

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF NORTH AMERICA
53rd Biennial Convention, Hollywood FL July 24-30, 2017
REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LAY MINISTRY

Metropolitan Joseph, Bishop Antoun, Bishop Basil, Bishop John, Bishop Nicholas, Bishop Thomas, Bishop Alexander, Bishop Anthony, Reverend clergy, brothers and sisters in Christ

Mission Statement: The Department of Lay Ministry engages Archdiocesan clergy and laity in strategic and structured conversations within seminars, consultations, and workshops that enable them to build up the Body of Christ as stewards and leaders of their Orthodox Christian dioceses, parishes, missions, and other communities.

Based on our Mission, the Department provides specific programs designed to deepen the spiritual lives of Orthodox Christians and Orthodox Christian parishes. The Department offers three specific programs.

1. The Enliven to Christ retreats and workshops are presented at all Archdiocesan conventions and also are available upon request to parishes and parish life conferences. To develop a program for the parish or for the Diocese please contact Dr. John Dalack at smaoc@earthlink.net or Anthony Bashir at anthony_bashir@emerson.edu. Topics for these retreats and workshops include Orthodox Christian thought on the seven deadly sins; the Prayer of St. Ephraim; the Lord's Prayer; Forgiveness and Reconciliation; The Servant Leader; and others. The specific measurable goals and accomplishments achieved in 2016 for the **Enliven to Christ** program are as follows:

- Provided seven workshops that focused on two topics, i.e., Orthodox Christian perspectives on sin and servant leadership;
- Antiochian Camp counselor training June, 2016
- Parish Life Conferences June and July 2016
- Clergy Symposium July 2016

2. Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Confidential consultation and interventions that focus on forgiveness and reconciliation are available upon request to pastors and parishes. The mission of this program is to teach practices that bring about the resolution of conflict through reconciliation and forgiveness. Great harm can come from prolonged and contentious conflict. However, conflict offers us an important opportunity to serve other people as stewards, grow through these practices toward a union with Christ (cf. Rom. 8:28-29; 1Cor. 10:31-11:1; James 1:2-4) and give glory to God (1 Cor. 10:31). A major goal of the Department is to present community building and peacemaking workshops for the pastor and the congregation so as to empower them to address their own local issues. Contact Dr. John Dalack (smaoc@earthlink.net) or Anthony Bashir (anthony_bashir@emerson.edu) for consultation or to develop a program for your parish or diocese. The specific measurable goals and accomplishments achieved in 2016 for the **Forgiveness and Reconciliation** program are as follows:

- Continued with private and confidential conversations with pastors 2016
- Two parish presentations conducted in 2016

3. The Program for Orthodox Christian Leadership and Parish Life Planning,

Development and Growth

This program has as its mission the conducting of workshops for pastors and parish leadership groups so that they may better understand their role as persons created in the image and likeness of God (i.e., an Orthodox Christian anthropology) as well as their responsibilities as stewards of God's creation. These workshops focus on parish leadership development as well as parish planning and growth. These goals are accomplished through a series of workshops (16 hours) that facilitate consensus decision-making processes for pastors and parish leaders using strategic and structured conversations. These workshops result in the following: an understanding of the Orthodox Christian leader as steward; the creation of a parish mission statement; the development of an explicit three to five year parish vision statement; the identification of a parish's core values that reflect the deeply held convictions of the community; and the writing of goals and action plans that enable implementation of the parish vision. To develop such a program for your parish or to have your questions addressed please contact Richard Robbat at (robbatr@gmail.com) or Anthony Bashir at (anthony_bashir@emerson.edu).

The specific measurable goals and accomplishments achieved in 2016 for the **Orthodox Christian Leadership for Parish Life Planning, Development and Growth** program are as follows:

- Six parish engagements and one Diocesan engagement in 2016
- Six Antiochian parishes in process
- The Antiochian Village in process
- Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America: Center for Family Care and Clergy Couple Care Ministry completed in 2016 and 2017
- Two Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America parishes in process

4. Recommendation: We respectfully request that the Department of Lay Ministry and the Department of Stewardship be reorganized into a new Department for Parish Life Leadership so that a coordinated and integrated program can be undertaken on behalf of "building up the body of Christ."

