

OCCJ

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WINTER 2003/2004 volume 76 number 4

The Official publication of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America



77th National F.O.C.A. Convention

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The mission of the

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educate the membership of the Fellowship of
Orthodox Christians in America,
to showcase the talents of its membership
and, in so doing, to propagate the
Holy Orthodox Christian Faith.

Mission Statement of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America

The Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America is a national organization of Orthodox Christians. ***Our mission is to proclaim, share and reveal our Orthodox Christian Faith through service, fellowship and example.*** We accomplish this by:

- studying the tenets of our Faith
- supporting, encouraging and promoting Orthodox Youth ministries
- supporting, encouraging and promoting the missionary growth of our church
- encouraging and promoting unity among all Orthodox jurisdictions
- establishing practical means for Orthodox Christians to form enduring friendships on local and national levels through networking
- providing educational, cultural, social and athletic activities for the people of our Orthodox Faith.

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PRESIDENT'S COMMENTARY

John Kruchok

37th National FOCA President

The year 2004 is shaping up to be another great year for the FOCA. We welcome several new district governors, Todd Walker, elected in the Midwest and Gary Lelo, returning in Central Pennsylvania. Our thanks for a job well-done to “retiring” governors Polly Walker and Nicholas Ressetar, who continues in his role as our OCJ Editor.

This year’s national events are rapidly approaching and in final planning highlighted by the 78th FOCA National Convention to be held at the Holiday Inn-Grand Island, New York, near Buffalo-Niagra Falls. Our sponsor, the Campbell “O” Club has chosen a “tropical get-away” for this mid-summer convention. Visiting the Falls, the casino or amusement park minutes away, there will be plenty to do for the whole family so we sincerely hope you “shuffle off to Buffalo” for your vacation, July 14-19, 2004.

The National Bowling Tournament will be sponsored by the St. Andrew’s “O” Club, Maple Heights, Ohio, April 30-May 2, 2004, while the North Suburban “O” Club (Allison Park, PA) will be running its first ever National Basketball Tournament May 14-16, 2004. The National Summer Sports Tournament wraps up the sports year later this summer in Frackville, Pennsylvania (July 30-31, 2004).

The Fellowship continues to sparkle in its commitment to several service projects. On St. Nicholas Day, fifty dollar gifts per child were placed in the mailboxes of our married seminarians at St. Vladimir, St. Tikhon, St. Herman and Christ the Savior Seminaries. We provided gifts to 93 children for a total of \$4,650. The FOCA’s Seminarian Assistance Program continues to match sponsors with families, involving parishes, chapters and individuals in this important source of aid. This program currently is providing over \$20,000 a year in assistance in addition to the nearly \$5,000 in Christmas gifts.

We also continue to make progress in our “Gifts of Love” drive to purchase a vehicle for St. Herman’s Seminary, Kodiak, Alaska. As of December 1, 2003, more than \$16,000 has been raised. Two additional fund-raising campaigns will be conducted in 2004 to push us over the top – the 2004 “Gifts of Love” drive, generally conducted around Valentine’s Day in February, and an “ice-scraper” sale in our chapter’s parishes throughout this winter.

The FOCA National Board of Trustees will be meeting February 5-8, 2004 at this year’s national convention site in Buffalo. I plan on focusing the meeting on membership growth. The Executive Board held its winter meeting utilizing teleconferencing and found this method effective. The board did cancel the 2004 Junior Olympics. A committee has been formed to review the program, site, procedures, and guidelines including the feasibility of integrating this event into the National Sports Department. It is hoped that this year’s July convention date will bring a greater number of young people together.

Thanks to all who accepted responsibilities to serve as district officers at our district conventions this past fall. Thanks also to those who serve so diligently at the national and chapter levels.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Nicholas Ressetar
Editor *Orthodox Christian JOURNAL*

The New Year brings a new edition of the *Journal* — the annual national convention issue — featuring complete coverage of the business sessions, liturgical services, social events and activities of the 77th held at Colonial Williamsburg, and as many photos as we could fit in. Also featured is the banquet address by National President John Kruchok. Read all about it.

“My Favorite Bible Story” was the topic of last year's Junior Essay Contest and we're proud to print the essays of the winners: Jessica Melnick, Rowan Morbey, Nicholas Hedge and Anastasia Shiyanova. Nice job, juniors. (Future *Journal* writers, maybe?). The popular Kidz Corner, speaking of conventions, talks about church conventions: the Ecumenical Councils. Try out the accompanying word scramble. And a reminder to all young people to participate in the “Celebration of Faith” creative art contest.

The *Journal* also includes the usual pieces, such as the president's commentary, district and chapter news, and the 2004 Fellowship calendar. Marge Hopkosky gives us a “Gifts of Love” update — buy those SOS ice scrapers! We answer the question posed in last issue's Ebay article. And in sports, Maple Heights fills us in on the 65th annual bowling tourney (with entry form) followed by this year's basketball tournament entry form.

Rounding out this special convention edition is, what else, but a promo on the 78th National Convention at Grand Island, NY by Nick “Safari Man” Vansuch on behalf of the Campbell “O” Club's sponsoring committee; New Year's greetings from the *Journal's* own supporters (thanks for the contributions!); and new this year, an application for the OCMC mission grants on the back cover. Till next time.....

P.S. Don't forget to apply for an F.O.C.A. scholarship — deadline is March 31st. Application forms at orthodoxfellowship.org.

FOCA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2004

- **Saturday, January 17:** 67th Novogodny Ball, Radisson Hotel, Treose, PA; sponsored by the St. Stephen's OCF; for info, contact Paul Fedoronko at 610.328.6911 or pfatsgd@aol.com
- **February 6 & 7:** National FOCA Winter Board of Trustees meeting, Holiday Inn Grand Island Resort & Conference Center, Grand Island, NY
- **Monday, February 23:** First Day of Great Lent
- **Sunday, April 11:** PASCHA
- **April 30 - May 2:** 70th National FOCA Bowling Tournament, Cleveland/Maple Heights, OH, sponsored by St. Andrew's, #220; for info, contact Marianne Noah at 1-330-274-8061 or visit www.2004bowling.com
- **May 14 - 16:** 2004 National FOCA Basketball Tournament, Pittsburgh/Allison Park, PA, sponsored by North Suburban “O” Club, #1; for info, contact Mary Wusylko at MWusylko@zoominternet.net or 1-412-935-5423
- **Sunday, May 30:** Pentecost
- **Monday, May 31:** 100th Pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery; for info, visit www.stots.edu/monastery
- **July 14 - 19:** 78th National FOCA Convention, Holiday Inn Grand Island Resort & Conference Center, Grand Island, NY (for reservations, call 1-800-359-4827), sponsored by the Campbell “O” Club, #27; for info, contact Nick Vansuch at nmvan@aol.com
- **July 30 & 31:** 2004 National Summer Sports Tournament, Frackville, PA, sponsored by the Frackville “R” Club, #150; for info, contact John Malinchok at malincj@nationwide.com

F.O.C.A. Highlights and News In-Brief

Mission Donations through the FOCA Mission HOTLINE

St. Athanasius Orthodox Mission of Nicholasville, KY (the first OCA mission in Kentucky) recently received a donation of altar boy robes (from St. Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC) and a winding cloth (from St. John Orthodox Church, Alpha, NJ). The FOCA Mission HOTLINE Project is a church article exchange sponsored by the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (FOCA) which serves all canonical Orthodox missions in the United States. It serves as a “broker” of church articles from established churches to mission parishes requiring such articles. Begun in 1948, and since reactivated over 19 years ago, the F.O.C.A. Mission HOTLINE Project has assisted over 50 canonical Orthodox missions.

Children Perform for the New Haven Chapter

2003 was a very busy time for our Chapter and the youth of our chapter. We not only sponsored Chapter events, but also assisted with many Church functions.

Our parish was privileged and honored (Monday evening, November 3, following Daily Vespers) to host a choral concert of Russian sacred and folk music, performed by eleven children (ages 7 & 8) from Saraktash, in the Orenburg region of Russia. They are the adoptive children of Father Nicholas and Matushka Galina Stremsky. Residing in a poor region of central Russia, they suffer many hardships, struggles, and sometimes hunger as part of their daily lives. The auditorium was packed and the children's voices sounded like little angels as they sang.

Proceeds from the concert (over \$4,600.00) will aid the children and the residents of Mercy House.

Natalie Kruchok and Betty Bolash coordinated a delicious supper for the children and their adult chaperones before vespers. The children were then laden with gifts for their family.

February: Our youth enjoyed the FOCA Atlantic District annual Skating and Pizza Party at the Milford Ice Pavilion. Member Robin Milburg and hubby Stuart welcomed the arrival of their infant son (Samuel) on St. Valentines Day.

March: Our parish designated the March Stewardship Basket for the F.O.C.A. Heartbeat Sunday. We collected \$326.00 We also supported the New England Diocese ONE Stewards. And, our chapter fulfilled its United Fund Obligation for \$275.00 earmarked for youth ministry.

April: Barbara Pope coordinated a fantastic feast for the parish's annual Paschal Feast following Midnight Paschal Services and on Bright Monday. Bright Monday, we held our annual Easter Egg Hunt.

May/June: We lit Votive Crosses on Mother's Day and Father's Day. Scholarships were presented to the following: Nicole Maldera received the "R" Club scholarship and the Victor Panko Scholarship. Nicole is enrolled in the Nursing Program at Southern Connecticut State University. Also, the Victor Panko continuing education scholarship was presented to Jason Maldera, Alexander Oji, Lawrence Oji and Patrick Ross. The St. George Girl Scout Medal was presented to Natalie Asarisi, member of Junior Troop 422 in Hamden.

August: Gregory Swan qualified for the State of Connecticut's swimming competition in the long course events.

September/October: Alexis Swan chaired the annual drive for the parish and chapter's efforts in support of the OCA Christmas Stocking Project. \$1,131.00 was raised. Our youth coordinators, Martha Asarisi and Alexis Swan, held a Thanksgiving Craft Workshop for the Church School Children. Approximately 30 children

attended the workshop, making turkey lollipops, bookmarks with psalms, and felt tote bags decorated with turkeys.

November - Our FOCA ("R" Club) hosted the 70th Atlantic District Conference on Sunday, November 16. Delegates from our Chapter were Helen Cherniavsky, Toni Cherniavsky, Barbara Dixon and Gladys Kruchok. Barbara Pope was our Trustee. Following the meeting, we enjoyed a Pasta dinner prepared and served by members Jean Cherniavsky, Shirley Farm and Alexis Swan. Dinner consisted of H'ors d'oeuvres, Pasta Primavera or Pasta Seafood, tossed green salad, bread, dessert and beverages. Great fellowship had by all.

- Barbara Ann Dixon

Cleveland "R" Catches Up With Activities

It was a beautiful Tuesday in July and also our annual steak roast meeting. We gathered together to honor our Junior graduates and welcome them into the Cleveland "R" Club by giving them a delicious steak dinner and all the trimmings, and at the same time treat them to their first meeting on the senior level. We also get a lot of our college students at this meeting. The steak roast is always held in our "Shanty" which was originally to be a storage garage somehow turned into a picnic shelter with heaters, ceiling fans and even its own bar area.

