

South Central (Dallas) Deanery Report

Diocese of the South

Orthodox Church in America

Dallas Diocesan Assembly 2014

Respectfully Submitted by Fr. Basil Zebrun

Introduction:

The South Central (Dallas) Deanery is comprised of six states: Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Within its borders lies the Cathedral of St. Seraphim of Sarov in Dallas, and the oldest community in the Diocese, Sts. Cyril and Methodius Orthodox Church in Hartshorne, Oklahoma founded in 1897. Currently there are 23 active parishes, missions or mission stations in the Deanery.

Diversity in activities can be seen throughout our territory as the faithful engage in various endeavors in efforts to grow the Church spiritually and numerically. Most communities with a resident priest offer a minimum of three regular services a week (Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday). Some have added weekday Liturgies, Matins and Akathists as well. Education classes for all ages is the norm, including some Vacation Bible Schools, as well as a diverse selection of outreach activities. The latter range from unique sales, to lectures on iconography and prayer, recordings of inquirers classes and sermons on parish websites, concerts, customized websites, and plays written by Church members and performed at the Church hall by local actors. One may also see efforts in prison ministry, the writing of local editorials, as well as charitable endeavors, including outreach across the border into Mexico. Several active building programs are in progress, and not a few churches are choosing to invest extra savings with the Diocese, at a generous rate of interest. These funds are then used to help other missions expand or develop their own communities, when loans from local banks become difficult to acquire.

In addition a localized Deanery Unction service was celebrated for the Archpriest John Maxwell who has been battling cancer, but continues to work full time as Hospital Chaplain and to work with the St. John of Chicago Mission in Rogers, Arkansas. Furthermore, a special celebration was conducted at our oldest Diocesan Church, Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Hartshorne, Oklahoma. A Divine Liturgy was held on Saturday, May 10 in anticipation of the parish's Patronal Feast. Archimandrite Gerasim (Eliel) and Fr. Basil Zebrun participated, along with parish members, as well as visitors from Dallas, Ft. Worth, the local community, and out of state. Furthermore, progress continues on the Archbishop Dmitri Memorial Chapel and it is hoped that in the near future we may bring His Eminence home to the Cathedral.

And finally, we are blessed to have a group of enthusiastic, mission minded clergy, as well as dedicated laymen to help with the growth of their respective communities. I would like to thank especially the Archpriest Marcus Burch, Archmandrite Gerasim (Eliel), Mr. Milos Konjevich, and other clergy (priests and deacons) who have assisted tremendously in an administrative capacity within our Deanery during the past year.

The following is a brief summary of activities in most of our Deanery communities, submitted by the local priests. Some final reports are pending and these will be posted as they are received.

All Saints of North America Orthodox Church

Albuquerque, NM

Fr Nikolay Miletkov

All Saints of North America has currently 88 pledging members. The average Sunday attendance is around 95. The parish is a good mix of people from all ages. More than half of our parishioners are converts.

Our weekly schedule consists of: Silent recitation of the Jesus Prayer on Tuesday mornings followed by Continuing Education/Book Study; Wednesday Vespers followed by Catechumen class; Thursday morning Divine Liturgy; Saturday Great Vespers and Sunday Liturgy. Additionally, Fr Nikolay and Fr Conan (the local Greek Orthodox Priest) meet on Thursday afternoons with the University of New Mexico OCF for discussion, fellowship and food. Our Sunday school is divided into 3 age group classes and takes place every Sunday after Holy Communion.

Our Building Committee is currently working on a conceptual design for our future temple with Michael Bertin, an architect from Colorado who is also licensed in New Mexico. Mr. Bertin is the architect of Holy Trinity Antiochian Orthodox Church in Santa Fe.

