



President's Letter to Archbishop

Your Eminence,

It is with a great deal of surprise that we learned that you will be retiring as our Archbishop on July 29, 1996.

Mere words cannot describe the gratitude which we extend to you for your decades of uninterrupted, God-inspired leadership. Truly, you have been an enlightened leader, one with a charismatic personality, who has taken the Orthodox faith in America from the shadows into the light.

In light of the announcement of your upcoming retirement, rest assured you will have the full cooperation of the APC to make certain your last year in office is one which allows you to receive the respect and appreciation due you. We also stand ready to assist His Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew and Your Eminence in assuring a harmonious transition to our next Archbishop.

On Monday of next week, we will begin our Fall meeting of the Presbyter's Council. Should you desire any items be placed on the agenda for consideration, please forward them to me either directly or through the Chancellor, Fr. Triantafilou. Allow me to also bring to your attention certain items which I would like you to consider, advise us and give your blessings upon:

1. It has come to my attention the Executive Committee of the Archdiocesan Council is planning to visit the Patriarchate in November. I feel it is of utmost importance that the clergy, that is the Presbyters, also speak to His Holiness concerning the future of the Church in America and exchange views and ideas with him.
2. The National Clergy Retreat is to be held at the Antiochian Village in Ligonier, Pennsylvania October 2nd through the 5th. I am pleased to report to Your Eminence that approximately 100 clergymen have already signed up for this retreat. It is our hope and prayer that the gathering of clergy will not only be a retreat but also a time we can share with our Spiritual Father as he reaches the last year of his ministry as our Archbishop.

I would appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible as to the above mentioned items or any others you feel should be addressed.

Your Eminence has served us with distinction and honor. Truly the Lord has blessed your ministry and thereby those of us in America privileged to have served with you these many decades.

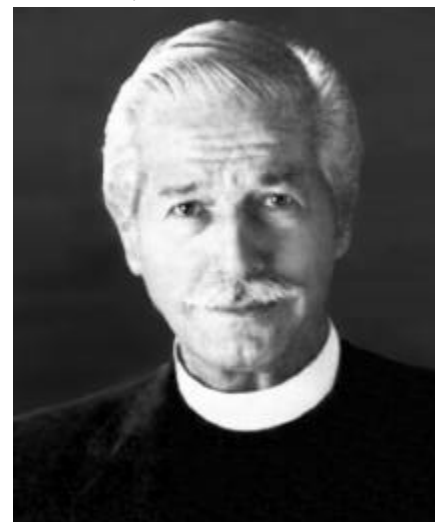
Most respectfully,

Rev. Christopher T. Metropulos
September 7, 1995

In Memoriam

News of the loss of Fr. Leon Contos evoked this comment, "It's the end of an era." No era was ever ushered in with heralds or with trumpets; only with the cry of a newborn child. An era ends in much the same way; no fanfare. The door quietly closes and there is silence: silence which gives us time to bring the era into focus.

The Very Rev. Leonidas C. Contos



1920-1995

A birthing cry was heard on February 18, 1920 and ushered in an era. Born to a family of modest means, Fr. Contos shared the love of his parents and the hardships of those depression years with his brother and sisters. When times got tough, he went out and picked blueberries and sold them door to door to help the family make ends meet.

In the late 1930's, Fr. Contos heeded the call to Priesthood and entered Holy Cross Seminary in Pomfret, Connecticut, where he excelled. He was bold but never brash. He was dashing and daring. So daring, in fact, that a prank he pulled on his professors is still legend. He imitated a visiting abbot from Mt. Athos, which sent professors scurrying to kiss his hand and, with their respects, curry his favor. It almost lost him his place at Pomfret.

So dashing was he that he easily won the heart of Athena Evergates who lived in nearby Danielson. There, near his beloved Pomfret and beside his dear Athena, he is to be buried and find his final rest.



Their daughter, Tanya, was, indeed, her daddy's little girl, with whom he shared a unique closeness and love. And then, of course, there is his grandson, Alexander; a grandson who Athena never saw and of whom Fr. Leon could not see enough. How he adored you both.

Fr. Contos's Priesthood began with his ordination, in 1944, at the Church of the Archangels in Stamford, Connecticut. This was also to become his first assignment. From there, he was assigned to St. Sophia, in Los Angeles, where I first met him 35 years ago. Wherever he served, and whenever he spoke, he made us proud. His extensive ministry in Radio and Television began then and grew and continued to the end. A sabbatical leave, during those years, gave him the opportunity to earn a doctorate at Oxford after which he returned to Los Angeles. This was to be a time of trial and tempest.

