inquiring about the faith from the Mobile area, and the husband has just resigned from his position as a pastor in the Church of Christ so that he can join the Orthodox Church. So it seems clear that the Lord is at work and is using this parish, but we are hopeful that He will lead more people to us from nearer at hand! We hope to schedule some events in the coming year to increase local awareness of our presence.

This year we stopped receiving funds from the diocese to help missions. Thus far the transition to being dependent solely on funds from our parishioners and donors has gone fairly satisfactorily, though giving was off during the summer months. We understand that a significant bequest was made to the church by the mother of a parishioner who passed away last summer, but thus far we have not received anything from it. Our hope is that the funds may be used to pay off what remains of the parish's debt on its three buildings.

#### **Hattiesburg Mission Station**

Clergy: Fr. Benedict Crawford

A monthly Divine Liturgy is served here on a Saturday.

#### **Louisiana**

##### **St. Matthew Mission, Baton Rouge**

Clergy: Fr. Mark Christian

By the mercy of God, St. Matthew the Apostle Mission in Baton Rouge, Louisiana has grown to an average Sunday morning attendance of 32, an increase of 20% over 2010. Average monthly income for the first three quarters of 2011 has surpassed our anticipated monthly needs by nearly 10%. A building fund (savings account) has been established with the Diocese and we continue to operate a small bookstore and to tithe to the Diocese.

In addition to weekly Great Vespers on Saturday evenings and Divine Liturgy on Sunday mornings, we have introduced services for all of the Great Feasts and some lesser commemorations. The Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts was served each Wednesday in Great Lent. On Palm Sunday we were delighted to have a congregation of 54, our largest Sunday morning gathering to date. We observed an increasingly full schedule during Holy Week, culminating with Nocturn, Paschal Matins, and the Divine Liturgy on Great and Holy Pascha.

Regular classes are conducted for inquirers and catechumens and a children's class has been introduced. We celebrated five Baptisms, two Chrismations, and presently have two catechumens. Our choir is growing and there is increasing interest in serving in the altar and reading at services. There is some frustration

with the limitations of our present rented storefront space, but the high price of relocating and the difficulty of finding a more suitable building have convinced us to continue to find creative ways to use the space we have

As a small but growing mission in south Louisiana, we are cultivating a life together in gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all people. With great joy and humility, we rejoice that the Lord is adding to our numbers those who are being saved.

### **Nativity of Our Lord Mission, Bossier City**

Clergy: Fr. Jason Foster

Thankfully we are considering a new “more permanent” location for the Mission, and it looks like we may be able to move into it in October. I believe this will help us tremendously in regards to missions and evangelism.

Currently our regular schedule of services is as follows: Saturday night, Great Vespers, Sunday Morning Divine Liturgy (following the hours) at a local credit union. Wednesday night vespers, bible study and dinner takes place in our home where we converted our formal dining room into a chapel. Quite often, on feast days like today, I serve at either the Greek or Antiochian parishes if one of the priests is out of town or we cannot secure a location.

Our average attendance for Saturday night Great Vespers is 18 -20 (10 children and 10 adults). Sunday Divine Liturgy is approximately 40 people. Usually this number consists of 25 adults and 15 children. Wednesday night average attendance is 35. Usually 18 adults and 17 children – this is the service that most non-Orthodox visit and Orthodox Christians from other jurisdictions visit. We also serve a local shelter for battered women and children once a month (average attendance is 16 or so), and we often meet together just to eat or spend time with each other – attendance varies on this social events.

Over the last year we have had three baptisms (one infant and two children) and eight chrismations (six adults and two children). At present, we have four adult and three children attending catechism classes. Lord willing, they will be received into the Church at Nativity.

In regards to major challenges, the most trying has been our inability to secure a location. Once again, this may be resolved. However, it is not a long-term solution. Land in our area is very expensive, so we are praying and hoping someone will donate it to us in exchange for the tax benefit. As I assume with other young missions, finances are tight. Due to the fact that most of the tithes and offerings we receive helps supplement our income, we are not able to save a lot of money at this time. In turn, this delays the purchase of land and or a building. I am in the process of securing the forms needed to apply for the national evangelism grant. If God blesses us with this grant through the Church, then we will be able to move forward more aggressively.