Although the shanty is a great place to picnic and party, it's about the worst place to hold a meeting. Everyone is spread out and it's very hard to hear anyone speaking. But after we ate, we had our meeting there anyway. I don't think the president was particularly focused that night and did not run a very good meeting - there was a lot to discuss and some decisions to be made and not much response from the crowd. So all that combined, not much was accomplished. (I can be critical because I'm the president!)

When I got home that night I was beating myself up on what a lousy meeting it was. When my son Daniel came home he indicated he couldn't

understand why at the meeting we wouldn't donate any money to the Gifts of Love Project for Alaska, which of course made me feel worse. I told him I really didn't know and if he was bothered by it to do something about it. We talked some more and did some brainstorming and the following day he called his friend Greg Mindala, also at the meeting. See, Danny and Greg have had the good fortune of visiting Alaska and St. Herman's Seminary and have seen first-hand how little they have there. That's why Danny just couldn't understand how our chapter did nothing that night.

As it turns out, something good did come out from that lousy meeting. Danny and Greg came up with all sorts of ideas to raise money, but knew it had to be something that could be done relatively quick before the National Convention so the money could be given there. They came up with a basketball shoot-a-thon. Participants would shoot 100 shots and get people to pledge a dollar amount per basket made, or instead a flat dollar amount. Easy enough. They passed out forms to all the young people in church - "R" Club members or not. If everyone participated they would have over 20 young adults taking part.

Of course, the reality was that only a handful got pledges and made their shots. But that handful, within a month's time, raised **\$2,350.35** for the Gifts of Love Project!

I am so proud of our young adults of the Cleveland "R" Club, #4/6 - **Danny Herzak, Greg Mindala, Melissa Tesar, Becky Tesar, Phillip Tesar, Nick Tonic, Bryan Glosik, Daniel Kovalak, Steven Visocky, Nicholas Kormos**, and of course our forever young adult **Jim "Toot" Kormos**.

What's next guys?

- Paula Herzak

76th Ohio District Convention

This year's Ohio District convention was sponsored by Chapter No. 220 at St. Andrew's Church in Maple Heights on Saturday, Oct. 4th. Business sessions opened with the procession led by Past National President Fr. Deacon Peter

Homik. Host rector Fr. Emil Hutnyan, past national secretary, gave the opening prayer with choral responses directed by Past National President Andrew Cvercko.

The morning business session quickly reviewed the report book and identified several topics for review by the over 70 delegates and alternates. Four break out sessions were held: scholarships, sports, young adults and camp. This format allowed active participation in discussions in their respective primary areas of interest. Subsequent summations by the session leaders demonstrated concern and enthusiasm to support these district activities.

The scholarship session elected to distribute available scholarship resources among all Ohio District applicants who had not received an award from the national scholarship program. The sports session reviewed participation by Orthodox non-FOCA members. It was decided that 2004 district sporting events would allow participation by non-FOCA members but that a "surcharge" would be imposed thereby providing a financial incentive to become a member. Review of finalized construction plans was made by those interested in the St. Vladimir's Campground and Retreat Center. The \$200,000 renovation project hopefully will be completed prior to the 2004 camping season. There was also a commitment to the district's young adults who intend to coordinate a number of activities in the coming year. These events will probably include a winter ski weekend, a spring white water rafting trip, the district golf outing and the 77th district convention next October.

An address by National President John Kruchok was read, highlighting the past national convention and the initiatives established; dates of coming national events were reviewed. District officers for 2004 are: Spiritual Advisor Fr. Tim Sawchuk, SS. Peter & Paul, Lakewood; Governor Leon Sheean, Cathedral; Lt. Governor, Melissa Tesar, Cleveland "R" Club; Secretary Jessica Lazor, Treasurer Kaye Garman and Imm. Past Gov. Nancy Boldish, all of the Campbell "O" Club; Nominating Committee Ann Cvercko, St. Andrew's

and Donna Chiarelli, Campbell.

After Vespers, Fr. Emil led the executive board in the FOCA pledge of renewal service. A western ho-down theme, dining from the back of the "Chuckwagon," and remarkable decorations provided a fun and casual setting for the convention hosted by St. Andrew's with Nancy Kazik and Mary Grace Dimitrijevs serving as cochairs. Following dinner square dance lessons rounded out a wonderful and productive day.

73rd Central PA District Convention

St. Nicholas Church in Bethlehem, PA was the site of this year's Central PA District Convention, hosted by the St. Nicholas Sr. "O" Club, #166, on Sunday, October 26. National Spiritual Advisor Fr. Eugene Vansuch concelebrated the Divine Liturgy with Fr. Chad Hatfield, dean of St. Herman's Seminary in Alaska; Nick Lezinsky directed the concert choir. After liturgy, members under the leadership of Mary Dorosh hosted a gourmet luncheon for the delegates, alternates and friends in the new fellowship hall. President Dennis Chrush welcomed everyone to St. Nicholas and thanked them for attending. Gov. Nicholas Ressetar highlighted the recent national convention in Colonial Williamsburg. National Vice President Dr. John Schulz delivered the main address, citing the Fellowship's renewed commitment to the seminarians and young adults. Program books were prepared and distributed by Past National President Michael Dorosh.

The business sessions opened with an informative Powerpoint slide presentation by Fr. Chad on recent improvements and developments at St. Herman's Seminary this past summer. He thanked the district for its support, including the funding of an icon of St. Andrew for the chapel. 45-page report books were reviewed by the delegates and alternates. Final financial figures for the 76th national convention sponsored by the district were summarized. The district decided to "Adopt a Seminarian"

at \$100/month for 12 months [St. Tikhon Seminarian Mark Tarpley, his wife and 2 children of St. Seraphim's Cathedral in Dallas were later selected]. The \$500 Metropolitan Theodosius library fund pledge was paid. Other contributions were made to the Christmas stocking project, Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards (FOS), and the district scholarship fund whose chair, Lt. Gov. Gary Lelo, awarded the Matushka Anne Prislopsky Memorial Scholarship to Sheena Hisiro of Harrisburg (who also won a national scholarship) and others to Adam Frantz and Lauren Hutton, both of Minersville. Plans for the forthcoming year were made, including holding another Orthodox Family Day at Knoebel's Grove Amusement Park which was quite successful last August.

The new district officers are: Spiritual Advisor Fr. Daniel Ressetar, Harrisburg; Gov. Gary Lelo, Alpha, NJ; Lt. Gov./Imm. Past Gov. Nicholas Ressetar, Harrisburg; Treasurer Matthew Hatrak, Minersville; Secretary Alice Mallick, Harrisburg; Junior Advisors Matushka Fran Vansuch and Barbara Roman of Bethlehem. The officers were installed in the church by Frs. Vansuch and Ressetar and a buffet supper was then held in the hall. An enjoyable and fruitful convention day was had by all.

Other district conventions will be covered in the next edition of the *Journal*.

Creative Arts

"CELEBRATION of FAITH"

Open To All Orthodox Youth

In conjunction with the Orthodox Church in America's Church-wide youth movement, the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America (F.O.C.A.) has announced the 2nd annual National Creative Arts Contest entitled "Celebration of Faith". The Celebration is open to all Church youth who are communicants in a parish or mission of a canonical Orthodox Church in North America. The program will be administered by the Junior F.O.C.A. with Mrs. Cheryl Morse of St. Mary's Cathedral, Minneapolis, Minnesota serving as national chairperson. The

Winter 2003/2004 TRANSITIONS

Bridgeport "R" Club, #73, (from Vera Alesevich)

BIRTH: Congratulations to **Michael** and **Patricia Kosh** on the birth of their daughter, Olivea. Michael is a member of the chapter. *Many years!*

BIRTH: Congratulations to **Mark** and **Sandra Kosh** on the birth of their son, Kyle Nicholas. Mark is a member of the chapter. *Many years!*

DEATH: **Vera Zastenichik**, a member of the FOCA for over 50 years, has passed away. Our sympathies to her family. *Memory eternal.*

Cleveland "R" Club, #4/6 (from Paula Herzak)

ENGAGEMENT: **Jason Glagola**, son of **Tim** and **Sharon Glagola**, to **Sandra Mickholzick**. Jason is currently doing his D.O. internship at a Youngstown, OH area hospital. A May 2005 wedding is planned. Congratulations!

ENGAGEMENT: **Kyra Visocky**, daughter of **Ed** and **Karen Visocky**, to **Joe Shaluha** of the New Jersey District. Kyra was recently transferred to New York with her job with Victoria Secret's fragrance division. A May 2005 wedding is planned. Congratulations!

DEATH: **Richard Kowalchik**, age 62, a long time chapter member, died suddenly at home on October 14, the 25th anniversary of his marriage to Karen. He was very active in FOCA sports and had bowled in tournaments for over 25 years, dating back to his membership days in Cleveland's Cathedral "R" Club, winning a number of handicap places. In recent years Rich also attended many basketball tournaments, particularly when his children were playing. In addition to his wife, he is survived by his children, all "R" Club members: Andrea, a teacher in Washington, DC, Tammy, a June graduate of Ohio University, Lara, a senior at Bowling Green U., and Richie, a high school junior in Parma. Our sympathies to Karen and the family. *Memory eternal.*

CONGRATULATIONS: **Walter Alesevich**, president of Chapter #79, Nation's Capitol, and Colonial District Governor, was elected on Nov. 16 as church council president of St. Nicholas Cathedral, Washington, DC. *Good luck, Walter!*

RECUPERATING at home from complete knee replacement surgery is **Matushka Natalie Breyan**, 11306 Copley Court, Spring Hill, FL 34609. *Get well soon!*

ELECTION: His Grace, **Bishop Nikon (Liolin)**, was elected by the OCA Holy Synod of Bishops as Bishop of Boston and the Albanian Diocese and installed on November 22, 2003 by Metropolitan Herman. Bishop Nikon, an honorary FOCA member, has participated in the past two national conventions. *Axios!*

DEATH: **Matushka Olga Kiryluk**, wife of the late Archpriest Nicholas T. Kiryluk (Retired Col. Chaplain U.S. Airforce) fell asleep in the Lord Dec. 1. When Father Kiryluk retired in 1981, he and Matushka Olga moved to Terryville, CT, her hometown. Matushka Olga was a graduate of the University of Connecticut and taught school in the Terryville School system until she married Father Kiryluk, then a seminarian, and graduate of St. Vladimir's Seminary in 1947. They had two sons Mark, married to Barbara with one son, Christopher, and Thomas, both living in Denver, CO. Matushka Olga was buried from St. Cyril and Methodius Church, Terryville, CT, with five priests present and many relatives and friends and was laid to rest beside her husband.

TRANSITIONS is for current FOCA members only.

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theme of this year's Celebration will be "Let Your Light So Shine". The chosen theme reflects the designation chosen by the Holy Synod of Bishops for the Church-wide youth movement for 2003-2004.

There will be four age divisions for entries: Under 10 (3rd grade and under), 4th-6th grade, 7th-9th grade, 10th-12th grade. Students may submit works in any of the four arts areas: literature, music composition, photography, and visual arts. The deadline for submissions of all material accompanied by an official entry form is **April 2, 2004**. You can obtain further information including instructions and entry forms on-line through the youth page of the Orthodox Church in America's website at www.oca.org or through the F.O.C.A. official website at www.orthodoxfellowship.org. Questions or additional information can be obtained from Mrs. Cheryl Morse through email at camorse916@aol.com.

