

Saints Mary and Martha
Orthodox Monastery
Report to the
Diocesan Assembly, 2017
Chatanooga, Tennessee



O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.

— *Psalm 104:24 (KJV)*

One of God's marvelous works this year was that last September we received news that Archbishop Alexander had given his blessing for Fr. Edward Rommen to retire near our monastery and to serve Liturgy here. He and his family were able to acquire acreage adjacent to the monastery property. After almost twenty-one years of driving the distances to attend Liturgy, we are so grateful to have Liturgy served here regularly.

The building program took a turn this year when we were given the money to build a three-bay garage (more like a carriage house) to be used as storage for furniture and other items for the monastery building. A number of small additions and adjustments have been made to the large monastery building: brick landings have been added to the bottom of both sets of stairs; a ramp was built so people could enter the nave of chapel directly; cutouts on the right and left sides of the altar platform were made to create space for a north and a south choir; and adjustments continue to be made to handle the rain runoff from the roof. Three of the five remaining stained glass windows finally made it off the drawing board and are in the process of being built. The last two, Saints Mary and Martha are still on the drawing board and are slated to be finished by the end of the year, God willing..

Several months ago, a six-foot, wire fence was built around the vegetable garden. We love the deer, rabbits, and other wild life, but . . . As this report is being written, workman are totally replacing the roof and skylights on the double-wide trailer. While this has been a financial setback for us; nevertheless, it is a most needed repair, as were several others of late.

Over the past year, we have had many individuals and groups visit us, some helping with the numerous tasks that need doing. Most notable was a large group of high schoolers with chaperones who spent two days cleaning up the monastery grounds.

As in past years we hosted the Clergy Wives Retreat. This year thirteen attended. Mother Thecla attended The Synaxis of Monastic Superiors hosted at The Monastery of the Holy Transfiguration in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania. Mother Helena and helpers continue to make and sale thousands of candles.

It is most important that we remain faithful to our monastic calling and continue working out our salvation here. Although we are two again, we pray God will send those women He calls to be here soon.

As always, God is very good!