Our goal is to continue to reach those that are on a journey to Orthodoxy while at the same time ministering to and meeting the needs of those amongst us. There is a sincere hunger for Christ and His Church in our area. All we need

to do is be authentic and love those around us. This starts with us cultivating a deeper love for our Lord and each other. Thankfully, I feel like this is happening, and, therefore, the message we are bringing to those in our community is sincere and not hypocritical. Please continue to pray for us as we seek to be a place of healing, i.e. a spiritual hospital, to those in the Shreveport-Bossier City area.

A few of the highlights from the last year include both internal and external considerations. Two Baptist pastors that I once mentored left their churches and, along with their wives and children, became catechumens. One couple and child were Chrismated in March and the other couple is set to be Chrismated in December. Also at present, we have very good relationships with the two other Orthodox churches in our area. We do things together quite often. These relationships lead to Bishop Basil donating an iconostasis to us, and members of the Greek parish building an altar and other liturgical items for the mission. This unity also contributed to a very successful Vacation Church School this year. The total attendance was approximately 50 children and 15 adult volunteers helping all week. Also, our people at the mission have really worked hard and well together over this last year, especially the choir and everyone who helps set up and tear down the chapel each and every week. This is one of the blessings as well as challenges of a mission parish. It takes all of us all of the time working together to, by God's grace, make it work.

## **Arkansas**

### **Ss. George and Alexandra Mission, Fort Smith**

Clergy: Fr. John Maxwell, Fr. Paul Fetsko

During the past 12 months we have had one Chrismation, three adult Baptisms, four children baptism. We had one parishioner died. And one Orthodox person, somewhat connected to the parish commit suicide. Three adults and four children move away.

We had our first Christmas Children's Play and people really loved it. Our attendance has been up and down this year. We generally have between 5-10 for Saturday Vespers, 3-8 for Sunday Matins, 20-35 for Sunday Liturgy and Feast day vespers between 5-10 and feast day liturgy between 3 -7. We had pretty good attendance during holy Week and probably had about 40 for Pascha.

Since beginning the Mission Effort in Northwest Arkansas, Fr. Paul does the cycle of services on the First and Third Sunday of the Month. We are making plans on addressing the heating situation for our Church Hall. We are investigating putting in interior walls and making the heating space smaller and more efficient.

### **Rogers, AR, Mission Station**

Clergy: Fr. John Maxwell

In April under the encouragement of Bishop Mark I began an investigation into the feasibility of a Mission Effort in NW Arkansas and then with Bishop

Mark's blessing began to hold services on Saturday Evening and Sunday Morning. The response of the people there have been very heart warming.

They are serious about coming to confession. On Sunday following our Pot Luck and Class, I am usually one of the first to leave around 2 pm. They want to stay and be with each other. Each time I go I feel revitalized and as if I have been on a spiritual retreat.

We have been meeting in a home, but this coming week we will be in a rented space for the first time. It is located just outside of Rogers, AR, which is where we once had an OCA mission. For a long time Archbishop Dmitri of Blessed Memory keep its name on the DOS directory with hopes of starting it up again.

On several occasions Vladika said to me that he would really like to see something happen again in Rogers. The rental space is 1200 Square feet. It is very modern and clean looking and is only \$500 a month. In addition to this, the room next to it, also 12 square feet is available for us for Free on Sunday. It is a community room and has a kitchenette and tables and chairs.

Our attendance for Vespers tends to be between 10-14 and Liturgy between 18-24. There is lots of talent in the Mission Effort. There are some good voices and the choir is practicing hard. There are business and professional people in the effort. One man, received a blessing From Bishop Antoun to do an Icon for St. Nicholas Orthodox Church. It is quite beautiful. One man is quite talented with wood work. Another man went to a Protestant Seminary and is very humble and teachable. I have been mentoring him to do inquiry classes in the future.

St. John of Chicago did some labor in Arkansas in a place called Slovak. At one time there was an Orthodox Church there. Some liturgical items from that Church are housed in an Episcopal Church in Stuttgart, AR. We are talking with the Priest there and he is open to us obtaining these items. I hope to drive out there in Mid October on my way to my Board Certification Meetings in Memphis. (Stuttgart is between Memphis and Little Rock, a good distance from us.). I think that there is real hope for this mission effort and when the time comes for it to get a name, they would like to petition for St. John of Chicago.