There is no limit of entries a student may submit. A student may develop an entry in or outside church school class at the discretion of the parish priest and church school teacher. Each entry must be the original work of one student only and an adult may not alter, change, or enhance the creative integrity

of a student's work. All entries will be judged on artistic merit, creativity and interpretation of the theme. All youth who submit an entry will receive recognition and chosen entries in each category will receive a savings bond.

"Gifts of Love" Update

As of December, the "Gifts of Love" project has generated over \$16,500 according to Marge Hopkosky, the coordinator. The 77th national convention body voted to continue raising funds this year for the purchase of a new van at St. Herman's Seminary in Alaska. The old FROC van (circa 1980s) finally met its demise last summer. Many chapters & parishes designate the Sunday in February nearest to St. Valentine's Day as "Gifts of Love" Sunday. Contributions may be sent directly to Marge at 6474 State Road, I-16, Parma, OH 44134.

Answer to Ebay Article

In our last issue, the *Journal* reported on an online auction purchase of FROC memorabilia. The only clue as to the

Continued pg. 24 / Highlights

77th National F.O.C.A. Convention

“Faith, Hospitality and History” was the theme for the 77th annual national convention of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America at historic Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. Sponsored capably by the South River “R” Club, Chapter #167, of SS. Peter & Paul Russian Orthodox Church, South River, NJ, hundreds of Fellowship officers, delegates, alternates, friends and guests gathered at the Woodlands Hotel & Conference Center on the grounds of the restored town from August 28 through September 1, 2003 for the convention. Many came a few days earlier or stayed afterwards to explore not only Colonial Williamsburg but other parts of the “Virginia triangle” including both Jamestown and Yorktown. This was South River’s first national convention sponsorship. Cochairs were Michael Steffaro and Wendy Dashkiewicz; Fr. David Garretson was convention spiritual advisor; and National CP&O Chair Carol Deerson, South River’s own, coordinated the event. The pineapple or “pyne fruit” served as the traditional “colonial symbol of hospitality” and was prominently on display.



The Business Sessions & Liturgical Services THURSDAY, AUGUST 28TH

Registration for delegates and alternates opened in the conference center foyer with committee members dressed in hand-made period costumes including Martha Washington, Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson extending their Southern hospitality. National President John Kruchok convened the pre-convention meeting of the Executive Board after the President’s Golf Open followed by the National Board of Trustees pre-convention meeting in the conference center’s Cascade Room, with a striking view of a pine-forested waterfall. The board discussed the convention agenda, reviewed the report book and assigned recommendations for the next day’s break-out sessions. Michael Steffaro and Carol Deerson welcomed everyone on behalf of the sponsoring committee and gave an overview of events and activities. Fr. Robert Kondratyck, Orthodox Church in America chancellor, delivered a comprehensive report on Church life in America and around the globe. It was announced that His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman, the Fellowship’s spiritual leader, would

be attending the convention together with retired Metropolitan Theodosius, Fellowship life member, and His Grace, Bishop Nikon, auxiliary to the Metropolitan. His Eminence, Archbishop Dimitri of Dallas and the South, in whose diocese the convention was being held, was unable to participate because of a visit to parishes in Mexico. The meeting adjourned in time for vespers.

National Spiritual Advisor Fr. Eugene Vansuch conducted Great Vespers for the Feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist in the chapel with Marion "Manya" Shark, the convention's choir director, directing the responses. Several members of the clergy were present as were many convention participants. Fr. Eugene reminded all that the next day was one of strict fast.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29TH

Early Friday morning the Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the chapel by Fathers Kondratick, Vansuch, Garretson and Daniel Ressetar (Central PA District spiritual advisor). Fathers John Steffaro, FOCA communications director, and Michael Anderson, OCA director of youth/young adult ministries, were also present. Mrs. Shark again directed the responses and many in the full chapel partook of the sacraments. At the end of liturgy, Fr. Vansuch led the service of thanksgiving (molieben) that traditionally marks the opening of the national convention.

After a break the opening procession, preceded by the icons of St. Andrew, the patron saint, and the North American saints together with the American flag, entered the sessions room with the National Board of Trustees and past national presidents. National Recording Secretary Kathy Lazor conducted the roll call. President Kruchok formally called to order the 77th convention and acknowledged the past national presidents present, including Michael Herzak, Maurice "Pete" Garman, Michael Dorosh, Nicholas Vansuch, Carol Deerson, John Petronko and Sandra Fedorko. He welcomed members of the OCA chancery, including Frs. Kondratick and Anderson, John Mindala, assistant to the chancellor for communications (who did his usual tremendous job in digitally photographing the entire convention & posting it on the OCA website) and Jason Vansuch, aide to the Metropolitan. Also greeted were Fr. Theodore Boback, Colonial District spiritual advisor, and Elena Silk, St. Vladimir's Seminary librarian.

President Kruchok then called upon Michael Steffaro, convention cochair, who extended his greetings on behalf of the South River committee and encouraged all to enjoy Colonial Williamsburg and the area. The report book was briefly

reviewed before delegates/alternates were assigned to the following break-out sessions to consider proposals: Membership/Journal/Constitution-Bylaws Revisions, Sports and Juniors. Upon reconvening, National Treasurer Michael Bowan reviewed the financial statements, noting that the "Gifts of Love" project had generated \$12,300 thus far and that the Estate of Ann Lewis, widow of Journal Editor Fred Lewis, had left the FOCA a \$500 bequest. The convention assembly entertained the reports of the break-out sessions. Approved was a motion made by National Sports Director Robert Steffaro to once more allow all Orthodox Christians to participate in the 2004 sports tourneys.

Numerous amendments to the FOCA Constitution and Bylaws were made by VP John Schultz. A motion to permit associate members to hold chapter office only was tabled after much debate. One concern expressed was the ability of a non-Orthodox Christian to take an oath of office. Defeated was a motion to end the district chapters-at-large and restore the national at-large chapter. The chapters-at-large were given 1 delegate even if they have less than 15 members. A full-time student membership rate of \$10 was set. The Journal business manager was eliminated as a member of the board of trustees. "Chapter" was

substituted for "club" wherever it appears. Spirited debate accompanied the move to give the national spiritual advisor the right to vote. Dr. James Lazor opposed arguing that an advisor should give advice only, especially in a controversy, and that he is appointed and not elected. Because past national presidents now are voting delegates, Michael Bowan stated, the spiritual advisor too should get to vote. John Ihnat said it was long overdue and Paul Semanco pointed out that since the spiritual advisor pays dues, he should have a vote. Fr. Dan Ressetar, to much laughter, mentioned "when I was on the board as national spiritual advisor, I always wanted to vote!" The motion carried 89 to 12. OCA Chancellor Fr. Kondratick reviewed the situation of Orthodoxy in America and the world to conclude the day's sessions. He thanked the Fellowship for its strong support of the Church, including the summer OCA intern who assisted with "The Hub" publication and summer camps attended by 2,173 (in OCA camps alone) and the work with the seminaries. Nearly ½ of the lay members of OCA church departments are FOCA members, Fr. Bob said.



Welcome Wagon Evening

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30TH

Saturday morning began with the annual memorial service celebrated for departed Fellowship members by Fr. Vansuch in the chapel, with special remembrance by name of those “fallen asleep” since the last convention. Metropolitan Herman, Metropolitan Theodosius and Bishop Nikon were present for the first time at a convention event. Afterwards, President Kruchok called the convention’s second day of business to order. Past National President Peter Melnik was appointed parliamentarian. Immediate Past President Sandra Fedorko discussed ideas explored at the membership break-out session, including a possible new senior brochure and the possibility of the FOCA connecting with mission parishes, especially in the Diocese of the South in conjunction with the OCA youth movement where there is interest. For example, she said she was in contact with the mission in Raleigh-Durham, NC and there is the possibility of a regional chapter in Tennessee-Kentucky with several missions. A motion was made to issue membership cards to new members. Some felt it was unnecessary or too expensive but others spoke in favor of recognizing new members, with Alice Mallick saying it was “a great idea.” It passed 61 to 35.

Metropolitan Herman addressed the convention body: “It is a joy to be with all of you. Of course

I am very familiar with the Fellowship and have been a member myself for many, many years. We are all grateful for all that you do. I have travelled abroad recently to other Orthodox churches and people know the Orthodox Church in America well. We sometimes take for granted many things. I ask that you take your involvement in the Fellowship very seriously — all must be for the building up of the Body of Christ. All must assist in helping the Church’s institutions. The OCA is very important today in this day and age. That our autocephaly is not recognized by all is not that important because these churches are relying on us, even taking our publications and translating them into their own languages. Thank you again for all that you do and will continue to do. Ask only for thanks from the Lord Himself.” The assembly responded by standing and singing “Eis polla eti despota!”

Fr. Vansuch — himself a member of St. Herman’s Seminary board — next introduced the main theme of the session — the “Supporting our Seminaries” or “SOS” forum — by welcoming Fr. Michael Dahulich, dean of St. Tikhon’s Seminary, Prof. John Erickson, dean of St. Vladimir’s Seminary, and Mrs. Betty Slanta, board member of St. Herman’s Seminary and president of its auxiliary, Ilaasi. (Note:

an article on this forum appeared in the Fall issue of the *Journal*.) Fr. Dahulich, noting that 77 students were enrolled for the fall semester (37 of them married), reminded us that the 1st seminary had but a fishing boat on the Sea of Galilee as its classroom. “Seminarians make the decision to attend, but their children don’t.” For that reason, he said, it is wonderful to see the children’s smiles on St. Nicholas Day when their Fellowship gifts are presented. He pointed to the New Jersey District as a model for supporting a seminary family and finding them work in the summer. “The students will always remember what you have done in Christ’s name. The world takes care of its own and we must take care of our own. When you give, God is always the greatest Giver.” Fr. Michael invited us to come and see how our gifts have multiplied, come and see the children’s smiles, come and see the faces of the seminarians you have helped.

Prof. Erickson thanked the F.O.C.A. for its support over the years, with the Adopt-a-Seminarian program, the children’s

Christmas gifts, turkeys to families at Thanksgiving and the scholarships. Fr. Paul Lazor, the seminary’s rector, told him that he had received an F.R.O.C. scholarship as a young student. Who are we supporting, adopting? 87 students, 29 of whom are married with 26 children, 21 of



OCA Heirarchs with Protobresbyter Kondratick gather during religious services.

whom are 5 or under. He stated that a seminary is a place of study, worship and community — it is family-oriented, “theological education pursued in the formation of the whole person.” For the Fellowship family to help is only fitting. He concluded by saying that supporting seminarians has practical benefits for the FOCA: “Perhaps a new priest will go to a parish and reactivate a former chapter or even establish a new one.”

