

## **Report of Mission's Coordinator, July 2007**

The normal preamble for my reports include a disclaimer for the inevitable redundancies that will exist between the respective area dean and the mission director's report. Thus, I will attempt to be brief speaking only to those things that are purely related to a mission;s health and growth.

A few years ago there was a Best-selling book called Good to Great. It studied what separated companies that were "good" in America from similar companies that were "great," operating well above average. The underlying thesis for the book is is that "Good is the enemy of great." Because we have good businesses/schools/etc, we are satisfied and as a matter of human nature don't make the effort to go the next level of "great." This same paradigm applies to the Church's mission's work. When we are satisfied with good, we won't hold ourselves accountable to becoming great. I believe if the Gospel is worth anything, it is worth everything, thus I must make a great effort.

I cannot be satisfied with just "good." It is a struggle for us all. As mission leaders we need to teach our council leadership that "good is not good enough" and do things with a spirit of excellence.

### Holy Cross Orthodox Church in the Greensboro / Winston-Salem / High Point , NC

Fr Christopher Foley arrived about a year ago and the community has its own facility. Income and attendance is very good for a fledgling mission. Fr Christopher is a good humble priest with a healthy vision and he is doing things the right way. They will be applying for a national church-planting grant this fall. I conducted a church-planting workshop both with the parish and the council this past fall.

### Holy Ascension Mission, Charleston, Mt. Pleasant, SC

All the good news can be found in the deanery report- The building program is amazing. This year all mission grants cease. Fr John is a gifted pastor and visionary.

### St Nicholas Mission, Fayetteville, NC

St Nicholas became "orphaned" with the laicization of its former pastor. Although the mission has floundered in this leadership vacuum, it is now having regular pastoral visits with the focus on revitalization of this mission effort.

### St Athanasius, Nicholasville/Lexington KY

This year all church-planting grants ceased and Fr Justin Patterson took over the reins with Fr David Rucker taking his much needed administrative mission's talents to OCMC. Surely it was painful for St Athanasius to lose their planting priest, but in the end this is a win-win for all. OCMC desperately needed Fr David's gifts. The OCMC office culture improved overnight with the arrival of Fr David. Fr Justin is the perfect match for the youthful demographics of St Athanasius. I had the pleasure of celebrating the Liturgy with Fr Justin this summer and meeting with the mission council. The challenge for this year will be making budget without the grant (they are close) and the development of their land. This should be my last report on this mission and it approaches parish status.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem Mission, Houston, TX.

I visited St Cyril's and conducted a church growth workshop. Attendance at services for this fledgling mission is in the 40-50 range. My hope is that we would find a way to support Fr Basil to be full time.

St Phillip the Apostle, Tampa Florida

The mission has doubled in Sunday attendance over the past year. They have a wonderful facility. All signs are good and Fr Joseph with great love and dedication is nurturing a wonderful community. Demographically Tampa is long overdue for an English-speaking mission minded church and St Phillips is meeting this need and growing. They are starting to catch "snow-birds" which while you can't build a church with them, they can certainly spread the news of their work.

St Matthew the Apostle, Baton Rouge

Without a priest in residence, St. Matthew Mission is making great progress under the lay leadership of Mark Christian. Mark works hard and pays great attention to detail. They have their own well-appointed space, a renovated storefront with a two-year lease. Mark is a good teacher and has first rate pastoral skills.. He communicates well and us a good teacher. You can see mark's positive influence in the attitude of the people. Serving the mission is presently shared by four priests. This work is proving itself and has a tremendous future. Mark Christian is in the late vocations program.

Edenton Mission Station, NC:

I receive regular reports from the mission and the mission continues to make steps forward. Their biggest challenge is the demographics of a small coastal town.

St Peter the Apostle, Jupiter FL

The founding priest Fr Justin Foster has left. The mission consists of some very good and pious people who are working hard to make this mission work.

St. John the Evangelist Clarksville, TN

Fr Peter Dubinin is an Army Chaplain at Fort Campbell in Clarksville, TN. The community has been together for some time and has grown beyond a "chaplaincy." Being an "employee" of the US Army Fr Peter could be moved on and this community orphaned. I visited with the community and discussed "*What does it mean to be a community in the Diocese of the South.*" There will be the inherent "chaplain/family model cultural challenges that are unhealthy for mission growth that will need to be addressed. The local area dean Fr Stephen is well versed in this. Fr Peter Dubinin will be visiting Dallas and will be working with Fr Stephen Freeman.

Austin, TX

I have begun trying to work in the Austin area with a layman about planting a mission. This is in the preliminary stages.

Valdosta Mission A gifted pastor and lay leader from St Justin's, Subdeacon Jim Marth is conducting a regularly scheduled Orthodox Study group. The local lay leader, Steve produced an excellent video on Orthodoxy that presently by a long shot the number one viewed You-Tube video. Fr Sergius serves liturgy their once per month.