We are grateful to His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph and the Hierarchs for their support and trust in our work. We are blessed to work with them, the pastors and parishioners of this blessed Archdiocese. To all of you who invited us and welcomed us and who gave yourself over to the work of Christ in this world, we express our deep appreciation.

Respectfully submitted

John D. Dalack, Anthony S. Bashir, Richard Robbat
Department of Lay Ministry

Department of Lay Ministry
The Program for Orthodox Christian Leadership and Parish Life Planning,
Development and Growth

The Department of Lay Ministry offers a program that engages pastors and parish leaders in structured conversations and consensus decision-making processes within a workshop format that will enable them to build up the Body of Christ as stewards and leaders of their Orthodox Christian parish and extended community.

These structured conversations are intended to build trust and consensus among members of a parish. We provide a systematic framework within which pastors and parish leadership will develop a deeper understanding of each other and their parish. This enhanced understanding helps all move forward in His service as together the parish manifest Christ's love in the world.

During these conversations we reflect with you on who you are as a parish, what you do as a parish, and for whom you do it. Through these facilitated conversations, you and your leadership will develop a program for the parish that has five key elements – a model of Orthodox Christian leadership, a parish mission statement, a parish vision statement, an explicit set of core values that underpin your actions and behaviors, and SMART goals for realizing your mission and vision.

For example, we begin usually on a Friday evening with an in-depth look at Orthodox Christian leadership using an Antiochian perspective. On Saturday morning we guide the group through a conversation that results in a clear and concise mission statement. This statement informs your communities about who you are as an Orthodox Christian parish, what it is you do, and for whom it is you do this - both internally and externally within the greater community. On Saturday afternoon, you and the leadership group will develop a vision statement that states in what directions the parish will grow over the next three to five years; this statement serves as the parish's road map into the future.

On our next visit and also on a Friday evening, we guide you to develop a set of parish core values. These are an explicit set of principles that represent your deepest held convictions and that inform your actions and behaviors as individuals and as a parish as well as your relationships to each other and to your community.

On Saturday, we work in small groups on a specific element of the vision statement. We find it very helpful to invite additional parishioners who are specifically interested in a specific element of the vision statement to join a respective working group for this activity. These smaller groups are charged with developing an explicit set of SMART goals that will guide the parish in accomplishing the vision statement.

Each of the workshops ends with a completed statement (i.e., mission, vision, values and goals) developed by the participants. Each workshop fosters fellowship, leadership, mutuality, respect, commitment, accountability, consensus, and clarity of action.

Through this spiritually intentional process, you and the parish leadership will be able to set priorities for your ministries, allocate your time, talent and financial resources, ensure that everyone knows the goals that must be achieved collaboratively, and assess the progress and growth of the parish. As you can see, this is a deliberate and explicit process. It requires the full commitment and attendance of the parish leadership – the pastor(s), the deacon(s), the parish council, parish organization leaders, and others that you may invite.

All we ask from a parish, other than when possible our travel and lodging expenses, is its firm commitment to this entire processes. As necessary, we take responsibility for covering our travel and housing costs. The following is an example of the schedule associated with each visit.

Summary of Schedule

Part 1: Parish Leadership, Mission and Vision

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| Friday evening 2.5 hours | A model of Orthodox Christian leadership that focuses on the leaders' responsibilities and roles (an Antiochian perspective) |
| Saturday AM 2.5 – 3.0 hours | Development of the parish mission statement – Why does the parish exist? What does it do? For whom does it do these acts? |
| Saturday PM 3.0 hours | Development of the parish vision statement – Where does the parish want to be in the next three to five years? |

Part 2: Parish Core Values and SMART Goals

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| Friday evening 2.5 hours | Development of the parish's core values – What are the deeply held convictions that inform our actions and behaviors? |
| Saturday 4.0 hours | Development of the parish's SMART goals based on each element of the parish vision statement. |

The entire process requires approximately 16 hours to complete. We hope that this provides the information necessary to clarify our intent, purpose and offering. Programs previously developed by the Departments continue to be offered to parishes.

Please be in touch with us to let us know your interest, questions or concerns.

For the Departments of Lay Ministry
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 Anthony Bashir (anthony_bashir@emerson.edu)
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