A Note about Antiochian and OCA relations. For years I have received numerous complaints from people in the Antiochian Church about the Priest there. I have constantly sent them back to the priest. Many people cannot emotionally, spiritually go back to that Church, especially those who allegedly when approaching the priest about very serious concerns reported that the priest would fly into a rage and tell them to leave the Church. I have heard too many stories not to believe the veracity of these reports and the issues are indeed serious. We are not targeting members from St. Nicholas and we do not focus our attention on them. Unfortunately there have been some complaints by their hierarchs to ours. Two weeks ago the parish council at St. Nicholas unanimously voted to promote good relations with our Mission Effort. That was a very good sign. There was also reportedly some admission of self control problems by the priest there to the council which seems to be something new. Thus this gives me

hope that this mission effort may in reality be here for the Salvation of the Antiochian Priest, and for St. Nicholas and for those who are disenfranchised and for those in this region who stand in need of the Orthodox Faith.

## **Oklahoma**

### **Holy Apostles, Tulsa**

Clergy: Fr. Ambrose Arrington

Holy Apostles in Bixby has faced some challenges over the last year, as well as having made some strides forward. We currently average about 45 at Liturgy on Sunday morning. We celebrate Vespers on Wednesday, Liturgy on Thursday, Vespers on Saturday and Liturgy on Sunday, as well as all feast day services. We have an active church school, and a homeschool group that meets once a week made up of parishioners from Holy Apostles and Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox church in Tulsa. Over the past year, we have celebrated 7 baptisms/chrisinations, 5 children and 2 adults, one wedding, and one funeral.

This was the first funeral in our parish's history. We have recently begun our inquirer's class for the 'academic year' and currently have 2 catechumens who will be baptized this weekend, and 8 other inquirers. We also built a parish rectory on the property, and moved in November 2010. Challenges we have had over the past year: we had several families leave the parish for various reasons, which was difficult for the community, spiritually and financially. We seem to be recovering now, and hopefully maturing somewhat from the experience. Our biggest challenge remains an outstanding legal issue surrounding approval we received from the Board of Adjustment to implement a professional site plan we developed. Specifically 2 of our neighbors object to us putting in a cemetery, and one has hired a lawyer to appeal the decision. This is an ongoing spiritual drag on the parish. We hope to have some resolution soon, but the hearing date has been postponed several times, and some of us have gotten discouraged.

Nevertheless, God continues to bless us, and we continue trying to live out the Gospel with His grace and to the best of our abilities.

### **SS Cyril & Methodius, Hartshorne**

Clergy: Fr. Ambrose Arrington

Ss. Cyril and Methodius parish in Hartshorne, OK has been under my [Fr. Ambrose's] spiritual guidance for 2 1/2 years now, since the retirement of Fr. Joseph Nelson, who reposed in the Lord in May of this year. Parish membership there is small, and many of them are elderly, suffering from health problems. They have one catechumen who is being instructed by one of the members of the community, and we hope to have a baptism by Nativity. There is some interest in Orthodoxy in the area from time to time, but it is sporadic and unpredictable, yielding no lasting results as of yet. Doubtless someone being able to dedicate more time and energy to the community would be able to see some fruit. Metropolitan Jonah, in his visit to the area last year, mentioned to them the

possibility of a small monastic community to take over responsibility of the upkeep of buildings and maintenance of services. This idea was received enthusiastically both by myself and the community, but nothing has come of it. This is likely due to the lack of a bishop in Dallas to spearhead the endeavor.

**Weatherford, OK, Mission Station (Summer 2011)**

Serviced by Deanery Clergy (Reader Nick Aiello)

This mission station was established this summer by Reader Nick Aiello, who is now back at St. Tikhon's completing his third years of seminary. He plans to come back and live there with his wife when he graduates and build up a parish. This summer's initial effort garnered several people committed to seeing a parish here to the point of keeping their rented space through the year. Fr. Michael Storozuk has gone there to serve two Liturgies. One baptism was celebrated.

