

ST. FURSEY'S ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY AND PARISH.  
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COMMUNITY AND PARISH NEWSLETTER  
DECEMBER 2018.



*The Nativity of Christ (December 25th)*

*Troparion*

**T**HY Nativity, O Christ our God, hath revealed to the world the Light of wisdom: for in it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know thee, the Dayspring from on high. Glory be to thee. O Lord.

BRITISH ORTHODOX SAINTS  
COMMEMORATED IN  
DECEMBER.

- 03 Birinus, Apostle of Wessex  
Lucius, King in Britain\*  
Sola, Hermit\*
- 07 Diuna, Bishop and Missionary
- 08 Budoc, Celtic Missionary  
Gunthild of Wimborne, Virgin
- 09 Ethelgiva, Abbess of Shaftesbury  
Wolfeius, Hermit
- 12 Agatha of Wimborne, Virgin
- 13 Edburgh of Lyminge, Virgin  
Edburgh, Abbess of Minster-in-Thamet
- 14 Hibald, Abbot
- 15 Offa, King of Essex, Monk
- 18 Winebald, Abbot and Missionary
- 23 Frithebert, Bishop of Hexham
- 25 Alburgh of Wilton, Nun
- 30 Egwin, Bishop of Worcester

**Troparion of St. Fursey**

Establishing thy monastery in a Roman Fortress  
Thou didst teach men that the Orthodox faith is  
A true bastion against the onslaughts of every  
Evil force O Father Fursey  
Wherefore pray to God for us that we may all be  
Bastions of the faith standing firm against the  
Rising tide of falsehood, that our souls may be saved



COMMUNITY PROGRAMME  
DECEMBER 2018.

CHRIST IS BORN GLORIFY HIM

SERVICES IN DECEMBER AT ST FURSEY'S PARISH CHURCH.

FRI.NOV.30<sup>th</sup>. HOLY APOSTLE ANDREW THE FIRST – CALLED  
VESPERS 4pm.

SAT.DEC.1<sup>st</sup>. DIVINE LITURGY 10am ( Followed by buffet meal)  
( No services on Sunday December 2<sup>nd</sup> at Parish Church; Vespers 4pm at St Furseys Chapel.

SAT.DEC.8<sup>th</sup>. VESPERS 4pm.

SUN.DEC.9<sup>th</sup>. CONCEPTION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS BY THE RIGHTEOUS ANNA.  
BAPTISM; CHRISMATION AND DIVINE LITURGY 10am.

WED.DEC.12<sup>th</sup>. ST SPYRIDON THE WONDERWORKER BISHOP OF TRIMYTHOUS  
( Patronal Festival of the Greek Orthodox Parish in Great Yarmouth.)

SAT.DEC.15<sup>th</sup>. VESPERS 4PM.

SUN.DEC.16<sup>th</sup>. SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FOREFATHERS  
DIVINE LITURGY OR TYPIKA 10am

WED.DEC.19<sup>th</sup>. FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY; Hieromartyr Ignatios God-bearer of Antioch. 107.  
VESPERS 4pm.

THUR.DEC.20<sup>th</sup>. FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST 4pm.  
VESPERS 4pm.

FRI. DEC.21<sup>st</sup>. FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST 4pm.  
VESPERS 4pm.

SAT. DEC. 22<sup>ND</sup>. FOREFEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST  
VESPERS 4pm.

SUN.DEC.23<sup>rd</sup>. SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST ( Commemoration of All the Righteous who  
pleased God from Adam to St Joseph the Betrothed of the Mother of God)  
DIVINE LITURGY 10am.

MON.DEC.24<sup>th</sup>. EVE OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST.  
DIVINE LITURGY 10am followed by informal carol singing and refreshments.  
( No services on Christmas Day )

SAT.DEC.29<sup>th</sup>. THE HOLY INNOCENTS  
VESPERS 4pm.