Betty Slanta, the F.O.C.A.’s Mission Hotline coordinator, spoke next. She said that most of the 17 seminarians now at St. Herman’s in Alaska were married. The biggest goal is that they graduate debt-free because of their inability to pay back student loans. The seminary kitchen was renovated this past summer and the next project is upgrading the library. The ongoing “Gifts of Love” project will replace the van purchased by the F.R.O.C. in the 1980s, which finally died. She too thanked the many Fellowship members, chapters & districts which have assisted the seminary.

Elena Silk mentioned that the libraries of St. Vladimir’s and St. Tikhon’s are involved in a cooperative effort with St. Herman’s library, and she plans to go next summer to assist. She is reaching out to other institutions to help build up the

library and sent 4 boxes of books from Dr. Booramra's library.

Allison Steffaro, who heads the "Adopt-a-Seminarian" project, reviewed the considerable progress to date with placing seminarians with parishes, chapters and districts. Her goal is to "get everybody off the need's list this year." Each seminary dean has provided her with a list of needy students. The New Jersey District, for example, has sponsored Christmas projects the last 2 years in which 23 families with 50 children have been helped with food certificates, pots and pans, socks, etc. Some have visited the seminarians and gotten to know them through an exchange of letters and photos. Another need is establishing an emergency seminary relief fund for immediate assistance such as help with repairing a furnace, purchasing medicines, etc. She encouraged those interested to contact her.

The FOCA's first recipient of an O.C.M.C. mission grant, Amy Barrett, gave a presentation on the O.C.M.C. Agape Canister program which she now administers. Thousands and thousands of dollars are raised each year from these cans which are usually placed in restaurants but may also be placed in churches and other sites. The funds support short-term O.C.M.C. mission teams.

A number of delegates provided concrete examples of assistance. Paula Herzak, Cleveland 4/6, noted that her son Daniel visited St. Herman's with Greg Mindala on an OCA young adult team. The young adults in their parish raised over \$2,300 for the "Gifts of Love" drive by holding a basketball shoot. Kaye Garman of Campbell movingly asked for "gifts of love" by advising that kidney donations are needed for Annette Ressetar Lapso and Priscilla Sirilla, both of Ohio, who are now on dialysis. Anyone able to volunteer for testing should contact her.

The convention turned to regular business with the presentation of membership awards by President Kruchok: the Phoenician Sr. "O" Club, #219, Phoenix, AZ, whose award was accepted by Stephanie Homyak; and tied for the juniors were the Akron Jr. "O" Club, #20/32-J, Akron, OH and the Campbell Jr. "O" Club, #27-J, Campbell, OH, whose awards were accepted by Melissa Tesar. Each of these chapters gained 6 members. And a new charter was awarded to the Phoenician Jr. "O" Club, #219-J.

Junior Department Chair Jennifer Pishko moved a series of recommendations from the Junior break-out session. Most of the discussion centered on Junior Olympics and its relationship to the Sports Department and the Sutyak Sports fund. A committee was formed to review and revise the Junior Olympics and to examine moving it to the Sports Department. Ruled out of order was a motion to move the Junior Olympics to Sports. The name "National Junior Olympics," however, was changed to "National Junior Summer Sports Tournament." Awards money was allocated to the "Celebrations of Faith" contest and the essay contest. Approved was the sponsorship of a "Leadership Weekend" for \$3,000. Fr. Michael Anderson reviewed at length the OCA's youth movement and how it interfaces with the

Fellowship. 53 deaneries have youth teams in place appointed by their bishops. Where the FOCA has a presence, it is involved. This provides an excellent promotional opportunity for the Fellowship. All Jr. FOCA activities are posted on the youth section of the OCA website. "The youth are not the future of our Church," Fr. Michael reminded, "but they *are* our Church, now, today."

Sessions adjourned for the day as many participants went off exploring Colonial Williamsburg. The young adults, however, under the leadership of Lara Herzak, held an afternoon focus gathering on their role in the FOCA and the Church which was attended by over 60 and mentored by Fellowship and Church leaders. (Note: A full report on this session appeared in the Fall 2003 issue of the *Journal*). Later that afternoon, vespers was served by Fr. Vansuch in the chapel.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31ST

The liturgical highlight of every national convention is the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. Fr. John Steffaro led the general confessional prayers in the conference center's main room and Joe Shaluha read the hours. President Kruchok and the board of trustees greeted Metropolitan Herman with the bread and salt together with Metropolitan Theodosius and Bishop Nikon. Con-celebrating priests were Fathers Kondratick, Vansuch, Dahulich, Steffaro, Ressetar, Garretson, Bobak and Andrew Nelko, a Navy chaplain. Also serving were Archdeacon Alexei Klimetchev and Deacon Dr. Michael Wusylko, a past national president serving at a convention for the first time since his ordination. Subdeacons included Jason Vansuch, Gregory Hatrak, Gregory Mindala and Michael & Daniel Herzak. Mrs. Shark directed a choir of 35 or so singers.

In his sermon, Metropolitan Herman spoke on the theme of forgiveness in that day's Gospel lesson of the servant who refused to forgive the debt of his fellow servant. "It is a reminder to us all that God is loving, compassionate and forgiving. If we pray sincerely, our prayers will be heard." Our parents have taught us from birth the Lord's Prayer in which we ask God to "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." If all the world would take this prayer seriously, how much joy and peace would there be — no broken homes, no wars, no terrorism. Although we beg God for forgiveness, we must forgive others first and live the Lord's Prayer. "Let us be willing to plead for forgiveness so that we can go to others and ask for their forgiveness and so complete the process." Many in the congregation of over 300 received the Holy Eucharist. The liturgy concluded with the invocation of many years. The St. Andrew's Fellowship held its annual brunch with the clergy.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST

On Labor Day
President Kruchok



BANQUET ADDRESS of John Kruchok 37th National FOCA President

**Delivered on Sunday, August 31, 2003 at
Colonial Williamsburg's Lodge**

Your Beatitudes, Your Grace, Reverend Fathers,
Delegates, Members and Guests,

As we gather this evening in the culmination of another year in the life of the Fellowship of Orthodox Christians in America, I would like to reflect upon many of the wonderful moments and accomplishments of the past year and offer thanks for a job well done.

Last fall, our districts gathered for their annual conventions. In faith and in fellowship, many of these events took on new life. In the New Jersey District, a dinner cruise overlooking the striking skyline of New York, with nearly 300 members and guests, including those from around the Fellowship, passed the Statue of Liberty, but not without those in attendance saluting this symbol with the spontaneous singing of "God Bless America". In the Midwest District, "McFellowship

Weekend", held at McDonald's University near Chicago, brought a new focus with social activities for youth, young adults and senior members and streamlined sessions. In Ohio, a fantastic two-day celebration of the Ohio District's 75 anniversary was held with a "Roaring Twenties" theme. In Connecticut, the Atlantic District moved its conference to the campus of the University of Connecticut, in an impressive facility which served well for the break-outs, youth activities and banquet. Some districts held more traditional annual meetings. In Central Pennsylvania, the enthusiasm for their recently sponsored national convention overflowed in Coaldale, Pennsylvania, site of the meeting, held in a parish without a senior chapter, but hosted by the recently reactivated St. Mary's junior chapter there.

All of these examples are great signs that our organization is "thinking out of the box", adopting a fresh new approach to organized activity and moving away from tedious meetings!

During the year, I had the opportunity to address the Holy Synod of Bishops, the youth, young adult and campus ministry meeting of the O.C.A. and the parish of SS. Peter and Paul in South River, New Jersey, immediately following divine liturgy during the national bowling tournament – thank you Fr. David

gavelled to order the convention's final session. Treasurer Bowan reviewed the budget for the next fiscal year (\$70,000) and it was approved. United Fund Chair Mary Jane Lucak reported that this year's goal of \$31,000 had been exceeded; the stock awards were also made. The essay contest winners were announced by Marissa Hedge and Marge Kovach (with the essays appearing in this *Journal*). Mary Anne Soltis awarded prizes to the photo contest winners (55 contestants with baby photos). Secretary Kathy Lazor moved that we sell SOS ice scrapers as a winter service project — \$10 per scraper, 10 to a chapter; passed. Resolutions of greetings were extended to Archbishop Dimitri, Life Member & Past National President John Daniluck and Marge Hopkosky, "Gifts of Love" coordinator who was ill. The 2005 Labor Day national convention was awarded to the Colonial District to be held in Old Town Alexandria, VA. Sports tournaments were awarded through 2006, with Director Bob Steffaro complementing sponsors on their willingness to bid. President Kruchok announced, to much applause, that an anonymous donor had funded FOCA memberships for 70 seminarians (\$700). Special thanks was expressed to the South River "R" Club for a job well done.

The Campbell "O" Club under the helm of Nick Vansuch then presented a spirited promotional for its 2004 July national convention on Grand Island, NY: "It's a Jungle Out There." With Sarah Vansuch singing the theme music, members paraded around in safari costumes, including their spiritual advisor with a lion wrapped around himself and a congo line of young adults and youth insisting that they were "not monkeying around." All too realistic jungle sounds (e.g., a bellowing elephant) filled the convention hall.

With Michael Herzak acting as temporary chair, Nick Vansuch presented the nominations for national offices and the entire national board of executives was unanimously reelected (Michael Bowan to a record 10th term as treasurer!). Fr. Vansuch was reappointed as spiritual advisor and led the installation ceremony. Each officer briefly addressed the body, thanking the delegates for the confidence expressed in them. Many years was sung, a prayer for travelers was said, the traditional closing circle was formed, the "squeeze" made and the convention came to a close.



Sports Director Bob Steffaro during plenary sessions.

Garretson, Fr. Michael Anderson and Fr. Robert Kondratik for putting me on the spot! It can be a frightful task to explain the Fellowship in 25 words or less, or in my case 2500 words or less. Unprepared, I always think of the four letters of the organization – F. O. C. and A: “F” for fellowship, our social opportunities, “O” for outreach, our service, charitable programs and humanitarian aid, “C” for commitment, to each other, to our faith and to our church, and “A” for athletics, the various opportunities to participate in sports and athletic competition.

As president, I am the recipient of an unbelievable amount of correspondence, even more so with e-mail. While many times we only hear about things going wrong, how uplifting it was to receive a handwritten note of thanks for our support from the dean of St. Vladimir Seminary, John Erickson... a note from the national office that a priest and his wife in Chelsea, MA joined as a result of our church-wide distribution of the *Journal*...and one from a young adult, Lara Herzak, who wanted to motivate others to get more involved in our organization because they were its future. Without a doubt, every young adult in the church should have the F.O.C.A. experience – you make lifelong Orthodox friends, find loved ones, learn leadership and become more involved in the church. The F.R.O.C. and now the F.O.C.A. has a long history of being a movement for youth and young adults. Proudly, so many young Fellowship members distinguished themselves in church life. Learning leadership skills and broadening their horizons – Metropolitan Herman, Metropolitan Theodosius, past national presidents Alice Woog, Michael Herzak and Fr. Deacon Michael Wusylo, John Mindala, Michael and Allison Steffaro among the many....In service to others, our organization maintained and expanded its long tradition of helping the church, helping its people and helping the community: youth ministry... another outstanding national basketball tournament, integrating an entire parish into this premiere F.O.C.A./youth event, drives to aid the O.C.A. Christmas stocking project, raising funds to donate a vehicle to St. Herman Seminary in Alaska, Mission Hotline, grants to young people on missionary teams through O.C.M.C. scholarships, financial support of our seminaries and F.O.S. through the United Fund and countless other projects as the need arises.