**Texas**

**St. Seraphim Cathedral, Dallas**

Clergy: Fr. John Anderson, Dn. Steven Kroll, Dn. Gregory Norris, Dn. Gregory X

**St. Barbara, Fort Worth**

Clergy: Fr. Basil Zebrun

The first parish activities of the New Church Year were experienced in August as St. Barbara's conducted a parent/teacher meeting for the 2011/2012 Church School program, and participated in the Texas Christian University Church Fair. The TCU activity helped to encourage the parish council to budget funds for local OCF work, spearheaded by a new member of the parish and his family. This addition to the budget follows another added line item: one percent of Church income donated every month to the Deanery Mission Fund, as suggested at previous clergy gatherings. Preparations are well underway for our 25th Annual Old Country Christmas Ethnic Festival, November 11 & 12, one of two major outreach/fundraisers. It is estimated that between four to six hundred people will visit our Church during the event. Wednesday evening Catechumen/Inquirer classes continue to be held after Vespers, with Church members participating as well. Sunday morning adult classes on St. John's Gospel will begin in October, as will once-a-month General Confessions in September. Forty day Panikhida's will be conducted on October 5 & 6 for His Eminence Archbishop Dmitri, in conjunction with services for St. Innocent of Alaska. St. Barbara's is looking forward to hosting an evening gathering in January 2012 of a Regional Mission & Evangelism Conference sponsored jointly by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese and North Texas Orthodox Missions. The entire Conference is being dedicated in loving memory to Archbishop Dmitri who fostered unity among the Orthodox in North Texas, but whose love for missions is greatly recognized cross-jurisdictionally. Plans are in the works for hosting a parish retreat after Pascha 2012. In addition attendance at Liturgies has increased to an average of ninety worshippers on each Sunday

during the first eight months of 2011. And finally, discussions have begun concerning a design for a traditional Church building, and for the re-establishment of a formal Parish Building Fund to help with the project.

### **St. Sava Mission, Allen**

Clergy: Fr. Seraphim Hipsch, Fr. Photius Avants

This past year St. Sava's paid off our property. We have had an official kick-off fund-raising campaign for the construction of the temple. We are still negotiating with the city to determine the most cost effective means for accomplishing their desires and keeping our costs from escalating beyond our means. We have also been assigned a second priest. We have received 5 souls by baptism and celebrated the mystery of marriage for a couple in the community. We continue to pray the Divine Services with Sunday Liturgy, Monday Divine Liturgy, Wednesday Vespers and Parish Education, Thursday Divine Liturgy with Homeschool Co-op, Friday Youth Group Activities, Saturday Prayer for those suffering from abortion and Great Vespers. We continue to expand our ministry opportunities through Prison Ministry, Real Options for Women, and our local homeless shelter.

### **St. Maximus the Confessor Mission, Denton**

Clergy: Fr. Justin Frederick

This July, St. Maximus celebrated the ten-year anniversary of its founding, honored by the presence of His Beatitude Metropolitan Jonah and His Grace Bishop Nikon.

Our Sunday attendance has averaged 72 over the past year, up nearly ten from the previous year, despite having several people move away. A 'normal' Sunday record of 101 was set in June, and 125 turned out for the tenth anniversary Liturgy in July. Vigil attendance has jumped even more dramatically, from about 20 in the previous year to consistent numbers between 30 and 40 with a high of 50 on a normal weekend and 65-70 the anniversary weekend with the bishops.

In the past twelve months, we baptized six adults, seven children, and received two adult converts by Chrismation. Currently we have nine active adult catechumens, three children, and five serious adult inquirers with another four children. Two readers were tonsured. A year-long Basics of Orthodoxy Class is taught on Wednesday nights after Vespers with from ten to twenty in attendance, and an Adult Education class is taught on Fridays usually with four to eight present for the edification and education of the faithful. Church school is held on Sundays after Liturgy, September through May.

Our regular schedule of services includes Vigil Saturday night at 5:00, Hours Sunday at 8:45 and Divine Liturgy Sunday morning at 9:00. The fast days of Wednesday and Friday each week are observed with Vespers in the evenings at 7:00 (with a Pannikhida on Fridays after Vespers), and Matins in the mornings at 7:00. Matins is currently served on Monday and Tuesday also. Services are

served daily during Great Lent. Vigils are served for major feasts on the eve of the Feast, and Liturgies the morning of the feast, either at 7:00 or 9:00. We are increasingly serving a weekday Liturgy, most commonly on Thursdays.

Our challenges include getting more hall space built, renovating, repairing, and beautifying our present one hundred-year-old building, building a new church, revitalizing our outreach to the two universities in town, growing in our ability to 'catch men' for Christ, and continuing to deepen the spiritual life of our parishioners so that those we bring in remain in and those in go ever deeper into Christ.