A series of assignments at the Archdiocesan level followed, which added a different dimension to his ministry. Most notable were his contributions as its Ecumenical officer.

He then served as President of Hellenic College, Holy Cross School of Theology. His mark is there. Indelibly etched, it has given new meaning and direction to that institution. Again, there were more trials, more tempest. Then followed the long illness and the loss of Athena.

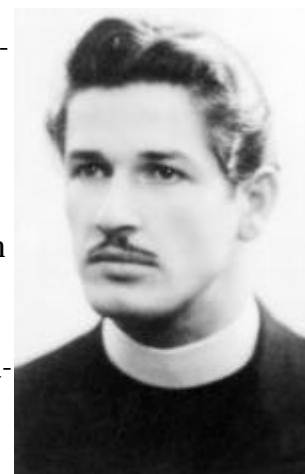
In 1979, with the blessings of His Eminence, the suggestion to Bishop Anthony to assign Fr. Leon to Belmont, California readily became reality. Then, he went on to the Patriarch Athenagoras Orthodox Institute in Berkeley as professor of Orthodox studies.

***...a scholar, a humorist, an intellectual,
a gentleman, an artist, an author, an
orator, a musician, a theologian...***

Fr. Leon was a stickler for the proper conduct of worship. He would become frustrated and wince at what he termed "the butchering of the language." This became the catalyst, a culmination of our friendship, resulting in a collaboration to provide a new translation of the liturgical texts of the Greek Orthodox Church, and so we gave birth to Narthex Press.

Archbishop Iakovos afforded him the opportunity to concentrate on this work and be the official translator of the Archdiocese.

Our primary goal was, through contemporary language, with the elegance, the challenge and the dignity of a classic style, to impart the beauty and meaning of our worship. In the span of a few years, 11 books, 7 of which represent a major contribution of his talent, have been published.



One of these works, Sacraments and Services, a two volume edition, was to be published in two weeks. Volume II contains the Funeral Service, his very own translation. Little did either of us imagine for a moment, last week, that the first time it would be prayed, even before publication, would be for him.

Fr. Leon, a personage, a public figure, was a very private person. He guarded and valued that privacy. Well, then, who was he? He was a charming, a gracious, and a most eloquent man. Once you listened to him, you never forgot him. With his wit and razor-sharp retort, he could charm you or chastise you and even confuse you as to which you were receiving; charm or chastisement. He was a scholar, a humorist, an intellectual, a gentleman, an artist, an author, an orator, a musician, a theologian, a husband, a father and a grandfather. He was a gifted man. Lesser men were intimidated by the enormity of his talent. Honest men were inspired by it.



He looked for beauty and strove for perfection in every facet of his life. That for which he searched and sought is now for his soul to see and be satisfied.

Language was his palette and with it he painted frescoes with phrases, and with his words, well with his words he brought wonder and wisdom. His sermons and his writings were his works of art.

And again came trial, only this time, thank God, no tempest. Bravely, Fr. Leon bore his bed of pain. That cancerous pain was real and severe. He challenged it with courage; no bitter complaints, no remorse, no bemoaning of his fate. He faced it with an almost stoic acceptance, true to his ancestral past.

Accept him, Lord, as loving, compassionate, charitable, forgiving, humble, prayerful and devoted.

Just a few weeks ago Fr. Leon returned from Boston where he planned to relocate. He was excited about the prospect of the move. In describing what was to be his new home, the adjectives were typically his. It was a simply elegant, tastefully done and quite handsome place. He was right, his new home is just that.

Fr. Leon was concise, punctual, punctilious, reserved, yet not removed. He was diligent, disciplined, determined, meticulous, impeccable and certainly not implacable. My, how these words would have pleased him. Time will dim the memory of the man. His books and his works he leaves behind to run the test of time. His soul he gives to God for eternity. Fr. Leon was a priest and we are here to pray for his soul. Accept him, Lord, as loving, compassionate, charitable, forgiving, humble, prayerful and devoted. My, how these words please God.

In the Emergency Room, a few hours before his death, Fr. Contos's concern was not for himself. Fr. Peter Salmas, who was there to minister, found himself being ministered to, as Fr. Leon inquired about him and his son who had been ill. I know many of you have similar stories of how he was there for you.

Eighteen months ago his book, The Lenten Covenant, was published. It is, in my opinion, his finest work; theologically and inspirationally. It also gives a glimpse into the private heart of this priest of God. I have chosen this excerpt to share.