One particular service project has brought a whole new dimension of service – our seminarian assistance programs continuing the long tradition of addressing church needs largely unaddressed, along the lines of the FROC’s front-running spirit of “Sunday School” programs, English publications and liturgical music

conferences. I commend those who found the “perfect program” for our involvement, or maybe it was God’s gift to us. Imagine a project which brings moral, financial and humanitarian support to struggling families who are attempting to meet Christ’s calling...add a dimension of trying to bring the F.O.C.A. message to a group which is largely unaware of the organization’s existence... add a project which sprouts from the organization, involves the parish and ignites possibilities of a nationwide movement of support ... and top it off with a way to assist those pursuing priestly vocations and helping address the church’s critical clergy shortage. It is my sincere hope that our focus and theme yesterday and throughout the past few years will bring a greater awareness of the very addressable needs of our seminarian families, involve others to join in support, and show our hierarchy,

clergy and faithful throughout North America our undying commitment to our church. At this point I would like us to give a round of applause to the deans of St. Vladimir and St. Tikhon seminaries for taking the time to join us this weekend.

In closing, I ask for one more round of applause. While the FROC and now the F.O.C.A. is rich in tradition, there is one tradition I would ask to put aside for this evening. Every national convention banquet body gives the national president a round of applause following his or her presentation. Having experienced this expression of support several times before, I would ask that you rise and applaud

each other and remember those members who cannot be with us this evening for honorable reasons. We have a truly wonderful organization with the very best people. Give yourself and each other a hand for a job well done.

Thank you and God bless.



President John Kruchok delivering his address with Metropolitan HERMAN looking on.



2003 National FOCA Convention Events

The convention events opened shortly after dawn on Thurs. Aug. 28th as golfers gathered on the Rees Jones' designed Green Course of Colonial Williamsburg's Golden Horseshoe Golf Courses for the annual President's Open. Named by *Golf Digest* as 1 of 5 best resort courses when it opened, players were challenged by the natural terrain and water hazards not to mention the heat and humidity later on. Winners: 1st place - Russ Petronko, 2nd - Bob Steffaro, Net 1st - Mike Steffaro, 2nd - Fr. John Steffaro. Closest to the pin winners were Mike Molchan, Leon Sheean, Mike Steffaro and Greg Mindala. The *Colonial Call* reported that AJ Sivess was last seen in the 18th hole sand trap at noon, Greg Cimboric will be on the PGA tour if only all the holes were like the 18th and it inquired how Todd Walker's arms were feeling and what is a president's open without a president playing?

Later that evening, guests were welcomed to Williamsburg with full colonial hospitality. Booklets were distributed to each attendee

containing song lyrics and the Colonial Treasure Hunt check list. South River's Joe Shaluha led the participants in the singing of 18th century American songs while Phil



Rogozenski accompanied on the key board. Committee members were dressed in their period costumes lending a historic feel. After the sing-a-long, "table talk" was played where each person answered questions on various topics. Next was the treasure hunt in which players vied for prizes by trying to collect color-coded symbols of such items as a bale of hay, horse shoe, rolling pin or one of the 13 original colonies on each other's name tags. Everyone got the opportunity to meet and interact. The "Welcome Wagon" concluded with the Virginia Reel.

After Friday's full day of services and sessions, the night featured the "Yankee Doodle Pub" with colonial entertainment provided by 18th century magicians, jugglers, contortionists, balladeers, puppeteers, actors, and singers. Included was a revisionist Bible retelling of the story of Adam & Eve. Five select Fellowship members (who shall remain anonymous for reasons best left unsaid), including one distinguished recent retiree, joined in the fun by role playing under the stage names of "See Trouble," "Road Builder," "Drinker," "Hunter," and "Cry Baby." Many could be seen wiping the tears of laughter streaming down their faces, according to the *Colonial Call*, and one said she laughed until her face hurt.

Juniors and Fellowship Kidz were busy with their own programs. "Young Patriots" (8-18) toured the Jamestown

settlement and the Yorktown battlefield, and undertook a Colonial Exploration of the Powell House, the Courthouse, Jail and Magazine at Colonial Williamsburg, experiencing life in both 17th and 18th century America. For the "Small Colonists" (3-7) there were arts & crafts, games, snacks and more. Those not attending the banquet enjoyed a pizza party.

For the Young Adults, activities included an informal gathering late Friday night, a two-part focus session Saturday afternoon and a volleyball game Sunday afternoon (with first-time Mississippi delegate John Dietrich ending up with an elbow in a sling). All participated in the convention's many other events, too, resolving to meet at future national and regional gatherings. The hotel pool was popular with everyone as the best way to escape the late summer heat.

Adults also went on several tours. The "Head to Toe" educational afternoon had three female interpreters describing the many layers of clothing women wore in colonial times, spending months hand-embroidering items themselves. Mrs. Randolph was the featured female speaker who truly lived the life of her character. Guests were treated to homemade cookies

and drinks. A number of members ventured out into the sweltering afternoon to visit the historic gardens, guided by a horticulturist who educated them on the layout, plants, flowers and herbs

cultivated as they were in the colonial era. A private tour of the historic area was held. Popular were the Saturday evening dinners at the historic taverns, such as Christiana Campbell's (George Washington's favorite). The Saturday night lantern tours, meeting in front of Raleigh Tavern, were also popular. From the *Colonial Call* (as adapted): "In the beautiful moonlit night, the stars and moon gave atmosphere for the participants. Guides used candlelight to take visitors thru the dry, crowded streets of Williamsburg. Legends and myths were told during the walking tour. Many said it was the convention highlight. NOT!!! Actually, in the midst of a severe thunderstorm, with flashes of lightening across the skies, over 70 started the tour but only 6 brave and fearless finished it. The brave tour guide never stopped talking even when the rain was falling sideways. Those soaked to the bone found themselves on a bus to nowhere. While on the bus they were pleasantly entertained by Ethel Merman show tunes, which many said was the evening's best part!"

No question about it. This convention's highlight was the "Colonial Candlelight Banquet" held at the Virginia Ballroom of the Williamsburg Lodge on Sunday evening. Following the processional by the head table, the opening prayer, the invocation by Metropolitan Herman and the singing of the FOCA anthem, "Faith of Our Fathers," there was a dramatic pause as diners waited to sing the National Anthem. From

outside the room was heard the distinctive sound of fifes and drums as 8 corps members, attired in 1774 era soldier's uniforms, marched in and played colonial marches and then "The Star Spangled Banner" to an awed, standing crowd with more than one shedding a few tears. As someone put it, "you really felt like you experienced Williamsburg to the fullest!" Convention cochair Michael Steffaro introduced his aunt, Karen Steffaro, who served admirably as toastmaster with professionalism, grace, good timing and plenty of inside family humor. She started by "forgiving" her nephew in keeping with the Metropolitan's sermon and recalled her very first convention in 1976 at the Waldorf-Astoria where she was dressed as Martha Washington as well as other Fellowship memories.

In his banquet address, Metropolitan Herman reminded us that the Orthodox Church will only be as strong as its monasteries and seminaries. Next May we will celebrate the 100th pilgrimage to St. Tikhon's Monastery, founded by St. Patriarch Tikhon himself, and he urged us to plan now to participate. In Pochaev, Ukraine, which His Beatitude visited earlier in the summer, over 30,000 people walked over 1 week to be involved in the pilgrimage. "We pray that the Orthodox faithful will visit our American monasteries and gain spiritually." He also announced that Metropolitan Theodosius will be honored for his 25 years of service as primate by the construction of a new museum at St. Tikhon's. "I commend you on the theme of 'Supporting Our Seminaries' and urge you to offer the greatest gift possible to God — one of your sons or daughters — to serve the Church. We must encourage those born into Orthodoxy to become clergy and lay workers. The founders of the FROC saw the need from the beginning to support our seminaries. I challenge all of you to build on this theme. If you see a little altar boy, encourage him to become a priest; encourage a young girl to become a church worker. They and we will receive a great reward. May you members of the Fellowship meet with every success and labor for the Lord and His Church so that we can reach the Eternal Heavenly Kingdom."

Next, John Kruchok delivered his president's message (which is reprinted in this edition of the *Journal*) and announced the 2003 national scholarship winners, some of whom were present. (Their photos and bios appeared in the *Fall Journal*). The evening concluded with the "Musket Ball" to the dancing music of Joe Stanky and His Cadets all the way from Pennsylvania, one of the original 13 colonies. Several families showed off three generations of dancers. The Hopak, as always, displayed the athleticism and spirit of even those middle-aged. Lots and lots of children crowded the dance floor, as has been the trend in recent years, and the *Colonial Call* wrote that it may have been the longest Kozak line in convention history!

After sessions concluded on Labor Day Monday, those remaining conventioners trekked out to Waller Miller Park for the "Patriots' Retreat" farewell luncheon at a pavilion deep in the forest before journeying home. The national board of





trustees held its post-convention meeting later that afternoon and a number of hearty members stayed on to meet later that night in, where else, the hotel's breakfast room. Thanks for the memories, South River!

Convention Odds and Ends, This and That...

Kudos to Jennifer Pishko, Jr. Dept. Dir. & Michigan Guv, for shuttling conventioneers back and forth on Sat. evening from the colonial taverns (where they were dining en masse) to the hotel during the torrential downpour speaking of downpours, how about those hearty tourists who tried to brave the thunderstorm for the lantern tour of Colonial W-Burg sites, only to get thoroughly drenched and see their numbers diminish to a handful nice to see the newlyweds, past Metropolitan District Guv Nik Zedlovich and his new Russian bride, Tatyana, from Tula ...also newlyweds Basil & Sonia Kraftician, Randolph Sr. "O" Club members Dimitri



Ressetar had 2 holes-in-one on the Woodland's miniature golf course while VP Doc John Schultz lost about 2 dozen orange balls during Thursday morning's Presidential Open on the Green Course...by the way, your Editor wishes to thank John Malinchok, next year's golf tourney chair, for the wakeup call for the Open ... Millie Herzak, mother of Past National Prez Michael "Mickey" Herzak, gets the award for grace & dignity after bouncing back from a little spill (the \$300 she won in stock awards might've helped!)... special thanks to Jean Semanco, who is stepping down after many years of coordinating the popular Chinese Auction & arts/crafts display (over \$800 raised this year alone!)... Was the hotel's breakfast room popular with late night partyers or what? Golden-agers (50 plus) packed the place Sat. night singing along to the balalaika music of Sasha Ressetar (George Malinich even remembered most of the words to the Russian folk songs with help from wife Faith!), Sunday night featured over 100 younger adults singing, dancing, etc. some of whom didn't leave the breakfast room until...you guessed it... breakfast!!! (6:30 a.m. by one report), and even Monday night, after the convention was finished, another 50 filled the place playing cards & reminiscing how many drivers ended up at Shelter #3 on their way back from the Patriot's farewell luncheon in the park? ... Who was the recent retiree nicknamed "Drinker" by the colonial actors during the Yankee Doodle Pub night? What a good sport as were his fellow participants, the "Crybaby" who closely resembled CP&O Director Carol Deerson, ...