At All Saints we are fortunate to have a vibrant sisterhood called, *The Sisterhood of St. Anna*. The women involved in this ministry gather in fellowship to organize fundraising events and facilitate charitable giving for local, national, and international causes. Some of the Sisterhood's regular fundraising events include: Christmas Baklava & Kolache Bake Sale; Blini Breakfast on Cheesefare Sunday; and a Spring and Fall Concert featuring talented musicians from our Parish. The concerts are also an opportunity for community outreach and are advertized through flyers and the local newspaper. The sisterhood donates yarn on a regular basis to a parishioner from our church that hand-makes hundreds of hats and slippers for orphanages in Eastern Europe. We continue our participation and support for the Monthly New Mexico Orthodox Clergy Fellowship Meetings. This year All Saints hosted the Sunday of Orthodoxy Vespers for all parishes in our state. The yearly blessing of the Rio Grande continues to take place on the Sunday following Theophany, and is being advertized in the local newspaper. It is our hope that this service will also develop as an outreach to the local community.

All Saints Mission

Victoria, TX

Fr. Dimitri Cozby

Parish membership remains level, new members being balanced by old families moving away. We are a very diverse lot of cradle and convert Orthodox from America, plus immigrants from Greece, Russia, Moldova, Ukraine, Romania, Mexico, and Eritrea. Only one of our families came from an OCA parish.

During the last year we have had two baptisms, one of an infant and one of an adult. Two persons were received into the Church by chrismation. We currently have one catechumen.

Several parishioners have planted a vegetable garden on the property. They hope to provide vegetables for parishioners, sell some at the local farmers market and donate some to local food pantries.

As in previous years, the confirmation class from a local Methodist church visited for Wednesday evening Vespers during the Paschal season.

St. Anthony the Great Orthodox Church San Antonio, TX

Fr. Leo Poore

We have set up through our newly formed mission and evangelist committee, a partnership with San Antonio Food Bank whereby we have been able reach out to the local community and provide groceries for about 200 families. The Teen group as well as parishioners, have taken a very active role in these events. We have also added to our website a selection of testimonies regarding how various individuals found the Orthodox Christian Faith. It seems not only has it provided in-house knowledge about our parishioners but also has allowed those seeking to discover Orthodoxy, the understanding that each person does have their own story to tell.

Our Sisterhood and Brotherhood organizations continue to fulfill their duties and responsibilities with utmost care. The Sisterhood has continued to see that our Coffee Hours are not only well set up but most importantly conducive to strengthening the bonds among our own faithful, and making our visitors feel most welcomed. The Brotherhood has continued to maintain the Church and fellowship hall, as well as seeing to the landscaping. In the very near future members will be correcting a water problem on the left side of the temple. It should be noted that we should have our icon project completed shortly when six female saints will be placed on the far left and right side walls in the temple. We have been very blessed by our Lord this past year by the number of baptisms, chrismations, and the increase of new members to the parish. Just a short overview of things happening at St. Anthony the Great, San Antonio Texas.

Holy Apostles Orthodox Church Bixby, OK

Fr. Ambrose Arrington

Glory to God, this past year has been very active in the life of Holy Apostles Orthodox Church in Bixby, Oklahoma. Our average Sunday attendance is up quite a bit from last year, at 81. We have celebrated 10 baptisms, a family of 7 and 3 infants, and currently have 11 catechumens, consisting of a family of 6 and a family of 5. We also have several inquirers. Our parking lot, which had been 2/3 gravel for the past 7 years, was finally completely paved and striped. We currently have an active women's group under the patronage of St. Mary Magdalene, which meets once a month. We have also recently begun a M.O.M. group (Meeting of Orthodox Mothers), which is meeting once a week through the summer to provide fellowship and support for the many mothers that we have in the parish. Our Sophia Homeschool Co-op continues to meet September through May once a week, consisting of families from Holy Apostles and Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. We are currently raising funds to expand our chapel, in the hopes of accomplishing this without taking on further debt, which will allow further growth while continuing to pay down our mortgage. We hope that this will put us in a position to build the projected Temple in the next 10 years. Perhaps most importantly, we finally received resolution on our parish cemetery, which had been held up on appeal from one of our neighbors for 5 years. We were able to move one of our founding members, who passed away 3 years ago, and whose dying wish was to be buried at the church, and hence now have the beginnings of a parish cemetery. Glory to God!