On Easter Eve when, as one of four priests privileged to be at the altar of the Holy Sepulchre for the Resurrection Liturgy, it came my turn to offer prayers for the living and the departed at the "Prothesis", those simple, unaffected words took on a thundering clarity. For the Table of Oblation is the very stone on which Christ's body was laid. One can enter only on one's knees. One enters alone. Like the high priest of Israel one finds oneself, incredibly, in the presence of the Living God, and the terror of that knowledge is utterly shattering.

It would be absurd to suggest that I understood all this at the moment. I could not control the weeping, let alone govern my thoughts. But I have come to understand it, a little, since. And not all the redemptive theology, nor all the writings by and about the Fathers of the Church, can make any clearer Christ's meaning when He declares: "I say to you, you will see heaven opened."

This is all that matters now.

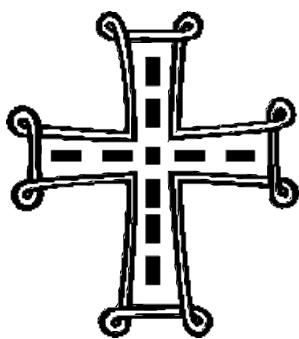
In the early morning hours of last Saturday, after a restless night, I found myself between darkness and dawn, sleep and wakefulness. I know not why, but the last note of his comments on the final draft of our forthcoming edition kept playing in my mind, even the ever-present lines of humor. But, I was almost troubled by his closing, again not knowing why. It read, “fondly and faithfully, Leon”. And then the phone rang and I learned that the door of his era had quietly closed and his mellifluous tones were now silenced. With that silence comes the focus of his era.

Quite often he would say. “Spencer, promise me that you will preach my eulogy,” and because I mimicked him, he would add, “but do it in my own voice”. I now fulfill that promise and say, “Indeed, fondly and faithfully dear friend, farewell.”

—**Rev. Spencer Kezios**

Pastor, St. Nicholas Church Northridge, California

Eulogy delivered at the Trisagion at Holy Cross, Belmont, California on Wed. evening, September 6, 1995



The Way We Were

Woodrow Wilson once observed that one of the proofs that the Scriptures are divinely inspired is the amount of bad preaching they have endured. It has been similarly suggested that the divine institution of the Church can reasonably be adduced by the centuries of clumsy clergy and inept leaders it has survived. And yet this ministry is entrusted to human hands, precisely because it has a way of transcending all mortal limitations. St. John Chrysostom tells us: “The work of the priesthood is done on earth, but it is ranked among the heavenly ordinances. Ordinary men have been entrusted with the stewardship of heavenly things and have received an authority which God has not given to angels or archangels.”

There was the corresponding pressure to marry quickly, be ordained, then plopped into a parish...

Where angels and, presumably, archangels fear to tread, I have foolishly consented to come rushing in, to impart very limited wisdom on the vexed and complex issue of theological education, especially vexed and more than ever complex as the ground beneath us is more than ever shifting sand. The title suggests what thin credentials I bring, since the past is something I do know a little about.

If I do have any qualification to offer some observations on this topic, surely it is not because I regard myself as a theologian, except in the broadest and most permissive sense of the word, but at least, as the theologians tend to ascribe authority, on the basis of antiquity. I entered Holy Cross at Pomfret in 1938, with the great hurricane of that year perhaps an omen of turbulent times to come.

I also qualify as standing in a rather long line of “*scholarchas*”, most of whom before me were, or would become, bishops, making me a misfit in yet another way. Further, it was during my tenure of seven years—with one year off for bad behavior—that the noble but hapless enterprise of Hellenic College was launched.

The concept of Hellenic College was not, to put it charitably, universally applauded, least of all among the clergy, the alumni, many of whom seemed to think their Alma Mater, their academic mother, had in middle age been seduced into a life of sin. Thus in 1971, in response to a rising ground swell of unenthusiasm, I found myself translated out by means of “lateral percussive thrust”, which the *Peter Principle* defines in more familiar language as a kick in the backside. It is not unlike the arcane order within the CIA that someone is to be treated “with extreme prejudice”, meaning he is to be bumped off. Suddenly I bore the distinguished title of President Emeritus. You know what that means. As it was explained to a very senior rector who had been nudged not too gently out to pasture, it is made up of the Latin prefix “e”, as in egress meaning out, and “meritus”, meaning you deserve to be. All of this—my baleful biography—is merely by way of presenting my credentials.