SUN.DEC.30<sup>th</sup>. SUNDAY AFTER THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST.  
DIVINE LITURGY 10am.



#### DAILY SERVICES AT ST FURSEY'S CHAPEL NEVILLE ROAD.

In addition to the services at the Parish Church daily services take place in St Fursey's Chapel; they are normally; 3<sup>rd</sup> Hour 9am with reading from the Fathers ( Tuesday at the Parish Church )  
Vespers 4pm ( Monday at the Parish Church) Local readers are very welcome to attend .

#### COMMUNITY NEWS AND NOTICES

OPEN DAY AT THE PARISH CHURCH.( Former police station in Stalham )

MONDAY DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup>. START 10am. Various stalls for Icons and Books, raffle, tombola, cakes and Refreshments.

SHORT SERVICE AND TALK ABOUT THE ORTHODOX CHURCH 12NOON

LIGHT LUNCHESES AVAILABLE 1PM

BIBLE STUDY 2PM

TEA AND CAKE 3PM

VESPERS 4PM ( Finnish 4.30pm )

#### OUR CATECHUMEN.

We blessed Joe as our catechumen on September 1<sup>st</sup> and he will be Baptised and Chrismated at the Liturgy on Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup> 10am; Please pray for him and his Sponser William.

#### A NEW BABY

We rejoice with William and Laura on the birth of their little boy Noah and he will be Baptised in the new year; Elly is very pleased to have a baby brother.

#### JOHN AND FAMILY

We met John on the market stall in Norwich some years ago and recently he moved Great Yarmouth. He was a member of the Coptic Church but wanted his children to grow up in an English Orthodox environment. They were Chrismated on Sunday November 4<sup>TH</sup>. So welcome to John; his son John and his daughters Julie-Marie and Bonie-Blue his youngest Victoria Grace was Baptised previously; His wife Roseanne is expecting another baby in the new year.

#### MONDAY BIBLE STUDY

We meet in the priests room at the Parish Church at 2pm and we continue with our study of Genesis using the Orthodox Study Bible as our guide; We have a break for tea and cake about 3pm and start Vespers promptly 4pm and finish about 4.30pm. We will have a break over the Christmas period and resume on Monday January 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### OUR MARKET STALL IN NORWICH.

It was good to be back at the old market stall opposite Primark in November we did very well and raised £145 from the sale of icons and books but most important we were very busy with people enquiring about Orthodox Christianity. We will be there again on Wednesday December 5<sup>TH</sup>. with a selection of Icons of the Nativity Christmas Cards and Advent Calendars. COME AND SEE US IF YOU CAN.

#### PARISH CHURCH DEVELOPMENTS

We are now settling into our new parish church but there is still much to do in the way of painting and decorating and we are very grateful for all the work Ralph is putting into it with the help of other

members of the congregation. The planning permission from North Norfolk District Council has been delayed due to pressure of work by the planning officer but we hope to report on this next month.

## MODERN AGE SLAVERY 36

St Furseys was a small part in raising awareness and small resource for a bus to transport women from safe houses to training centre. Helping them in a project for rehabilitation for the survivors of the sex trade in Mumbai India.

Mark Little goes to India this December visiting Mumbai with the objective of seeing the bus and discussing with the slavery charity YOU CAN FREE US of a new and larger training centre.

St Furseys is very interested in the outcome of these discussions.

Thank you for all your prayers, goods and donations for BAKHITA HOUSE and The Falconer Trust and RAGAS and QMC Kinder Ward and Moldova etc. We need as much encouragement as possible and your prayers and contributions are really much appreciated.

As co-ordinator I want to thank Fr Stephen and Mark Little, Linda Peers, Caister Methodist Church for all their help and support.

And not forgetting my friend May and all my friends and family that have given me the encouragement to continue.

There is so much we can do to free children of the risk of being trafficked. Awareness is so important and every small action as small as we think it is, together we can achieve to overcome this dreadful evil.

I hope all the readers of my articles have a very Happy Christmas.