In obedience to the Metropolitan, the priest has been teaching the curriculum for the diaconal late vocations program, four classes in Scripture, Church History, Dogmatics, and Liturgics. While geared for the Late Vocations program, they are open to laymen not pursuing ordination.

### **St. Paul Mission, Denison**

Clergy: Fr. Michael Storozuk

The regular weekly services at St. Paul's include an Akathist at 4:00 p.m on Saturday, Great Vespers on Saturday at 5:00 p.m., the Hours Sunday morning at 9:05, Divine Liturgy at 9:30, Vespers Wednesday night at 7:00, Thursday morning Divine Liturgy at 7:30. Services for all of the feast days are served as well. On most Tuesdays at 5:00 a.m. I serve Divine Liturgy in my Chapel at home and other services as is meet.

Our average Sunday Attendance is 34 During the last year we received 2 adults by Chrismation. The major need of our mission is more parishioners. This is good, of course, for the Kingdom, but would also help our financial situation. Still working on details to finish out the Activity Center. Earlier this year I made new icons for our Holy Doors. During July an Orthodox young man moved to Sherman and joined the parish. We have about 5 inquirers at the present time. Our main goal: To be faithful and do the services worshipping God.

St. Paul's also hosted the South-Central Deanery meeting this year in June.

### **St. John of Damascus Mission, Tyler**

Clergy: Fr. John Mikita

This past year has been one of growth on several levels. Most of our numerical growth has come from Orthodox families moving into the East Texas area. This has swelled our numbers enough that the dynamics of the mission have changed substantially as we welcome new families into our midst. We currently have one catechumen. Our average Sunday attendance is 45. We continue to have Catechumens class on Wednesdays at 6, followed by Vespers at 7, and Adult Education at 7:45. On Saturday we have teen and children's Church school at 5:00, followed by Great Vespers at 6. Liturgy on Sunday is at 10am. We are greatly looking forward to hosting Fr. Demetrios Carellas at the end of September for a series of 3 talks on Faith, Hope, and Love. We also continue the

design process on our temple and hope to be in a position to begin raising money this Fall.

**St. Anthony, San Antonio**

Clergy: Fr. Leo Poore

**St. Cyril of Jerusalem Mission, Houston**

Clergy: Fr. Samuel

Regular average Sunday attendance is 44-50 at St. Cyrils. The regular schedule of services includes Great Vespers Saturday evening at 6:00, the Hours Sunday morning at 9:15, Divine Liturgy Sunday at 9:30, Sunday school for children right after the Gospel reading to right before Communion, and services for the Great Feasts. A teaching session on Orthodox Theology is held every Saturday after Vespers. Catechesis usually takes place mid-week on an individual basis. The priest also ministers by personally mentoring of five men each week for two hours each, holding the Parish Council Meeting once a month, doing marriage counseling with two parish couples, and much personal visitation at parishioners' homes each week.

Parish highlights for the year include our move from a storefront space to a former sanctuary of HopePointe Anglican Church in The Woodlands, a visit by Metropolitan JONAH, a visit to the Byzantine Chapel in Houston, including Vespers, ordination to Sub-Deaconate for Constatin Ardeleanu, tonsuring to Reader for Mark Hunter. We look forward to a symposium on Orthodox unity and working toward an American Orthodox Church to be held December 2-3, 2011 at St. Cyril's in The Woodlands to be led by Metropolitan JONAH and Speakers/leaders to include Fr. John Behr from St. Vladimir's, Fr. Alexander Addy from St. Tikhon's, Fr. Nick Triantifilou from Holy Cross, Fr. Mel Weber from the Monastery of St. John, Mother Gabriela, Cynthia Costas, and John Maddox from Ancient Faith Radio.

We have two baptisms/chrisinations upcoming on October 2, 2011. This past year we have added twelve new members plus seven children.

Our major needs are for our own property and church building, a choir director, greater congregational participation, and a younger but mature priest with energy to build up this thriving mission without as much mileage on him as I have. :-)

**Protecting Veil Mission, Kerrville**

Fr. Daniel Montgomery

**St. Jonah Mission, Alpine**

Clergy: Fr. John Filipovich

**New Martyrs of Russia Mission, Georgetown**

Clergy: Serviced by Deanery Clergy

**All Saints Mission , Victoria**

Clergy: Fr. Dimitri Cozby

**St. George Church, Pharr**

Clergy: Fr. Antonio Perdomo

My family has been at St. George for almost ten years. I personally believe that even though there have been and continue to be challenging times for us that this has been a blessed time for all of us. One of my main goals in preaching Jesus Christ is to promote authentic Christianity which is lacking so much in today's world.