And there is a point to my identifying myself with the virtual beginnings of Holy Cross nearly sixty years ago. It may be instructive to draw, though very carefully, some comparisons between what was then and what now is, and perhaps a little of what has gone between. Pomfret was obviously a very different proposition, in part because those were very different times and because, at least until the war, the basic academic purpose was limited and fixed. I can think of no apter way of describing that era and the mentality that informed it than is to be found in the words of another onetime seminarian, a Roman Catholic, William Sullivan, in his small but powerful book, *Under Orders*:

"The seminary was a place for immature minds which were to be kept in immaturity. The Church was mature and that was enough. We were exactly in the position of infants who had only to repeat the words of an infallible parent. The method served well enough for practical purposes. For in the leaden quiescence of the parsonage and in the humdrum of parish rites, what was the need of a mind? Indeed, there was latent in our thought the sense that an independent intellect, determined to study religion profoundly and impartially, would encounter peril. A good priest should be on guard against many things, but chiefly against himself, lest in affirming his own personality, he should take a step beyond the enchanted circle of awful authority and so be lost."

Those were very different times...

This is an uncanny profile of Pomfret. It was not merely rigid discipline: lights on at 6, out at 10—and don't get caught hiding in a closet cramming for an exam; monitored study, in the classroom; prohibition against speaking anything but Greek (commendable for learning a language, a device not lost on the Berlitz people). It was the total—the word totalitarian was not yet in vogue—approach to training for ministry. It involved the confiscation of books on, say, philosophy; utter disparagement of advanced academic degrees: "ti ta theloume ta hartia?" And of course, given the pressing need for priests, there was the corresponding pressure to marry quickly, be ordained, then plopped into a parish with the most acute need with no time to assess whether there would be a proper "fit".



Holy Cross Seminary in 1938, Pomfret Connecticut.

Without fully understanding it, this was the cause of my class's celebrated rebellion, though in our immaturity unable to articulate it, we probably cited a long list of minor and tangential complaints. But as a strike against authority it was quite genuine. Being the neatest typist, though using only two fingers, I typed the official manifesto. It succeeded in putting a substantial chink in the armor of Bishop Cavadas—J.B. (Joe Bishop) as he was commonly referred to—who was obliged to summon reinforcements in the formidable person of Archbishop Athenagoras. The archbishop knew what to do: single out a few of the miscreants, label them as troublemakers, and sacrifice them to the higher good.

The situation more than half a century later is vastly changed. I remember reading an account of an academic convocation, a two-day intra-Orthodox conference on pastoral praxis which inaugurated the school's Jubilee Year 1988. J.B. would have reserved his wryest comments for such an assemblage of academics in full plumage. Nevertheless, such a gathering, with such a topic for serious discussion, provides some measure of how far we have traveled and how things have changed, mostly, one wants to believe, for the good. Some of the issues confronted in workshop and seminar, words from an alien tongue in our time, were: Orthodox parish life and changing interpersonal relations; women in the Orthodox Church; Orthodoxy in American culture; the role of monasticism; continuity, discontinuity, newness, etc. Not new issues to be sure, but newly come within the ambit of our theological perspective. And it is no empty truism that what we judge to be the real issues of our life and ministry should determine the content of our theology for ministry.

I did not take part in that symposium. But I had participated in one two years earlier, something called a “directions conference”, the purpose of which as nearly as I could determine, was to determine where the school was going, or ought to go. I found it disconcerting on several grounds, not least for the fact that it betrayed an ongoing, underlying and pervasive unsureness about the whole enterprise, one that I thought had been finally exorcised in 1970. For at the Biennial Congress of that year, a resolution, amply supported by clergy, indeed some very recent graduates, was passed.

The vision: to train young men, by the best means available and affordable, in the shortest time possible, to serve to the best of their ability.

The sense of the resolution was that Hellenic College would henceforth admit only pre-theology students. The obvious effect was to nullify the very charter the trustees had handed me. It struck me as cruel irony that the name Hellenic College would be retained. Instead, not only the earlier, somewhat high-flown notion of a “Hellenic University” held by such respected men as the Pappases and the Skourases, but even the very modest, scaled-down concept of a small uniquely oriented Church-related liberal arts school, which had begun to have some solid academic successes, lay in tatters on the convention floor.