Kaye Garman, fundraiser extraordinaire and who doesn't take "no" for an answer, collected almost \$2,000 on the convention floor to support the *Journal*! Thank you, Kaye ... South River "R" Club convention committee members donned beautifully hand-made colonial costumes as they greeted delegates and ran events National Prez John Kruchok crisply chaired the sessions, declaring that he had never experienced such heat & humidity, bringing to mind the old saying: "if you think it's hot here....." We hear that Fellowship Kid Herman Makosky, grandson of Past Prez Peter and Elizabeth Melnik, finally found Gen. George Washington, who was in town to review the troops with the Marquis de Lafayette en route to Yorktown for the decisive battle with the British redcoats... he had been asking everyone, including Metropolitan Herman, after liturgy... a picturesque waterfall and nature walk graced the back of the conference center, visible from the windows, the balcony & patio Karen Steffaro was the perfect banquet toastmaster, toastmistress, toast-whatever... professional, funny, sentimental, smooth ...the convention highlight for many was the surprise appearance of an 8-man Colonial fife-and-drum corps which entered the banquet hall unannounced to play the National Anthem & other patriotic music, leaving many with goose bumps & tears...your Editor, thinking that the singing of the "Star Spangled Banner" had been overlooked, was busy whispering "sing it, sing it" just before the beat of the drums was heard Marion "Manya" Shark (Skuby), the convention's choir directress, got a workout with a full slate of liturgical services (the Beheading of John the Baptist Thurs. eve & Fri. a.m., Sat. Vespers & Sunday Divine Liturgy

(or, as the hotel had on the schedule, the *Devine* Liturgy)...she received a deserved icon of St. Herman presented by Metropolitan HermanWho traveled the farthest to the convention? Well, Bob & Karen Steffaro came up from Texas, Neena Malinich (and probably others) from Florida, John Dietrich from Mississippi, the Homyak's (and others?) from Arizona, the Fedorkos from Texas/Arkansas, the Walkers from Minneapolis.... anyone else? ... Friday afternoon, the nearby College of William and Mary (its Wren Building said to be the oldest academic structure in America for you trivia buffs) hosted a welcome for its..... Class of 2007! Does that make you feel old or what? Which member of the board of trustees, unpacking his tuxedo & stuff, discovered about an hour before the banquet that he was missing his bowtie? Fortunately his brother, in a wedding party the day before in Maryland, came to the rescue with his own Good to see many clergy and families participating in the entire weekend... The Golden Agers and Past Presidents held their annual gatherings, missing John "Dany" Daniluck, who was unable to attend.... the convention committee published the *Colonial Call* each day, keeping everyone apprised of the many happenings.



IT'S TIME**to make plans
to come to
Ohio!**

By Lissa Molchan and Marianne Noah

St. Andrew Chapter #220 is "watching the clock" and enthusiastically preparing for your arrival at the 2004 National Bowling Tournament on April 30- May 2, 2004.

The manager and staff at Cloverleaf Bowling Lanes were very excited to be selected as our tournament location. Boasting of 46 newly-renovated lanes, hidden ball return, automatic scoring, a 14-table billiard room, a game room and a full service snack bar and lounge, Cloverleaf assures us that their facilities can provide the entire family a "STRIKINGLY" good time! Singles and doubles will be scheduled for Friday April 30 with team events on Saturday May 1, 2004. Visit the lanes at www.bowlcloverleaflanes.com

Amerisuites Hotel in Independence (located at I-77 and Rockside Rd just south of I-480) will be where our guests will stay for the weekend. It's located 2.4 miles from the lanes and 4.2 miles from St. Andrew Eastern Orthodox Church. An "ALARMING" rate of *only* \$65.00 per night plus tax makes this a perfect "TIME" to bring the whole family. Each room is a mini suite (featuring either two double or one king size bed) with a sleeper sofa and either table and chairs or a desk in a second room. All suites have a coffee maker, iron and ironing board, hair dryer, microwave, wet bar/sink and a mini refrigerator. In the lobby, coffee is available 24 hours a day and popcorn is offered in the evenings. With an indoor pool, a small fitness room with television, this four-year-old Amerisuites has something for everyone in the family! Daily, a Continental breakfast bar is available for hotel guests featuring fresh,

hot Belgian waffles. DEADLINE FOR ROOM RESERVATIONS for the tournament weekend is APRIL 9, 2004. To guarantee the discounted rate, CALL THE HOTEL DIRECTLY at 216-328-1060, stating you are with the "FOCA BOWLING GROUP".

If you travel by air, Hopkins International Airport is approximately 20 minutes from the hotel and the Akron-Canton Airport is roughly 50 minutes away. Both offer a wide selection of rental car agencies. AirTran flies into Akron-Canton and offers very competitive East coast, round-trip rates. If train travel is your choice, the Amtrak station in downtown Cleveland is about ten minutes north of the hotel.

It is important to our committee that activities for the weekend are as FAMILY FRIENDLY as possible. We feel it is equally important to emphasize that each family acknowledge its responsibility for the Junior(s) in their company since the National Bowling Tournament has been and still is an event primarily planned for Senior members and guests. Each Junior attending needs to have a FAMILY chaperone.

We will ask each participating family to provide the names and ages of the Juniors traveling with them so we are able to plan enjoyable and suitable activities for them.

With the cooperation and assistance of the National Junior Department, a special Junior bowling party is being planned during the Senior team bowling time. COSMIC BOWLING will feature black lights, teen music, pizza and soda – to mention just a few items. Group transportation will be provided for those participating in the bowling party. Details will be sent to Senior chapters so Juniors can make plans along with their families.

Other weekend activities include the usual and customary Friday RECEPTION/REGISTRATION and OPEN HOUSE with some refreshingly different twists, turns and surprises!

Saturday evening VESPERS will be held at St. Andrew Eastern Orthodox Church followed by a DELICIOUS DINNER in a DELIGHTFULLY-DECORATED DINING room, featuring

(from the beginning of the evening to the end) a crowd-PLEASING, PROFESSIONAL, POLYNESIAN PROGRAM with special performances by the ensemble. We hope it will be an evening you will remember fondly.

So, pack away your summer clothes for now but leave your sandals and beach attire at the top of the pile so you can grab them as we head for the Tropics! (Why! You could even be the trendsetter by carrying your bowling ball in a sand bucket rather than the typical, boring bowling bag!!!)

Contact Information

As our program is finalized, information packets will be mailed to Governors, Chapter Presidents and to 2003 National Bowling Tournament participants. If you would like to receive your own packet, please send your requests to us at yumyumchoco@yahoo.com or mjmlrm@cs.com.

A website will also be set up for the tournament. Visit it at www.2004bowling.com

Chairman, Marianne Noah (330-274-8061 or yumyumchoco@yahoo.com)

Co-Chairman, Lissa Molchan (216-447-0373 or mjmlrm@cs.com)

Spiritual Advisor, Father Emil Hutnyan (216-662-1313 or lime4697@aol.com)

Secretary, Sandy Uhrina

Treasurer, Dorothy Klodnicki

Ten Pin Chairmen, Anne and Andy Cvercko (330-467-0301 or antbabe22@aol.com)

Don't miss the **TIME** of your life! Remember, think TROPICAL!!!

**We look forward to
welcoming YOU to Ohio in 2004!**

**BOWLING SPORTS FORM:
download bowling sports form from
F.O.C.A. website
www.orthodoxfellowship.org**

**BASKETBALL SPORTS FORM:
download basketball sports form from
F.O.C.A. website
www.orthodoxfellowship.org**

78th National F.O.C.A. Convention in July

A New Year, A New Adventure, "IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!"

The Campbell "O" Club is planning a **Great Adventure...a wild opportunity** for you to join us, as we sponsor the **78th National FOCA National Convention, July 14 to July 19, 2004**, at the Grand Island Resort and Conference Center, Grand Island, NY.

The Holiday Inn Grand Island is the only hotel situated on the banks of the Niagara River, just 15 minutes from Buffalo, Niagara Falls and Canada. Our safari of conventioners will occupy most of the 261 newly renovated rooms and suites, each with a balcony that overlooks the Niagara River or countryside. Room rates start at \$92.00 for a single/double. Mention that you are with the FOCA to attain these rates, which will be available three days before and after the convention. **Most credit cards are acceptable; reservations can be made by calling 1-800-359-4827.**

If **'giraff-ter'** more excitement than the convention sessions have to offer, FOCA Tribesmen can relax in the indoor or outdoor pools, sauna, whirlpool or fitness center. Other amenities include a video arcade, tennis courts, and a gift shop. Young warriors and cubs can enjoy the nearby Fantasy Island Amusement Park or venture a little further to Six Flags, various wax museums or points of historic interest. Blaze a trail to the adjacent River Oaks Golf Course or stampede to the 3 major shopping malls that are within a 15-minute radius. The hotel also offers free parking and boat docking. If you require further necessities for your stay, there is a grocery store, drug store and even an emergency clinic just a few minutes from the hotel.

Whether you are **Tarzan and Jane**, or **Stanley and Livingston**, start your quest by attending the President's Open on Thursday, July 15. Then we

will welcome old friends and new Thursday evening for a truly unique cultural experience.

Don't **monkey around** as sessions begin on Friday, July 16, and continue again on Saturday, July 17. For your convenience, we are planning a possible continental breakfast bar and also a buffet luncheon bar, provided by the hotel, to be placed outside of sessions.

Sunday we will hold the Hierarchal Divine Liturgy in the hotel, later followed by the Grand Banquet and Ball.

Please check the FOCA web site (www.orthodoxfellowship.org) for frequent updates, reservations, ad forms, and contacts concerning the national convention. Also, watch your mailbox for additional information.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU LIKE A HERD OF ELEPHANTS!

Please support our program **JUNGLE BOOK**. Prices are as follows:

- Full page \$ 125.00
- Jungle Page (special listing) \$ 20.00
- 1/2 page \$ 75.00
- 1/4 page \$ 50.00
- Baboon Booster \$ 10.00
- Inside front or back \$ 175.00

IMPORTANT INFO: If you are planning to enter Canada on your visit, you must be prepared to show your birth certificate...including children. More importantly, if there are children other than your own that will be traveling with you, be prepared to show their birth certificate along with a notarized letter from their parents stating that the child/children are allowed to travel with you out of the country.



78th National F.O.C.A. Convention Committee promotes next year's event in Niagara Falls.

“My Favorite Bible Story”

- **Jonah and The Fish** -

by Jessica Melnick

There are many stories in the Bible that have been read to children since they could understand English. Some of these stories are excellent examples of good behavior and manners and are in a way, fables of the Bible. One of these stories is about Jonah. This is a fabulous story because it teaches children and adults more than one lesson while still being an interesting read.

One lesson that is explained in this story is how God is always with you no matter what you have done or where you are. It is impossible to escape His eyes. In a way this is a frightening concept, but in most ways it is a wonderful thing. Jonah was afraid of a task that God had set before him so he attempted to hide himself from God by sailing away on a ship. God followed him across the sea and created a storm to show Jonah that He was displeased. It sounds frightening that God would create a storm to force someone into doing what he asked, but in reality if Jonah had managed to avoid God then the mission that God sent him on would have failed. His mission was to go to the city of Nineveh and preach to them the word of the Lord so that they might repent and turn away from their terrible lifestyle. If God had not been with Jonah then countless lives would have been lost. The presence of the Lord in one man caused an entire city to be saved and that is a great thing.