PLEASE read the RAGAS newsletter we are mentioned on page 7 [www.ragasonline](http://www.ragasonline)  
Co-ordinator

Pat Hinkins RAGAS Member (Rotary e club of Innovation)

ST FURSEYS ORTHODOX COMMUNITY (action against Child Slavery)

SPONSORS of ROTARIANS ACTION GROUP AGAINST SLAVERY

### *Kontakion*

THE Virgin to-day giveth birth to him who is  
above all creation; and the earth offereth the  
cave to him whom none can approach unto. Angels  
and shepherds sing glory, and wise men journey with  
a star, since for our sake hath come as a new-born  
Child he who from all eternity is God.

CHRIST IS BORN: GLORIFY HIM.

# THE NATIVITY ACCORDING TO THE FLESH OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST

## Vespers

On Lord, I have cried, *eight stichera are sung*:

TONE TWO

(by Germanos)

Come, let us greatly rejoice in the Lord as we tell of this present mystery. The middle wall of partition has been destroyed; the flaming sword turns back, the cherubim withdraw from the tree of life, and I partake of the delight of Paradise from which I was cast out through disobedience. For the express Image of the Father,<sup>1</sup> the Imprint of His eternity, takes the form of a servant, and without undergoing change He comes forth from a Mother who knew not wedlock. For what He was, He has remained, true God: and what He was not, He has taken upon Himself, becoming man through love for mankind. Unto Him let us cry aloud: God born of a Virgin, have mercy upon us (*twice*).

(by Anatolios)

When the Lord Jesus was born of the holy Virgin, all the world was enlightened. The shepherds watched in the fields, the Magi adored and the angels praised in song; but Herod was troubled: for God has appeared in the flesh, the Saviour of our souls (*twice*).

Thy Kingdom, O Christ our God, is a Kingdom of all the ages, and Thy rule is from generation to generation. Made flesh of the Holy Spirit and made man of the ever-Virgin Mary, Thou hast enlightened us by Thy coming. Light of Light, Brightness of the Father,<sup>1</sup> Thou hast made the whole creation shine with joy. All that hath breath praises Thee, the Image of the glory of the Father. O God who art, and who hast ever been, who hast shone forth from a Virgin, have mercy upon us (*twice*).

From a sermon by Saint Leo the Great, pope

(Sermon 1 in Nativitate Domini, 1-3; PL 54, 190-193)

CHRISTIAN, REMEMBER YOUR DIGNITY

Dearly beloved, today our Savior is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: *Glory to God in the highest*, and they proclaim *peace to his people on earth* as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvelous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, *and when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ*, so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.

## SELECTED LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

**BUDOC** (Buoc. Beuzec) (6th century). Celtic saint, patron of Budock and Budoc Vean (Cornwall) and St. Budeaux (Devon). Budoc was honoured also in Pembrokeshire (Dyfed) in and near Steynton; to him was dedicated a Tironian monastery at Pill in 1200. An Oxford church (near the castle) was also dedicated to Budoc; it may well have been of pre-Conquest date.

Budoc is also venerated in Brittany. The 9th-century Life of \*Winwaloe describes him as a teacher living in the island of Laureá. The Life of \*Maglorius, written c.900, and the 11th-century Chronicle of Dol, make him Maglorius' successor as bishop of Dol. He is the local saint of Plourin, where his relics are still preserved. There is a cult and no place-names at Dol, but place-names without a cult in Cornouaille. Whether this Breton bishop is the same as the abbot venerated in Pembrokeshire and Cornwall it is impossible to determine. The date of the Breton feast (9 December) is sufficiently close to the Exeter martyrology entry to favour an identification; it is a curious fact also that Budock faces St. Mawes across Falmouth harbour, while \*Mawes was abbot of an island monastery in Brittany close to that of Budoc. The main centres of the cult(s) of Budoc are all close to the sea.