Again, this is not merely a desultory recitation of a forgotten piece of history; it is a pointed caution precisely against the danger of forgetting. For in my view this pernicious ambivalence has been more than anything else inimical to the progress of HCHC, to the realization of its true and full potential. But at issue here is more than the story of an academic institution; at issue, ultimately is the life and growth of the very Church itself.

You see, the point about Pomfret was that there was never any question about “directions”, about what its “academic franchise” was. It was conceived, established and run according to a clear vision. There might have been a bit too much experimentation with courses—one of the things our little rebellion was about—and it might have been woefully narrow and bare bones, not least one can imagine for financial reasons. And if English was at best a cursory affair, or Latin became an

early victim, the place was always in sync with that vision: to train young men, by the best means available and affordable, in the shortest time possible, to serve to the best of their limited ability, what was still pretty much an immigrant bilingual Church. Whatever ambivalence there may have been concerning issues of academic scope, ie., whether the curriculum was preparatory for later schooling abroad, was resolved with the onset of WWII. It was a choice of strategy but not of the central vision. We just had to devote more time to raising pigs and vegetables.

The very lack of printed books from Greece was turned to our advantage. We copied from the handwritten notes of our professors, all of whom had appalling handwriting, designated typists putting them on mimeograph masters to be duplicated and passed around. Some of us also worked in the print shop. If I am an unusually good speller and if I continue to use the bareia by second nature at a time when virtually all accents have been eliminated, I owe it to those wartime exigencies.

Throughout my tenure at HCHC I found myself embattled on the Greek language issue—you will recall that this is nearly 30 years ago, a whole generation—trying to persuade the faculty that they were effectively disabling the students by lecturing exclusively in English, ignoring the need for an adequate preparation in Greek to minister to a Church still very much bilingual. I need hardly say that this weakness severely compromises the effectiveness of our young priests in many of our communities.

Besides this, for lack of a solid grounding in Greek and an appreciation of its grace and power, they are sadly impoverished.



We were loved.

There is another aspect of the Pomfret years which, though now little more than a faded snapshot, represented one of its more vital features. We took an active part in the projection of the school to the community from which we hoped to draw support. In this respect, Bishop Cavadas, though he would have been dismayed at the very suggestion, was, in the best possible sense, a public relations genius.

The very habit he designed—slender fitted cassock, blue velvet sash, snowy white collar of starched cotton pique—was both elegant and solemn. Every Sunday morning we accompanied him on his pastoral visits throughout New England, cruising the roads in a procession of huge black cars, bought for a song during those Depression years—a ‘28 Lincoln, a ‘29 Packard, a ‘31 Cadillac V-12, a ‘32 Pierce Arrow (my special love), a ‘35 V-12 Lincoln, another Cadillac, a ‘35 V-16 and of course the indestructible ‘34 Ford Woodie or Beach Wagon as we knew it. We must have looked like some sinister hit team. But there we were in our handsome habit, hair neatly combed, post-pubescent choirboys. Well trained choirboys. I do not think the quality of choral singing has been equaled since those days of the late ‘30s and early ‘40s. To say we were a “hit” wherever we appeared would be an understatement. We were loved. The Scholi was loved. J.B. was loved. And when we returned home Sunday night, we to our studies, he to his beloved comics, we knew we had served Pomfret well.

I suggested earlier that it is no empty truism that what we judge to be the real issues of our life and ministry should determine the content of our theology for ministry. A corollary to that, also a truism I suppose, is that if the Gospel message is of ultimate concern, then of ultimate importance to a theology for ministry is the theology of preaching. If the redemption of the world required that the Word become flesh, surely the redemptive work of the Church demands no less. “The Word of God” says Edgar deWitt Jones, “in the Book is a dead letter....paper, type and ink. In the preacher that word becomes again as it was when first spoken by prophet, priest, apostle...”

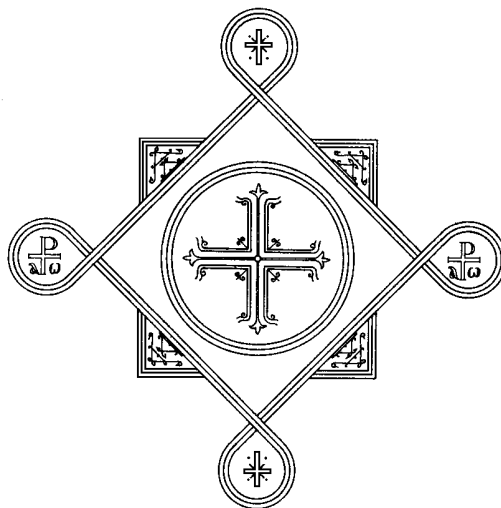
Provided of course that the preacher lives as prophet, priest and apostle. One of the supercilious members of the French royalty once said to a famous court preacher: “Sire, your sermons terrify me, but your life reassures me.” I don’t remember a set course in homiletics at Pomfret. I do remember that we were often expected to deliver the homily on these Sunday \morning visits. I have vivid images of sincere homiletic efforts heavily, mercilessly marked up by the then Deacon Coucouzes (Archbishop Iakovos), not much older than ourselves.