Another concept that this story demonstrates is how God is always willing to forgive, no matter what you have done. Jonah fled from the Lord but the Lord took mercy on him. Miraculously, he kept Jonah alive in the belly of a fish for 3 days and 3 nights. In Jonah's prayer he says: "From the

depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry." God forgave Jonah for fleeing and he had the great fish deposit Jonah on land. In this story God forgave not only once, but twice. When Jonah went to Nineveh and told the people what they were doing was wrong they listened to him and changed their ways. God forgave them and didn't destroy the city. This made Jonah angry that they would be forgiven even though they had done awful things. God said: "Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who can not tell their right hand from their left and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?" This proves that God is a gracious and compassionate God who is slow to anger and abounding in love.

This story is wonderful because it shows two sides of God that people forget about very easily. Often we forget that God is always watching us and is always there for us. We also tend to forget that no matter what we have done God will forgive us. People go to drastic measures because they believe that they could do nothing to redeem themselves in the eyes of God when in reality all one has to do is ask for His forgiveness. This story has wonderful morals and makes one admire God for his wonderful qualities.

My Favorite Bible Story

by Rowan Morbey

I enjoy many of the stories in the Bible, but the one about Lazarus being raised from the dead is my favorite. Full of beauty, grief, love and hope, it is both poignant and magnificent. For hundreds of years Orthodox Christians have heard it chanted in the Church before Holy Week and been greatly moved. This is because the Resurrection is so prominent in Jesus' miraculous destruction of Hades power before His Passion. I especially find Lazarus' story intriguing because it brings to light Christ's immense compassion for His creation, the importance of faith under difficult circumstances, and the human nature of Jesus. The Holy Fathers knew what they were doing when they chose

to have this passage from the Bible read on the eve of the feast of feasts, Pascha.

When Jesus heard Lazarus had died, he did not have to act; no one forced him to perform a miracle. It would have been much easier for him to stay away from Bethany, where Lazarus was buried. As the disciples said, "...lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there [Bethany] again?" (John 11:8) Christ ignores the warnings because, as the Gospel plainly states, he loves Lazarus' family. His compassion towards Lazarus transcends all other obstacles. This is a great consolation for me. Christ loves His people to such a great extent that He will help us even if it is inconvenient to do so. Of course, we cannot take it for granted that God will fix every little problem in our lives. But when it counts He will be there, like He was for his friend Lazarus. This good news is clearly evident in the story of Lazarus being raised from the dead, and one reason I like it so much.

Faith also plays a crucial role in the narrative. Without Martha's recognition of Jesus being Christ, the miracle in Bethany would not in all likelihood have taken place. Her simple words, "I know that he [Lazarus] will rise again in the resurrection at the last day," (John 11:24) and, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is come into the world," (John 11:27) provide the common ground of faith upon which Jesus can reveal the glory of God. I always feel renewed and refreshed in my belief in Jesus Christ after hearing these simple but profound statements. The account in John serves as a reminder of how integral it is to trust God in all things, and not to lose hope.

The most fascinating aspect of the story of Lazarus is the reaction of Jesus upon being told of his friend's death. He who made all creation, who brought us from dust into being, who robes Himself with light as with a garment weeps and groans because of the passing away of Lazarus. Tears flow from the eyes of God incarnate. We have all cried before: at relative's funerals, after hard exams, while saying good-bye to friends. It is a comforting thought that our Lord experienced the same anguish, that we are not alone in our suffering. He knows

what it feels like to be sad. The emotions of helplessness, loneliness and despair are not foreign to Him. This has, and always will be, a great solace to me during difficult times. No story in the New or Old Testament presents the humility and humanity of Jesus Christ so intimately as the one of Lazarus rising from the dead.

It is dangerous to start thinking in terms of some Bible stories being better than others. Each has their intent and purpose, and should not be cast off as “less important”. However, some passages in the Bible are more eloquent and provide more insight into the life of Christ than others. The account of Lazarus and his death and resurrection in Bethany is an example. It deals with the loving-kindness of God towards his people, the great fruits faith amidst turmoil can reap and the human weakness Jesus underwent during his time on Earth in a very direct way. In a world full of violence and fear, the words, “Lazarus come forth!” (John 11:43) are all the more meaningful as we look forward to the General Resurrection.

My Favorite Bible Story

by Nicholas Hedge

The story I am going to write about today is the Prodigal Son. It is my favorite bible story because it gives me a guideline for being a good Christian. I believe the story helps to explain our place in the world and through the story, I learn about the sacrifices that have to be made and the rewards that you receive for a life with God.

In this story there are two sons and a father. The younger son is eager to start his own life and demands from his father his inheritance so that he can go off and live the way he wants to. The older son, who works very hard for his family and is very loyal, asks for nothing. The younger son soon wastes all his money on parties and fun and is left with nothing, not even money for food. He decides to return home and ask his father to accept him back into his house as a hired servant. As soon as the father sees him, he tells his servants to bring his son some sandals, clothes, and a ring for his finger. The father proclaims “my

son was lost and now he is found” and orders the fatted calf to be slaughtered so they can celebrate. The older son who has always been there for his father, finds it difficult to accept his father’s actions.

I see the father in the story as symbolizing God. He is the ruler of his kingdom, but always allows for shelter and forgiveness. The father displays acts of kindness and leadership when he allows the younger son into his home once again after he has sinned against God and hurt his father badly. He has a pure and forgiving heart.

To me, the younger son represents the people on earth who have sinned against God. In this story however, the son realizes he has done wrong and repents. He goes to his father after all his money is wasted seeking forgiveness and to be accepted back into his house as only a hired servant. Before the son can even ask his father for this, his father treats him royally and accepts him unconditionally. This was more than the son wanted or felt he deserved. It is through his act of repentance, that he achieves real happiness.

Lastly, the older son represents the people that try hard not to sin and stay on the path that God has set for being a good Christian. This son believes that he has been treated unfairly by his father when his younger brother is given a party after he has done wrong. He doesn’t understand why his father hasn’t done the same for him. However, he learns the greatest lesson of all, that parties, fame, and fortune of earth mean nothing in God’s realm. It’s a life with God, which he has, that provides the best rewards. The older brother needs to accept his brother too, even though it isn’t easy. Even when you are good and try to do all the right things, it doesn’t mean that you are perfect. We all need God’s help, even the best of us.

All there of these characters have showed me what it right and what is wrong, what should be done and what should not be done, the father through forgiveness, the younger son through repentance and the older son through learning a sense of humility. This is why it is my favorite Bible story.

My Favorite Bible Story

by Anastasia Shiyanova

Ever since I was very little, I believed in miracles. I think that if you believe in God, the Creator, then you should not have a problem believing in His power to do the impossible. Therefore, I truly enjoyed listening to Bible stories about God’s gifts in my church, or at bed time. These stories filled me with awe, as they still do today.

In the twentieth chapter of the Gospel John, - John says that these miracles were described to prove that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and when you have faith, you will become a sincere believer.

The writers of the four Gospels recorded thirty-five miracles of Christ. All of them fulfill us spiritually and morally.

The story about the very first miracle that Jesus did is one of my favorites. I think every Christian remembers how Jesus Christ turned water into wine. Water becomes wine... Just hearing these words stirs up fascination. One substance, a simple one, was turned into something completely different. This miracle debuted to the world Jesus’ divine powers.

This is how this story was read to me, and how I read it today. It all began when Jesus and His disciples were invited to a wedding in Cana, which was most likely a family one, because Mary was also present. The wine at the wedding ran out, and Mary took the problem to her Son. Jesus responded to her with a gentle rebuke, saying that His” hour has not yet come.” Mary told the waiters to do all that Jesus said, and He told the waiters to fill six empty stone water pots with water, and they were filled to the brim. Next, Jesus told them to draw some out, and take it to the headwaiter, who tasted it and marveled at the high quality of the wine. The water had been turned into wine by Jesus Christ!

This spectacular miracle teaches us many lessons and morals. For example, the thirsty crowd at the wedding symbolizes the world without Christ. We are searching for a fullness, a satisfaction in life, but we can only get it with Christ’s

help. Everything symbolic in this story. Empty water pots represent hearts without the Word of God. The Bible tells us that while man looks at the outward appearance, God looks at our hearts and our souls. If we allow Jesus to fill them with His Word, then He will do the miracle. The wine in this story represents the miracle of salvation when a sinner's heart is filled with God's Word and joy.

From my point of view, this story is the greatest of all the Bible stories. It reveals to us that God will fill our hearts with gladness, that God will help us with all of our everyday commitments if we just believe in Him, and follow His example.

This story will delight me over and over again as we all continue striving to reach the path of the Lord. And by reading the Bible every day, we will discover for ourselves more and more of "our favorite Bible stories."

Highlights / from pg. 7

origin was the address on the shoe box: "Priscilla" in Indianapolis. Turns out that 3018 North Priscilla Street was the address occupied by Life Member & Past National President John "Dany" Daniluck and his late wife for over 50 years until November 2002 when Dany moved into a nearby retirement community. Dany didn't hesitate to write your Editor and respond with interest to the story. He wants everyone to know he is well and following Fellowship events closely. Drop him a card at 1301 Ritter Avenue, Apt. 337, Indianapolis, IN 46219.

Conventions in the Early Years of the Church

The Ecumenical Councils

This is a convention issue of the OCJ and we hope that those of you who were in Williamsburg, Virginia, came home with good memories of faith and fellowship.

A convention such as ours is held so that major decisions of the Fellowship can be made. The Early Church also held "conventions" but they were call Ecumenical Councils and there were seven of them. At these councils, the teachings of the whole church were laid down.

At the first council the first seven articles of the creed were established.

The next six councils decided upon the rest of the creed: That Christ was God and man in one person and that Saint Mary was the Mother of God, the Theotokos.

They also decided to restore the icons in the churches when some people tried to get rid of them and to condemn some people who were trying to put in false teachings.

Unscramble the words below to see words that were used in this article.
How many can you find?

- NVSVEE
- POFLELWHIS
- CIUCOLN
- NCVNOETINO
- THSHEOKTOO
- DEREC
- THCRIS
- EALFS
- NCOIS



ANSWERS: seven, fellowship, council, convention, Theotokos, creed, Christ, false, icons

OCJ Staff Thanks You...

For Supporting The *Orthodox Christian Journal* Publication,
and Wishes You All A Happy and Healthy 2004!