The most picturesque legend of Budoc concerns his birth at sea in a barrel. His mother Azenor had been falsely accused of infidelity to her husband by her jealous stepmother who had her thrown pregnant into the English Channel in a barrel. Fortified by visions of \*Brigid she reached Ireland and became the washer-woman of the monastery of Beau Port, near Waterford, where her son was brought up. This story is derived from Greek mythology; with other late accretions it has done nothing to help unravel the tangled skeins of this saint's life and cult. Feast: 8 December; Glastonbury claimed to possess a relic.

**ALBURGA** (d. c.810), foundress of Wilton nunnery. Half-sister of Egbert, king of Wessex and widow of Wolstan, called Earl of Wiltshire. Alburga is said to have changed her husband's foundation of canons at Wilton into a nunnery, which she entered and where she died. Feast: 25 December.

W. Dugdale, *Monasticon*, ii. 315; Stanton, pp. 607-8.

**OFFA OF ESSEX** (d. c.709), king. Son of Sighere, king of the East Saxons, and of \*Osith, Offa became king c.707, and was, according to \*Bede, a lovable, handsome, and popular prince. But in 709 he left 'his wife, his lands, his kinsmen and his fatherland for Christ', abdicated, went to Rome where he was tonsured, and died a monk soon afterwards. His betrothal to Cyneswith, daughter of Penda of Mercia, claimed by Florence of Worcester and William of Malmesbury, is chronologically impossible. It must also be remembered that at this period the abdication and tonsuring of kings was sometimes the result of palace revolutions both in Gaul and in Britain. No record of an official cult of Offa has survived; Stanton assigns his feast to 15 December.

Bede, *H.E.*, v. 19; *G.R.*, i. 99; *G.P.*, p. 317; Florence of Worcester, i. 46-7; Stanton, pp. 600-1.

**DIUMA** (Dimma) (d. 658), bishop of the Middle Angles and Mercians. Of Irish origin, Diuma was one of the four priests sent by \*Finan, bishop of Lindisfarne, to evangelize Mercia after the baptism of Peada, son of Penda c.652. The others were \*Cedd, Betti, and Adda, of whom nothing is known. Their apostolate in Mercia, according to \*Bede, was most successful. When Penda died in 654, the Christian King Oswiu of Northumbria ruled Mercia for a few years; during this time Diuma was consecrated bishop by Finan over the peoples of the Mercians and Middle Angles. It seems that he worked mainly among the latter and died in a district called *Inseppingum*. The 11th-century Anglo-Saxon saints' list (*R.P.S.*) says that he lies buried at Charlbury (Oxon.); the form of his name led to a belief that Dimma (Diuma) was a woman. Feast 7 December.

Bede, *H.E.*, ii. 21; *R.P.S.*

**FRITHEBERT**, bishop of Hexham 734-66. The successor of \*Acca, he is also mentioned as the administrator of Lindisfarne while its bishop, Cynewulf, was in prison. No other details are known of his life. His bones were discovered at Hexham in 1154. Feast: 23 December.

J. Raine, *Memorials of Hexham Abbey*, i (S.S., 1864), pp. 199-200; *D.C.B.*, ii. 566.



# Twentieth Century 1900 - 1925

## American Archdiocese

In 1898, **Bishop Tikhon Belavin** became the head of the diocese of the Aleutian Islands and Alaska of the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1900, the name of this diocese was changed to the diocese of the **Aleutian Islands and North America**. In 1905, the Holy Synod of the Russian Church elevated the diocese to the rank of archdiocese and Tikhon became an archbishop. During this same year, the center of the American archdiocese was moved from San Francisco to New York City where the **St. Nicholas Cathedral** was built. At this time also, the first ecclesiastical seminary was founded in Minneapolis and the first general council (sobor) of the archdiocese took place in 1907 in Mayfield, Pennsylvania, near **St. Tikhon's Monastery** in South Canaan where the archbishop had also founded a pastoral school for training priests.