The favored method then was memorization. And so we walked along the roadside, one rehearsing, the other checking, trying to keep our minds off the gorgeous Autumn colors on days like these. In my fifth and senior year I was given the assignment to preach every single Sunday of the year at the Church in New London, CT, also serving—as was permitted during the War years—as sub-deacon. All this, of course, exclusively in Greek.

What we lacked, were deliberately deprived of, at Pomfret, many of us in later years tried to supplement, hoping to make good some of our deficiencies, at least—or should I say at most?—academically. I am not altogether clear what made, and makes, Pomfret so important to us “Cavadakia”. I am sure we have romanticized it somewhat. Yet, for scores of us, many now dead, life was rooted there. Minds were awakened, hearts were committed, spirits nourished, some tentative awareness of calling slowly acknowledged and confirmed. There we learned priceless discipline—Oh, did we learn discipline!—and perhaps something of its kinship to discipleship.

—**Very Rev. Leonidas Contos**

*Keynote address to S.F. Diocese clergy at St.
Nicholas Ranch
November 1, 1994*



A review of Counsels on the Christian Priesthood

by St. John of Kronstadt

A brother priest recently asked me: “Where do our parishioners go to find us?” The answer, sadly, points out one of the fundamental flaws in our lives as parish priests: our parishioners come to our offices, not the Church, to find us. How many of us spend any time at the altar between Sundays? For many of us our time is spent counseling, administrating (whatever that is), attending various committee meetings and planning the next program for our parish. We squeeze in our hospital calls and prepare our sermons on the fly. With so daunting a schedule facing us (on our filofax dateminder), we begin to make cuts in our activities. Since we don’t live any semblance of liturgical life, we can’t really cut anything “out there.” Hence, our personal prayer life becomes fertile ground for the “scheduling plow.” And then we establish committees to study clergy burnout.



Fr. John of Kronstadt

This past year, SVS Press published *Counsels on the Christian Priesthood* by St. John of Kronstadt. This little book, edited by W. Jardine Grisbrooke, should top the reading list of every Orthodox priest. Mr. Grisbrooke has combed through St. John of Kronstadt’s *My Life in Christ* and isolated those passages that speak specifically to the parish priest. While any number of books are available to teach clergy the latest methods of streamlining ministry, diversifying ministry, delegating ministry, expanding ministry, ad nauseum, it is refreshing to read a book that calls the priest back to his fundamental task: **PRAYER!**

Father John’s conception of priestly ministry differs greatly from the modern, dare I say “professional”, vision found in many books written for clergy. For him, the most basic task of the priest is prayer. Every act of a parish priest’s life must be built upon fervent, daily prayer.

“The ignorance and sinfulness of the people is such that the priest must pray for them most fervently and must try to teach and enlighten them day in and day out. Yet too often we seek riches, or at least comfort and rest; we dislike hard labor; and sometimes we even become irritated when there are more penitents than usual! Let us not be given to rest, let us not be slothful, let us not be negligent in the performance of our spiritual duties, lest we deprive ourselves of the heavenly rest, for if we have taken worldly rest in abundance, what rest can we look for in heaven?”

Counsels on the Christian Priesthood is not to be read in one sitting. It is not intended to be read in any

sequential or “logical” manner. Grisbrooke has arbitrarily grouped Father John’s comments into ten “chapters.” Above each passage from *My Life in Christ*, Grisbrooke has inserted a relevant (sometimes) pericope from the Scriptures. I could have done without this addition. In many cases, I couldn’t make the connection between the pericope and the selection from Father John. It does, however, reinforce the reality that *Counsels on the Christian Priesthood* is to be read slowly, one passage at a time.

I was especially touched by the passages on “The Priest as Confessor.” In light of His Grace, Bishop Anthony’s encyclical to us last year on the necessity for our people to sacramentally confess their sins, the saint of Kronstadt’s words ring true and clear:

“Confession is a school of self-denial for the priest. How many occasions there are, in hearing confessions, for impatience, irritation, inattention, negligence and sloth! His way of hearing confessions is truly the touchstone of a priest’s love for his parishioners. Hearing confessions is a labor of love for his spiritual children.”