We continue to grow and continue to have an average about fifty to seventy people on Sundays. We have actually had more than seventy on several Sundays not just for Pascha this past year.

In 2010 there were 7 Baptisms and Chrismations. 5 were children. The population of young people continues to grow noticeably. There were 3 Funerals including the Funeral of Pete Peters who was one of the founding members of St. George. There were no weddings in 2010. In 2011 we had 2 Chrismations and 3 Baptisms on Holy Saturday and a Wedding Uncrowning (of our oldest daughter who moved to Columbia S.C.) in May 2011.

Current Church Membership grew from 51 last year to 55. This past year we lost about four members but gained about eight. Currently, we also have two new Catechumens.

Church School on Sundays was not offered during the summer months. Our Church School organizer and her family moved to Australia this summer. Church School started back in September and has been reorganized to offer three classes to three different age groups. Each group has a parent in charge who also receives help from some of the other parents. We need more space to be able to adequately serve the families in our Church. This will hopefully be addressed with the building of our new hall.

Over the years different approaches have been taken to offer classes to the adults in our Church. Beginning this month a class about Orthodoxy will be offered Wednesday evenings after Vespers. The first class had eight participants.

Pastoral care, house blessings and hospital visits continue to take up some of my time. In the time I have been here I have visited most of the hospitals in McAllen, Mission, Harlingen and Brownsville.

We finally received the building permit for our new hall. We are hopeful to begin building in about a week. Our next challenge will be to have bigger Church. Part of the challenge that we face this year is to have the hall built with enough time for our December Annual International Festival. Last year the Festival was a great success and we are hoping that everything will be in order for us to be able to offer up another successful Festival this year.

Our tithe base has grown over the last couple of years. Currently we send approximately \$500.00 a month contribution to the Diocese. This has been the

first year in which, much to our surprise and great blessing that we continued to receive an average amount of tithes during the summer months. This month we will start contributing one percent as requested at our last Deanery Meeting. St. George is financially stable at the moment.

Because of some of the ministry work that we do here, our Church is developing a reputation for being very active Service and Mission minded Church. Many in the Church at large have taken notice of these activities which are becoming part of our annual events, such as the Food Pantry where we served short of 9,000 individuals last year. This number could have been higher but I was out of town for other ministry work in Haiti, Mexico, camp and the Diocesan Assembly. In the Winter Youth Retreat there were about 25 participants from out of town this year. We are currently looking for a speaker for this years coming 7th Annual Winter Service Retreat at the end of December. Older teens and young adults attend this multi-faceted week long event. This ministry also includes some of the work done in Mexico, including translations of the lives of saints and daily scripture readings. I was invited to speak at St. Vladimir this past summer. We now have five very nice Spanish Orthodox Brochures available to use with the possibility of translating several others. Hopefully, these brochures will be reproduced and made available for others to use soon. A daily Podcast in Spanish at Ancientfaith.com has just been started. The first episode is dedicated to Archbishop Dmitri and every day afterwards the daily calendar of saints, the daily scripture reading and the life of the saint of the day will be broadcast.

Even though I have not done much in Mexico this past year because of the violence across the border, I do continue to work with some of the missions in Northern Mexico and am hopeful that this situation will change in the near future. Bishop Alejo came to Monterrey, Mexico to ordain a Deacon. I was able to join Bishop Alejo and to assist him.

We started the St. George web site in February of 2010. In the year there were close to 6,000 visitors to our site for various reasons. That number could have been much higher if the search engines would have been set a little earlier. The Church web site is [www.stgeorgetx.org](http://www.stgeorgetx.org) and continues to be a good tool for people to find our church and to know something about us. You can also access the monthly calendar. This web site can be used for many other things which time and lack of staff do not allow for at the moment.

This year is filled with many blessings and opportunities. May God grant us the grace to be good stewards of what He has given us and may it bare much fruit. God bless us all and may God be merciful to us.