## Archbishop Tikhon

The Church in America during the time of Archbishop Tikhon, who remained its leader until 1908, was comprised of all Orthodox Christians living in the new world, from all national backgrounds. Many of the Slavs in the archdiocese were former uniates, i.e., members of the Roman Catholic church of the Eastern rite who came to America from those sections of Eastern Europe where the Union of Brest was still in force. (See above page 184) Many of these Slav Christians were led back into the Orthodox Church by **Father Alexis Toth** (d. 1909), who, in 1891, joined the Orthodox Church with his parish in Minneapolis.

Archbishop Tikhon had great ideas for the Orthodox Church in America. He wrote to the Holy Synod of the Russian Church in 1905-1906 that the American archdiocese should be an autonomous Orthodox Church made up of all Orthodox Christians of all nationalities, using the English language and the American civil calendar (i.e., the Gregorian calendar) for its church services and activities. English translations of the main liturgical services of the Church had already been done at this time.

It was Tikhon's conviction that the American Church would be composed of many national groups and he himself had a plan for the gradual development of the self-governing church with a hierarchy drawn from all of the ethnic Orthodox peoples. In 1904, **Raphael Hawaweeny**, a Syrian archimandrite, was consecrated as bishop of Brooklyn to care for the faithful of Syrian and Lebanese origins in America. A similar plan was set for the consecration of a bishop from the Serbian clergy, who also would have a territorial diocese while tending to the specific needs of the Serbian Orthodox in the new land. Thus it was the consciously formulated plan to develop a local hierarchy, preserving the Orthodox territorial principle of diocesan government, and yet serving the pastoral needs of the various

national peoples. Already in 1905, however, a "**Hellenic Eastern Orthodox Church**" was incorporated in the state of New York independent of the local Orthodox hierarchy, although, at the time, there was no Greek bishop in the country and no plans for a specifically Greek-American diocese.

## From 1908 - 1917

After Archbishop Tikhon returned to Russia, the American diocese was headed by **Archbishop Platon Rozhdestvenskii** who served until 1914 when he returned to Russia to serve as a member of the Holy Synod under the provisional government. Platon was the former exarch of the Church of Georgia (Iberia) in the Russian empire. In 1912, the ecclesiastical seminary, called **St. Platon's**, was moved from Minneapolis to Tenafly, New Jersey.

**Father Leonid Turkevich**, the future **Metropolitan Leonty**, one of the original teachers at the seminary, became, at this time, the dean of **St. Nicholas Cathedral** in New York. He wrote many articles during this period about the destiny of the American missionary archdiocese to become a self-governing Orthodox Church. With **Father A. Kukulevsky**, he represented the American diocese at the Russian Church Council of 1917-1918.

## Church in Russia

The period from 1900 to 1917, in Russia, was a time of religious rebirth and ecclesiastical reform. While such atheist intellectuals as **P.B. Struve** (d. 1944), **S.N. Bulgakov** (d. 1944), **N.A. Berdyaev** (d. 1948), **S.L. Frank** (d. 1950), **G.P. Fedotov** (d. 1951) and others were effecting their conversions "from marxism to idealism" and into the Orthodox Church, the bishops and leaders of the Russian Church were subjecting the ecclesiastical structures to critical review. In 1905, the ober-procurator of the Holy Synod, **K. P. Pobedonostsev**, who had virtually ruled the church for a quarter century, made known the emperor's declaration that at long last a council of the Russian Church would be held and that plans should be made "to carry this great task forward." The civil power finally yielded to the demands that the Russian Church be free to carry on its life and work without interference from state control.

## Council of 1917 - 1918

Much pre-conciliar work was done. Surveys of the bishops were conducted to receive their ideas. Discussions were held. Reports were filed. After much debate, it was decided that each diocese would send delegates from the clergy and laity to sit in council with the bishops, who, alone, according to the Orthodox Faith, would make the final decisions in matters of

church doctrine and practice. In 1917, in the midst of revolutionary turmoil, the council convened. Its most momentous act was to restore the patriarchate to the Russian Church. On the morning of November 1, 1917, after vigil and prayer, an old monk drew the name of one of the three elected nominees from an urn in front of the icon of the Kazan Mother of God. Thus, **Archbishop Tikhon**, the former primate of the American archdiocese, became the first **patriarch** of the Russian Orthodox Church since the time of Peter the Great.