I was equally inspired by the chapter entitled “The Priest and the Ministry of Healing.” Father John’s comments present a very balanced view of the healing ministry of the Church. While he points out that healing can be a transformation of attitude, he also notes:

“Two children, by the infinite mercy of the Lord, in answer to my unworthy prayer, have been cured of the spirit of infirmity by which they were attacked. Nine times I went to pray for them with bold trust, hoping that my trust would not be put to shame. I came for the 10th time to their home and the children were well.”

No “flash and dance” healing services for Father John. Just the simple, fervent prayer of a pastor for his people.

For those who have not read *My Life in Christ*, I heartily recommend *Counsels on the Christian Priesthood* to all Orthodox priests. When so many of us are exhausting ourselves in the eternal race to accomplish so many different things, we need to be reminded that we are first and foremost men of prayer. The time you spend with St. John of Kronstadt will be time well spent.

—**Rev. James Gavrilos**
Pastor, St. Gregory of Nyssa Church
El Cajon, California

The Presbyter

APC Newsletter

Our little newsletter has passed on to the care of new workers in the vineyard. Previous issues were through the cooperative efforts of Rev. Christopher Metropulos with Rev. Emmanuel Pratsinakakis and Rev. Dennis Strouzas.

This is *our newsletter*—the presbyters of the Archdiocese. For it to flower it needs your nourishment of articles, essays, photos and news items. We encourage as well your anecdotes, jokes, cartoons or any creative input. Let our publication reflect the tremendous talent present throughout the Archdiocese.

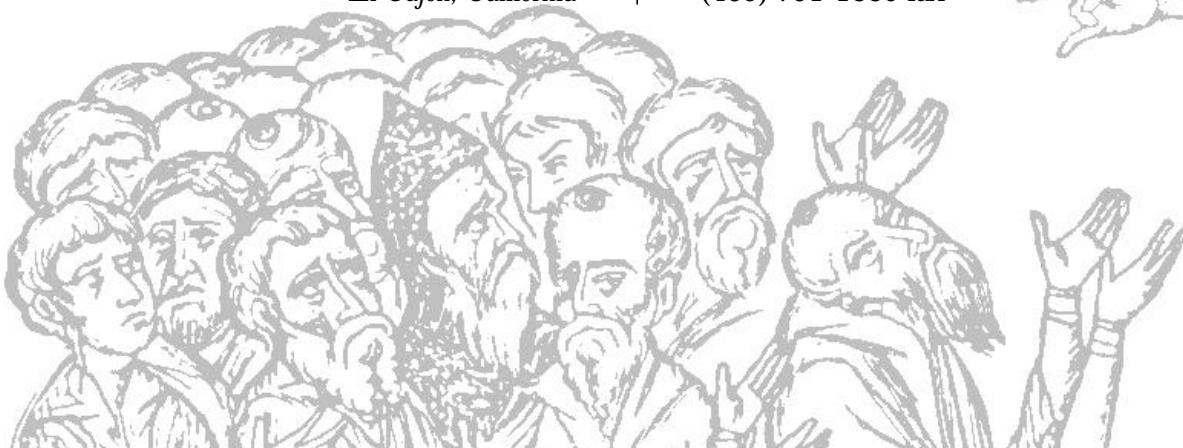
The plan is for The Presbyter to be issued quarterly. All photos and submissions will be returned upon request. Please contact us with your input.

Editor: Rev. Steven Tsiichlis

Assumption Church
1804 13th Avenue
Seattle, WA 98112
(206) 323-8557 office
(206) 323-8558 fax

Co-Editor: Rev. Chris Margaritis

St. George Church
2101 NW 145th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73134
(405) 751-1885 office
(405) 751-1889 fax





APC Retreat

The beautiful Laurel highlands of western Pennsylvania served as the backdrop for the first annual National Retreat for Clergy sponsored by the Archdiocesan Presbyters Council. With the blessings of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos, the retreat was held at Antiochian village, Ligonier, Pennsylvania, Oct. 2-5, 1995.

Over eighty presbyters from across the Archdiocese were in attendance, including His Grace Bishop Maximos of Pittsburgh and Archdiocesan Chancellor Fr. Nicholas Triantafilou. The presbyters also received paternal greetings from His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos and His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew I, who also conveyed his warm blessings for a successful retreat.