**Waxahachie, TX, Mission Station**

Clergy: Fr. John Anderson

**New Mexico**

**All Saints of NA, Albuquerque**

Clergy: Fr. Nikolay Miletkov

All Saints of Albuquerque has 70 members. The average Sunday Divine Liturgy attendance is approximately 90, with an average of 18 attending Great Vespers on Saturday. Average Wednesday Daily Vespers attendance is 10 (approximate), while the average Monthly Slavonic Liturgy attendance is about 30. At Pascha attendance some 200 attended.

Since last summer there have been seven Baptisms and one Christmation. Currently, we have twenty-four Catechumens and another six serious inquirers. Two marriages were celebrated, one parishioner reposed.

Highlights of the past year include the following.

\* Archpriest George Sondergaard was granted retirement with the title Pastor Emeritus on Aug 1st, 2010. He received a Gramota from His Beatitude Metropolitan +JONAH for his many years of faithful service in the Lord's Vineyard. On the occasion of Fr. George's Retirement All Saints of North America Mission received Parish status.

\* Fr Nikolay Miletkov was assigned as Rector of All Saints on Aug 1st, 2010.

\* Re-started the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at UNM.

\* Re-started the Monthly New Mexico Orthodox Clergy Fellowship Meetings.

\* Started Monthly Slavonic Liturgies, which are well attended and are a nice outreach to the Slavic community of Albuquerque.

\* We continue our educational programs: Sunday School, Two Catechumen Classes (on Wednesdays and recently added a Sunday class).

\* Record attendance at Sunday Liturgies.

\* Re-started the use of annual commitment forms.

\* Implemented the Envelope System from Our Sunday Visitor in an effort to stabilize stewardship.

\* Since beginning of 2011 there has been a substantial increase in financial contributions.

\* At the annual parish meeting on January 23rd, 2011 in response to the need for building a larger and proper Orthodox Church, a building committee was established which meets monthly.

\* Started a yearly Outdoor Blessing of the Waters (Rio Grande) on the Sunday following Theophany.

\* In the Spring of 2011, Dn Stephen Henne, was blessed by Bishop +NIKON to serve at All Saints. He is currently working on being permanently transferred to the OCA from the Antiochian Archdiocese. He is a great asset to our parish.

\* Three-day parish retreat for Memorial Day at St. Michael's Monastery in Canones, NM. We plan for it to become an annual event as we are fostering a great relationship with our local Monastery.

\* In 2011 started an ongoing financial support for Project Mexico. Also regular support to OCMC, IOCC, and several local Charities.

\* Started monthly soccer outings for fostering fellowship.

Areas in need of attention:

\* Building of a proper Orthodox Church.

- \* Increase attendance on Weekly Services.
- \* Continue to encourage Pan-Orthodox activities in New Mexico.

### **St. Dmitri of Rostov Mission, Los Alamos**

Clergy: Hieromonk John Anderson

The past Church year has seen improvement, maturation and growth at St. Dimitri Orthodox Church. There has been profound spiritual growth among the individual members in the congregation as well as growth in actual numbers. Hieromonk John (Anderson) was assigned as the priest-in-charge on Sept. 11 2010. At that time there were approximately 20 members of the congregation and attended (if not every Sunday) with sufficient frequency. Currently there are 30 members of St. Dimitri's. We have grown by 10! The majority of these ten were already Orthodox who have officially joined the congregation. This does not include those who come with much less frequency.

It is no secret that the history of the mission has been wrought with difficulty over the years. When Fr. John was assigned there we several issues in the congregation that were significantly affecting the growth of the church. It is a joy to report that by God's grace, it appears those problems have had resolution and the Church is moving forward. It took several months to work through these issues, and while change takes some time, we have gone beyond these former difficulties and are only now pressing forward unhindered. Thanks be to God!

Since September 2010, there have been two Baptisms/Christmations. There is one catechumen and three inquirers. Sunday Liturgy attendance averages 20.5. The current official schedule of services includes the Hours, Sundays at 9:40 a.m., Divine Liturgy Sundays at 10am, a Wednesday Class on Orthodoxy at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday Daily Vespers at 7.p.m., Saturday Great Vespers at 5pm; for Feasts Great Vespers at 7p.m. on the eve and Divine Liturgy at 6 a.m.

### **Monasteries**

**Archangel Michael, Canones NM**

Superior: Fr. Silouan

**Nativity of our Lord Monastery, Kemp TX**

Superior: Mother Barbara