St. Barbara Orthodox Church

Ft. Worth, TX

Fr. Basil Zebrun

Since the last Diocesan Assembly St. Barbara Church has continued its weekly schedule of liturgical services, general adult classes on Orthodoxy, as well as catechumen and inquirers classes. In addition Adult Bible studies were conducted this year on the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Gospel According to St. John. Special presentations were offered in October and in March respectively on: "*Incapacity and End of Life Issues*," by Mr. Louie Papaliodis (*a local Orthodox lawyer*); and "*The Orthodox Understanding of Salvation*," by Dr. Christopher Veniamin of St. Tikhon Orthodox Seminary. The latter may be accessed on our newly designed parish website. This continues to be a "work in progress," as we seek ways to update and make the website as educational and "seeker friendly" as possible. In January we held our Annual Chili and Cornbread Competition, in March our Annual Pysanky Festival, and in May classes were offered to Church members and the public on Pysanky decorating. The latter two events have proven to be good for both fund raising and outreach, as more people come to learn and appreciate this ancient religious folk art. In addition, a presentation was given in March after a Divine Liturgy on "*Children: A Great Blessing*." Once a month General Confessions are conducted on Wednesday nights prior to Vespers as an instructional aid, as well as a supplement to personal Confessions by members. Our yearly Holy Supper on Nativity Eve continues to be a beloved parish tradition. Additionally since last summer we celebrated two Marriages, three Baptisms, five Chrismations, have averaged ninety-five people for each Sunday Divine Liturgy, and currently have five catechumens and two inquirers. And finally, for the year 2014 we instituted a Parish Ministries Council consisting of seven people (*currently; we hope to add more*), each heading up a specific ministry within the Church: Greeters, Men's Fellowship and Youth, Adult Education, Kitchen, Media, Personal Greetings and Special Events, Cleaning and Beautification. The change has worked well and we look forward to even more progress this coming year.

St. Basil the Great Mission

Weatherford, OK

Fr. Nick Aiello

Since Bright Thursday we have been in the process of acquiring land and a building in Weatherford, OK - where our mission is located. With the help of the DOS we are near securing financing, having raised the necessary funds.

In addition to our land and building purchase we continue to offer almost daily Matins and Vespers, and celebrate Divine Liturgy twice weekly...which more and more of our members are attending.

Another area where we have experienced growth is our Wednesday evening catechism class. Last year we had consistently at 3 to 4 attend. Since we began a new series however that has grown to 9 participants - half of whom are inquirers.

We currently have 19 members in the mission and our Sunday attendance averages 10 to 12. In terms of catechumens we have two 'unofficial' catechumens. One is a current Mennonite Pastor and the other a

Methodist board member. Each are ending those relationships after their respective terms and are entering the catechumenate this year. ... They've been as active and supportive as most of the members.

And as I said, we have four very serious inquirers that I expect to enter into the catechumenate this year as well.

In terms of lay ministries we are in the process of developing a visitation ministry at a local care facility where my work there added one member and an inquirer to our mission. I hope to integrate two or three of our members into this important work this year.

Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church, McComb, MS

Fr. Benedict Crawford

Christ the Saviour Orthodox Church was established in 2004, a “daughter” parish of Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church in Clinton, Mississippi. Thus this year marks our Tenth Anniversary. At this time our total membership (including those at the Hattiesburg Mission) is 35 adults and 18 children, plus 3 catechumens and 1 inquirer. Our average Sunday attendance is around 25 adults and around 15 children. Our usual schedule of services is: Saturday, Vespers 6:00 pm. Sunday, Matins 8:30; Divine Liturgy 10:00 am. Wednesday, Daily Vespers, 6:00 pm. We have a class on the Faith each week, which is currently meeting on Sunday evenings. In the past year we have celebrated 3 baptisms, and 2 of our catechumens are ready to be received this summer.