The retreat master, Fr. Lawrence, Abbot of New Skete Monastery, Cambridge, New York, spoke on the Authenticity and Integrity of the Priesthood. His remarks during the sessions were thought provoking and open discussions ensued, moderated by APC President, Fr. Christopher Metropulos.

Beyond the beautiful surroundings, the fine fellowship and the opportunity to leave the outside world behind, the high point of this retreat, aside from the inspiring messages by Fr. Lawrence and His Grace Bishop Maximos, was the beautiful celebration of the sacrament of Holy Unction. The service was celebrated by Bishop Maximos, assisted by six presbyters on Wednesday evening, followed by Divine Liturgy Thursday Morning.

Although the retreat was the first attempt in recent years, it was an excellent balance of spiritual direction, discussion, quiet time and prayer, a banquet for mind, body and soul.

—**Rev. John M. Loejos**
*Pastor, St. John the Baptist Church
 Omaha, Nebraska*

Candids from the APC Retreat in Ligonier, PA, by Rev. Anthony Nicklas

Diocesan Syndesmos Reports

Diocese of Denver

September 11, 1995

With deep sorrow, His Grace Bishop Isaiah has announced the death of the V. Rev Charles Kyriacos Anastasiou on April 2, 1995. May his memory be eternal.

Welcome to Fr. Gabriel Barrow, who was received into the Diocese of Denver from the Antiochian Archdiocese, Fr. Gabriel is serving the parish of St. John the Theologian in Webster, Texas.

St. Catherine Parish, Greenwood Village, Co. celebrated the consecration of their temple on Sunday June 18th 1995, by His Grace Bishop Isaiah.

Subdeacon Demetrios Nicoludakis was ordained to the Diaconate on June 1, 1995 at St. Catherine's Parish in Greenwood Village, Co.

A retreat for diocesan clergy will be held in Kansas City, Mo., November 1 & 2, in conjunction with the Diocesan Clergy Laity Assembly on November 3- 5, 1995.

We welcome Mark Leondis, a 1995 graduate of Holy Cross, who has joined the Diocese staff as the first full time Youth Director.

Fr John Loejos of St John the Baptist in Omaha, Ne. was recently made an Oikonomos, during the last pastoral visit of Bishop Isaiah.

—Rev. John M. Loejos

*Pastor, St. John the Baptist Church
Omaha, Nebraska*

Diocese of Pittsburgh

September 13, 1995

Since our last A.P.C. meeting (February 1995-TX) our Diocesan Syndesmos Family, under the spiritual guidance of His Grace, Bishop Maximos, submits the following information for publication in the A.P.C. Newsletter.

We gathered at the annual March Clergy Family Retreat held at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, PA. Some of the highlights from our meeting were as follows:

His Grace was unable to Join us for the Retreat due to Episcopal Duties.

Heard from Dr. Steven Muse regarding the theme of Clergy Sexuality from a Psychological perspective. Much lively discussion ensued. The Syndesmos decided to continue this theme in the Fall by studying it through the Patristic perspective.

There was excellent participation from the Presbyteres and our children.

Clergy Family highlights are as follows:

Fr. Evangelos and Presbyteria Susan (Kanella) Pepps and family welcomed the birth of their son, Stavros Demetrios.

Fr. Luke and Presbyteria Faith Veronis returned to the States from their Mission Ministry in Albania to visit their families. They also participated in the First International Conference on Missions and Evangelism at HC/HC (August 6- 12). They have since returned to Albania to continue their ministry.

Fr. Theofanis and Presbyteria Helen Nacopoulos rejoiced at the wedding of their daughter Joanna to Pantelis T. Papazelos (New Castle, PA) on Sunday, September 3, at the Assumption Church, Erie, PA. Joanna is also a recent graduate (Law Juris Doctor Degree) from Dickinson School of Law. The couple have relocated to the Pittsburgh area.

Fr. Michael and Presbyteria Dimitra Pastrikos announce the entrance of their daughter, Maria, to Kent State University (OH). She has enrolled in the Pre- Med Program with aspirations to become a Pediatrician.

Frs. John Chakos and Michael Pastrikos were named "Clergymen of the Year" by His Grace and their peers for the year 1994.

—Rev. George L. Livanos

*Pastor, All Saints Church
Canonsburg, Pennsylvania*

"Hello Fr. George. I was going to leave a message on your voice mail, but then I thought, heck, I can probably reach him at home at this hour."