### **Patriarch Tikhon**

From the very beginning, the new patriarch struggled for the rights of the Russian Church in its new situation of legal separation from the soviet state. In January 1918, he issued a formal decree of condemnation and excommunication of all "open and secret enemies of the truth of Christ." This decree, which referred directly to actions of the Bolshevik government, was confirmed by the church council which was still in session.

Patriarch Tikhon was also arrested and brought to trial for his refusal to give up consecrated church vessels which the government demanded during the time of famine and civil war, ostensibly to feed the poor. The primate offered all unconsecrated riches of the church and promised as well to raise money for the afflicted through free will offerings of the faithful that would equal the amount which the government was demanding, and which also would be distributed to the people directly by the church.

In his struggles and trials, the patriarch tried to follow the path of political neutrality while he defended the rights of the church without compromise. He died in 1925 as a confessor for the faith and is recognized by many as a martyr and saint.

### **Living Church**

Patriarch Tikhon also had to struggle against the **Living Church**, a group of ultra-liberal churchmen who enthusiastically supported the soviet regime. The Living Church was recognized by the state as the official Russian Church, and it was used by the state against those faithful to Patriarch Tikhon. This group of "renovationists" in many ways changed the teachings and practices of the Orthodox Church and were greeted by some in the West as the bearers of the Reformation in Russia. The Living Church died out in the late twenties when it was no longer useful to the state. It had no following among the people, and a number of clergy who had been in the movement in good faith repented and returned to the Orthodox Church.

### **Church in America**

Following the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the Orthodox Church in America was thrown into confusion and chaos. Since 1917, the American archdiocese was without effective leadership. After the revolution, **Archbishop Platon** returned to America. He had the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon to care for the American church, but was without official papers of any kind. The **third council** of the American archdiocese, held in Pittsburgh in 1922, accepted Platon as its leader, but agreed to wait for official word from the patriarch in Moscow as to his official assignment. At the time, however, the patriarch was in captivity to the soviet regime and the official support of the state was given to the Living Church.

In 1923, the unfrocked priest, **John Kedrovsky**, came to America as a "bishop" of the Living Church and demanded — and received by legal action — possession of Russian Church properties including St. Nicholas Cathedral in New York. At this time as well, the seminary in Tenaflly was closed and its properties and library were sold.

### **Detroit Council**

In 1924, the **fourth council** of the American archdiocese was held in Detroit. This council, on the basis of Patriarch Tikhon's decree of November 20, 1920, No. 362 — which declared that all dioceses of the Russian Church cut off from the patriarchate should govern themselves and carry on their church life under local supervision — declared that the American archdiocese would be a **self-governing metropolitanate** until such time as normal relations could be resumed with the Church in Russia. Platon was officially installed as the metropolitan and the church came to be called the **American Metropolia**, officially incorporated as the **Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America**.

### **American Disunity**

The chaos of the post-revolutionary years gave opportunity for the non-Russian Orthodox in America to form their own ecclesiastical jurisdictions, thus inaugurating the existence of many church "dioceses" in the same territory for the first time in Orthodox Church history. In 1922, the patriarchate of Constantinople settled its problems with the Church of Greece over America and officially formed the **Greek Orthodox Church in America** under its jurisdiction. The Syrian bishop Raphael died in 1915 and the new bishop for the **Syrian Orthodox in America**, **Aftimios**, was consecrated in America in union with the local Russian bishops. At this time as well, local groups of Orthodox Christians from all national backgrounds were organizing themselves into parish communities in the new world with virtually no clear and consistent hierarchal leadership.