Once a month the Divine Liturgy is served in Hattiesburg for the benefit of our members there. Reader Vespers is served every Friday evening. The Hattiesburg Mission Station has around 12 adults and 5 children, including 1 inquirer there.

We are largely a “long-distance” parish for most of our parishioners. One member drives about two hours each Sunday to attend Liturgy. Only about one third of our parishioners live within a half hour drive.

This year we celebrated our third annual “Greek Festival.” In addition to being a fund-raising event, this is intended as a good way to help local residents to learn about our parish and about the Orthodox Church, tour the church, and generally be aware that we are here and friendly. This year we also resumed our annual spring “Rib Fest,” which we had not celebrated for a few years. This event was held on Bright Saturday, and included a Divine Liturgy followed by a festal meal, to which visitors are invited.

Last summer we completed a project to install a concrete sidewalk to connect our parish hall and church temple. We continue looking at an upcoming project to restore some of the church's wooden window frames. We have found a contractor who specializes in this type of restoration and we are hoping to restore one window at a time. We have also begun work on repainting the rectory this summer, a work that is progressing well.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem Orthodox Church, The Woodlands, TX **Hieromonk John Anderson**

Glory to God! The 2013-2014 year has been richly blessed at St. Cyril's. Since last year's report several new Orthodox families have joined St. Cyril's. In addition, we had two baptisms this Pascha, and currently have a number of inquirers preparing to be enrolled into the catechumenate. Due to steady growth we continue to implement more and more structure and organization to meet the needs common for a growing mission.

- To this end, we received Archbishop Nikon's blessing to increase our parish council from five to nine. At our 2014 Annual Meeting four new members were appointed increasing the council to nine. From these nine, a new parish council warden and vice-warden were elected. Also, a new treasurer was appointed.

Property purchase efforts:

- Since last year we have been diligently seeking to purchase property. As of June 2014, we continue to rent space from Hope Pointe Anglican Church. Since last year, we have been engaged in dialogue with the Hope Pointe leadership regarding purchasing half of their property. The property portion would include the large building in which we currently worship. We will know within the next month or two whether we will be able to purchase or not. With this in mind, we know it is important to have several options available. Thus, we are also looking at other property options in the vicinity.

Local outreach:

- St. Cyril's is a member of and volunteers at the Woodlands Interfaith Outreach organization. Woodlands Interfaith is not a religious institution or ecumenical organization, but rather functions as the local food bank, but offers many more services. Any persons in need can go to Interfaith to find aid. As a member church we volunteer and donate, as well as volunteer at special help events.

- Twice a month Fr. John offers Typica services at two of our local senior centers.

- Fr. John is currently waiting to hear back from the Texas prison system having submitted a volunteer application. Once approved, Fr. John and Subdeacon Connie will participate with the other pan-Orthodox clergy prison ministry.

Services: We continue to celebrate regularly scheduled services including: Wednesday night Vespers, Friday night Akathist Hymn, Saturday Catechumen Class and Great Vespers, and Sunday morning Divine Liturgy. Our goal this year is to begin serving regular Saturday evening Vigil.

Final highlight: Fr. John is a member of the local Pan-Orthodox Clergy Brotherhood. Our brotherhood truly enjoys close friendships as well as frequent fellowship. Recently, a number of the brotherhood, including Fr. John and members of St. Cyril's, attended the local pan-Orthodox OCMC Fundraising Banquet. Glory to God.

In conclusion, we continue steadily in our work to build up the Body of Christ and to preach the Gospel. It is a joy to report cohesive unity and love within our mission, as well as a zealous desire to serve the Lord. Thanks be to God we are steadily growing as a community and we are maturing in our Orthodox Faith. We look forward to another year of fruitful labor in Christ's vineyard in Houston.

Ss. Cyril and Methodius Russian Orthodox Church

Hartshorne, OK

Fr. Ambrose Arrington

Ss. Cyril and Methodius continues to function at a very minimal level since the retirement and subsequent falling asleep of Fr. Joseph Nelson. Current membership is steady at six, who are served once a month by a priest (usually Fr. Ambrose Arrington of Holy Apostles in Bixby) on Saturday. The community faithfully meets on Sundays for Typica service and fellowship when there is no priest. This year, they buried one of their core members, Tanya Onesky, who fell asleep in the Lord in October.

St. Dimitri of Rostov Orthodox Mission

Los Alamos, NM

Report Pending

St. George the Great Martyr

Pharr, TX

Fr. Antonio Perdomo

This past year we have had 5 baptisms, 1 chrismation, 1 wedding and 1 funeral. 4 members moved away and 7 new members joined the Church. Even though we face the challenge of people moving away we continue to grow slowly.

The hall was completely finished this year including a surprise handicap inspection by the State of Texas. The one final big project that we are still hoping to accomplish is to seal and wax the floors. It is a very useful space and it is finished for the moment. Having a new hall is a real blessing; it has allowed us to have more activities in the Church and to invite the community to join us in many ways that were not available before. Hall rental has also started to bring a little extra income for the Church. The one event among many in the hall that is worth mentioning was the dinner theatre sponsored by the local Arts Council as a fundraiser for them and for the Church. Four performances were offered about St. Valentine and how he can touch our lives. The play was written by Tom Fuschetto a member of our Church.

A fence was built around the playground and the air conditioners on the Church property. However, even with the added security three air conditioner units were stolen. Fortunately, even though there was a high deductible, the insurance covered some of the cost and because of very generous people helping it became possible for us to cover this expense. Extra security measures have been taken to secure the new units.

The 9th Annual Winter Service Youth Retreat was a success. Archimandrite Gerasim was the Retreat Master. Even though this has been a successful event at our Church, the decision was taken to have this one be the final Winter Youth Retreat at our Church. Maybe another Church where travel would be easier would consider sponsoring the Winter Youth Retreat in the future.

The Food Pantry was challenging this year because of a lack of funds and because of the difficult weather of this past winter. The weather is back to normal (hot) and our funding has stabilized for the

moment which makes it possible for us to return to our regular schedule of providing food for approximately 200 families in a month.

Even though there are difficulties with working in Mexico at the moment because of the turmoil across the border, we still continue to work and reach out in some capacity to those across the border.

Ss. George and Alexandra Orthodox Mission

Ft. Smith Arkansas

Fr. Paul Fetsko

This past year was highlighted by the celebration of Archpriest John Maxwell's 25th anniversary to the priesthood. Archimandrite Gerasim joined the faithful of Sts. George and Alexandra mission and St. John's mission in Rogers on February 2nd, 2014 at Sts. George and Alexandra Orthodox Church. Coinciding with the feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple, a joyful liturgy was celebrated followed by a banquet in Fr. John's and his wife, Matushka Debra's, honor.

Since the last Diocesan Assembly, we have had one baptism, five chrismations, one wedding, and one funeral. We are expecting to have an additional 2 or 3 catechumens in the near future. Over the past year, we have been more intentional in our charitable giving. Our main outreach is involvement in the Community Rescue Mission of Fort Smith. We hold a board position with the Mission, and this past June we took our turn in providing them with the Sunday afternoon services.

St John of Chicago Orthodox Mission

Rogers, AR

Fr. John Maxwell

St John Orthodox Mission is blessed to have very pious faithful members who also bring a wide range of talents that they offer up to the Lord. One member is a computer programmer who has developed a program where he can take a liturgical text and convert it with a couple of key strokes into Obikod Sheet Music. With another key stroke he can change the language from You and Your to Thee and Thou. He posts the music on the wonderful website he set up so any parish can get it if they want to use it. We have dedicated and talented teachers for the children. One member paints icons. One member is proficient in Byzantine Chant. We have a beautiful and dedicated choir. Two members are children of two different Antiochian Priests. Most everyone goes to confession once a month and most regularly to communion. We have added a mother and her son this year to our small membership. We have an average attendance of 15 adults and 6 children for liturgy. About half that number come for Vespers or feast days. We have a membership of 18 adults and 10 children. We have had some inquirers this year. One of our problems is location. Some people have had problems finding us. We have also been hindered by my health and ability to serve this flock with more time and energy.

St. John of Damascus Orthodox Church

Tyler, TX

Fr. John Mikita

Report Pending

St. Jonah Orthodox Church

Alpine, TX

St. Jonah's continues its weekly schedule of Reader's services and classes conducted by dedicated parishioners. Priests visit from Ft. Worth and Dallas once every month or two, depending on the availability of substitute Deanery clergy, and the parish is currently anticipating the Baptism of its newest infant, along with two adult Chrismations in the near future. Alpine and nearby Marfa have many artists and craftsmen who display exceptional talents. Coupled with the presence of Sul Ross University in Alpine, the Church has a number of options open to it for unique fund raising and outreach events to be sponsored by the parish.

Saint Matthew the Apostle Mission

Baton Rouge, LA

Fr. Mark Christian

One of the highlights of the past year for Saint Matthew the Apostle Mission in Baton Rouge involved the opportunity to venerate the Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God at one of our sister parishes during Great Lent. It was a tremendous joy to join with brothers and sisters from other congregations and other jurisdictions from throughout the southeast as we sang our prayers and honored this beloved Icon of the Theotokos. In December we held our second children's Nativity Pageant, with a slightly smaller (*but no less enthusiastic*) group of adult and children participating than the prior year. We hold classes for children and adults on Sunday mornings throughout the year, have had two infant Baptisms, and presently have six catechumens preparing for reception into the Orthodox Faith.

Our Sunday morning attendance averages between 30-40, as we continue to welcome newcomers while bidding farewell to those moving away due to school graduation and work transfers.

After an ambitious budget increase in 2013, we determined to maintain the same numbers for 2014. In the past year we have successfully met our financial obligations while increasing our savings in our diocesan building fund by 25%. We distribute alms to those who ask us for assistance and support the IOCC, OCMC, and FOCUS. We continue to discern ways to minister in the location God has given us while considering the possibility of a move to a more suitable location. Along the way, we pray for the wisdom and patience to abide faithfully as branches of the True Vine Who is Christ our God, since without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5).

St. Maximus the Confessor Orthodox Church

Denton, TX

Fr. Justin Frederick

Report Pending

Holy Nativity of the Lord Orthodox Mission

Shreveport, LA

Fr. Jason Foster

Thanks be to God, Holy Nativity of the Lord Orthodox Mission in Shreveport, LA is doing well. Over the last year, we have experienced numerical, and we pray, spiritual growth. Currently we have catechumens from various backgrounds preparing for entrance into Christ's Holy Church and we are prayerfully preparing to explore the construction of a new temple. Also, over the last year we have developed a closer working relationship with The Nativity of the Lord Monastery in Kemp, TX. Many of our women of 'the St. Emilia Society' participated in a Lenten retreat there and a group of our men, who meet weekly on Fridays for lunch, dedicated a day of labor to the retreat center project. These experiences, and others with Mother Barbara and Sister Svetlana, have challenged us to plan future mission trips. We are also excited about our growing children and youth groups. The younger ones, along with many volunteers, are preparing for their annual Vacation Bible School. The teens are praying and playing hard together – they just finished a weekend of prayer, bible study and fellowship on a local ranch! Lastly, we are very thankful for our ongoing and deepening relationship with our brothers and sisters at St. George Greek Orthodox Church and St. Nicholas Orthodox Church (AOC). Together, we desire to be the heart, minds and hands of Christ in the Shreveport/Bossier City area. Please keep us in your prayers as we prayerfully seek to discern God's will for us in all things as a Mission of the Diocese of the South.

St. Nektarios Orthodox Mission

Waxahachie, TX

Fr. David Bozeman

St. Nektarios Orthodox Mission is one month shy of our two year anniversary. The first year's work was characterized by establishing our worship space and liturgical schedule. Since July of last year, our primary focus has been on encouraging personal spiritual development and consistency in the life of the Church. In July we celebrated the first wedding within our community. Our patronal Feast day on November 9 was attended by fifty-five people including Fr. John Anderson from St. Seraphim's Cathedral, Fr. John Ballard from St. Andrew Orthodox Mission (Antiochian) in Waco, and the sisters of Holy Nativity Monastery. Our activities during the season of Nativity included a St. Nicholas Day program for the children and our first "Holy Supper" which was well received. In February, at the Feast of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple, we received a family of five through Chrismation into the Church. We increased our liturgical efforts during Great Lent and Holy Week including a mini-retreat given by Archimandrite Gerasim. On Holy Saturday we received the husband of a faithful member into the Church through Chrismation. We currently have one catechumen and our average Sunday attendance ranges between thirty and thirty-five people.

Our primary community outreach this year has been through our small food bank and the giving of alms to those in need in our community. In April we held a class on iconography with a local group from the Methodist church in which eighteen people attended. This was well received and has been requested again. We are hopeful it will be a means of outreach and witness for Orthodoxy in Waxahachie. Our search for property continues as we face issues with deed restrictions and needed, but costly, infrastructure requirements on potential properties. Our growth in numbers has slowed this last year slightly but we anticipate needing to find a permanent Church home within the next twelve months. Waxahachie is ripe with potential. There are few Orthodox here and our numeric growth has been almost exclusively through conversion which can be a slower process, but a process which yields wonderful spiritual benefits.

St Paul the Apostle Orthodox Mission Denison, TX

Fr. Michael Storozuk

Since the last Diocesan Assembly we at St Paul's had 2 weddings, baptisms of 3 high school youths who came to the Orthodox Faith individually on their own, no parental influence or other outside guidance, and we have a very serious inquirer who is a former evangelical pastor who quit his pastorate to pursue Orthodoxy with us and will be received soon with his wife.

Parish life focuses on a full Liturgical schedule, our meals after Sunday Liturgy and individual parishioners doing things together away from the church.

Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church Clinton, MS

Fr. Paul Yerger

Report Pending

St. Sava Orthodox Church Plano/Allen, TX

Fr. Seraphim Hipsh

Report Pending

St Seraphim Orthodox Cathedral Dallas, TX

Archimandrite Gerasim (Eliel)

Fr. John Anderson

The new Cathedral rector (Archimandrite Gerasim) arrived at beginning of September and enthusiastically began his new responsibilities. One of those responsibilities included helping to host, along with Fr. John Anderson and Cathedral members, the Clergy Deanery meeting at SSOC with guest speaker Archpriest John Erickson on October 30–31. Fr. Erickson presented a public lecture at SSOC on October 30.

On November 14, 2013 another lecture was presented by Nicholas Chapman on Orthodoxy in Colonial America. 50 + people were in attendance, and the talk was well received.

Construction of Archbishop Dmitri Memorial Chapel commenced in January, while remodeling of Archbishop Dmitri's residence began in February.

A lecture was presented by Andrei Desnitsky on the Translation of Bible in the Republics of Former Soviet Union, as well as an Icon exhibition by Subdeacon Vladimir Grigorenko in December at Lover's Lane Methodist Church.

On the 5th Sunday of Great Lent Archpriest Chad Hatfield served Divine Liturgy and preached at St. Seraphim's. Fr Chad continued his discussion on the publication of Archbishop Dmitri's *Commentary on the Gospel according to John* by SVS Press. Also on the 5th Sunday of Great Lent SSOC hosted Pan-Orthodox Vespers with Priest John Mikita as homilist.

St. Seraphim's continues its regular cycle of services, welcoming visitors each week, conducting classes, and looking forward to the completion of the Archbishop Dmitri Memorial Chapel and to bringing His Eminence home to his final resting place on earth.