Rev. Michael & Mat. Anderson Chapter #240 Sandra Kapelan Nat'l Admin. Secretary Philip Benda Chapter #97 Bob & Betty Czech Chapter #66 Walt & Carol Deerson Chapter #167 Joan & Bill Dupranick Chapter #43 George & Barbara Freimann Chapter #229 Dr. & Mrs. George Glosik Chapter #4/6 Marissa & Arthur Hedge Chapter #222 Mildred Herzak Chapter #4/6 Dr. Joseph & Barbara Jani Chapter #35 M/M William Kraftician Chapter #222 Michael & Alice Mallick Chapter #199 John & Kathy Mindala Chapter #4/6 Karen & Mark Phinney Chapter #229 Jessica Lazor Chapter #27 Kristina Barnosky Chapter #246 Michael & Veronica Burak Chapter #167	Rev. Michael Dahulich, Dean St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary Julia & Joseph Duffney Chapter #54 Paul & Diane Fedoronko Chapter #82 Fr. David & Shari Garretson Chapter #167 Michael & Marcella Hydock Chapter #229 Jennifer Lazor Chapter #27 Amy Barrett Chapter #167 Helene Emerick Chapter #109 Paul Malinchok Chapter #150 Metropolitan HERMAN Archbishop of Washington Metropolitan of All America and Canada David, Stephanie & Alex Homyak Chapter #219 Dave & Laura Johnson Chapter #129 Metropolitan THEODOSIUS Chapter-At -Large M/M Walter Mironchik Chapter #212 Pat & John Ihnat Chapter #79 Kovach Family Chapter #97	Helen Livosky Chapter #27 Karen Nichols Chapter #229 His Grace, NIKON Bishop of the Albanian Diocese of New England Gale & Jennifer Pishko Chapter #2/9 Alexander Ratushnik Chapter #73 Peter & Joni Rezanka Chapter #105 Anna Romanofsky Chapter #222 Dr. Walter & Laurie Rusnak Chapter #27 Olga & Walter Romanofsky Chapter #240 Ellen Scrip Chapter #64 Joseph J. Shaluha Chapter #167 Larry & Connie Skvir Chapter #82 John & Betty Slanta Chapter #79 Marie Stefanelli Chapter #44 Becky Tesar Chapter #4/6 Melissa Tesar Chapter #4/6 Marie L. Yanowsky Chapter #79 M/M Nicholas Zedlovich Debbie, Tom & Andrew Zelinsky Chapter #27 Sue Kennedy Chapter #127	Nick & Monica Vansuch Chapter #127 Mary Vansuch Chapter #127 Barbara & George Kolesar Chapter #127 Walter Leshinsky Chapter #127 Dr. Nicola & Shelly Nicoloff Chapter #127 Tom & Sonja Harvischak Chapter #127 Protopresbyter & Mrs. Robert S. Kondratick NJ Chapter at-large Dcn. Michael, Mary & Natasha Wusylko Chapter #1 Nettie Jury Chapter #2/9 Joseph, Nancy & Gregory Mell Chapter #3 Chuck & Doris Wasilko Chapter #3 Robert & Mary Jane Lucak Chapter #4/6 Melissa Tesar Chapter #4/6 Betty Ann Perschka Chapter #17 Marge Petty Chapter #17 Judy Rosko Chapter #17 Margaret Boldish Chapter #27 Pete & Kaye Garman Chapter #27	Jim, Kathy, Jessica & Jennifer Lazor Chapter #27 Ruth & George Libertin Chapter #27 Bill & Linda Livosky Chapter #27 Ann Steffaro Chapter #27 Mary Durkot Chapter #37 George & Faith Malinich Chapter #37 Neena Malinich Chapter #37 Stephen & Olga Melnick Chapter #47 "R" Club of Syracuse Chapter #47 Ann B. Dutko Chapter #50 Elizabeth Dutko Chapter #50 Mary Anne Soltis Chapter #54 Anne & Ron Geleta Chapter #57 John & Sonia Schultz Chapter #58 Sarah & Johnny Schultz Chapter #58 Marion Stenko Chapter #64 Nancy Filak Chapter #66 Edward & Rose Junda Chapter #66 Peter & Florence Junda Chapter #66 Vera Alesevich Chapter #73
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Frank & Carole Kaputa
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Helen Lichatz
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Stenko
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Theodora Ressetar
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Chapter #229

Coy Lee Williamson
Chapter #229

Faith Skordinski Williamson
Chapter #229

Sandra & John Fedorko
Chapter #242

John & Pam Petronko
Chapter #246

Happy New Year to One and All!

Greetings from the Governors of the Fellowship...

FRANK KAPUTA, Sr.
ATLANTIC DISTRICT

GREGORY HATRAC
ANTHRACITE DISTRICT

GARY LELO
CENTRAL PA DISTRICT

WALTER C. ALESEVICH,
Esq.
COLONIAL DISTRICT

JENNIFER PISHKO
MICHIGAN DISTRICT

TODD WALKER
MIDWEST DISTRICT

MICHAEL STEFFARO
NEW JERSEY DISTRICT

LEON SHEEAN
OHIO DISTRICT

DAVID HOMYAK
PACIFIC DISTRICT

SERGE DANIELS
PITTSBURGH DISTRICT

FAITH MALINICH
UPPER NEW YORK
STATE DISTRICT

Chapter No. 1
**NORTH SUBURBAN
"O" CLUB**
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 2/9-2/9J
DETROIT "R" CLUB
Detroit, Michigan

Chapter No. 3
**McKEES ROCKS "R"
CLUB**
McKees Rocks, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 4/6 - 4/6J
**CLEVELAND "R"
CLUB**
Cleveland, Ohio

Chapter No. 5
**AMBRIDGE "R"
CLUB**
Ambridge, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 7
**CATHEDRAL
CHAPTER**
Ohio District FOCA

Chapter No. 11
**CHARLEROI "R"
CLUB**
Charleroi, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 13/84
**LAKEWOOD "R"
CLUB**
Lakewood, Ohio

Chapter No. 14
**MARBLEHEAD "R"
CLUB**
Marblehead, Ohio

Chapter No. 18
AUBURN "R" CLUB
Auburn, New York

Chapter No. 20/32 - 20/32J
AKRON "O" CLUB
Akron, Ohio

Chapter No. 21J
**COALDALE JR. "O"
CLUB**
Coaldale, PA

Chapter No. 23
**ST. ALEXIS TOTH
MEMORIAL "R"
CLUB**
Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 26 - 26J
ANSONIA "R" CLUB
Ansonia, Connecticut

Chapter No. 27 - 27J
**CAMPBELL "O"
CLUB**
Campbell, Ohio

Chapter No. 30 - 30J
**SS. PETER & PAUL
"R" CLUB**
Passaic, New Jersey

Chapter No. 34 - 34J
**SS. PETER & PAUL
 "R" CLUB**
 Minersville, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 35 - 35J
DONORA "R" CLUB
 Donora, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 37
**BINGHAMTON "R"
 CLUB**
 Binghamton, New York

Chapter No. 38
**AMERICAN "O"
 CLUB**
 St. Clair, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 43 - 43J
ENDICOTT "R" CLUB
 Endicott, New York

Chapter No. 44 - 44J
SINGAC "R" CLUB
 Singac, New Jersey

Chapter No. 47/135
SYRACUSE "R" CLUB
 Syracuse, NY

Chapter No. 50
**FR. J. NAUMOVICH
 R. L.
 "R" CLUB**
 Edwardsville, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 54
**WATERVLIET "R"
 CLUB**
 Watervliet, New York

Chapter No. 57
COHOES "R" CLUB
 Cohoes, New York

Chapter No. 58 - 58J
WEIRTON "R" CLUB
 Weirton, West Virginia

Chapter No. 63 - 63J
**HERKIMER "R"
 CLUB**
 Herkimer, New York

Chapter No. 64
BERWICK "R" CLUB
 Berwick, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 66 - 66J
PASSAIC "O" CLUB
 Passaic, New Jersey

Chapter No. 73 - 73J
**BRIDGEPORT "R"
 CLUB**
 Bridgeport, Connecticut

Chapter No. 78
TRENTON "R" CLUB
 Trenton, New Jersey

Chapter No. 79
**NATION'S CAPITOL
 "R" CLUB**
 Washington, D.C.

Chapter No. 80
HARTFORD "R" CLUB
 Hartford, Connecticut

Chapter No. 82
ST. STEPHEN'S O.C.F.
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 92
**NEW HAVEN "R"
 CLUB**
 New Haven, Connecticut

Chapter No. 94
ST. MARY'S "O" CLUB
 Minneapolis, Minnesota

Chapter No. 96
**SS. PETER & PAUL
 "O" CLUB**
 Burr Ridge, Illinois

Chapter No. 97
**BAYONNE ALPHA
 "R" CLUB**
 Bayonne, New Jersey

Chapter No. 105 - 105J
**ALL SAINTS "R"
 CLUB**
 Olyphant, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 107
**WHITESTONE "R"
 CLUB**
 Whitestone, New York

Chapter No. 109
**CANONSBURG
 "O" CLUB**
 Canonsburg, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 121
**ST. TIKHON'S "R"
 CLUB**
 South Canaan, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 129
**JERSEY CITY "R"
 CLUB**
 Jersey City, New Jersey

Chapter No. 132
**ELIZABETH "R"
 CLUB**
 Elizabeth, New Jersey

Chapter No. 146
TRINITY "O" CLUB
 Chicago, Illinois

Chapter No. 150
**FRACKVILLE "R"
 CLUB**
 Frackville, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 152
**TERRYVILLE "R"
 CLUB**
 Terryville, Connecticut

Chapter No. 161 - 161J
**MERRIVILLE "O"
 CLUB**
 Merriville, Indiana

Chapter No. 162-162J
**ARCHANGEL
 MICHAEL
 "O" CLUB**
 Burbank, Illinois

Chapter No. 166 - 166J
**LEHIGH VALLEY "O"
 CLUB**
 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 167 - 167J
**SOUTH RIVER "R"
 CLUB**
 South River, New Jersey

Chapter No. 171 - 171J
MADISON "O" CLUB
 Madison, Illinois

Chapter No. 175
**SACRAMENTO
 VALLEY
 "O" CLUB**
 Sacramento, California

Chapter No. 180 - 180J
ST. JOHN'S "R" CLUB
 Bridgeport, Connecticut

Chapter No. 189
**ST. MICHAEL'S "O"
 CLUB**
 St. Louis, Missouri

Chapter No. 199 - 199J
**HARRISBURG "O"
 CLUB**
 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 201
**HOLY TRINITY "O"
 CLUB**
 Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 204
**SS. PETER & PAUL
 "R" CLUB**
 Miami, Florida

Chapter No. 209
**GARDEN STATE "R"
 CLUB**
 New Jersey

Chapter No. 212
ST. JOHN'S "O" CLUB
 Alpha, New Jersey

Chapter No. 215
**ST. HERMAN'S "O"
 CLUB**
 New Jersey

Chapter No. 219 - 219J
**PHOENICIAN "R"
 CLUB**
 Phoenix, Arizona

Chapter No. 220 - 220J
**ST. ANDREW'S "R"
 CLUB**
 Maple Heights, Ohio

Chapter No. 222 - 222J
**HOLY TRINITY "O"
 CLUB**
 Randolph, New Jersey

Chapter No. 223 - 223J
**HOLY CROSS "O"
 CLUB**
 Hackettstown, New Jersey

Chapter No. 228 - 228J
**ST. HERMAN of
 ALASKA
 "R" CLUB**
 Wallingford, Pennsylvania

Chapter No. 229
ST. MARK FOCA
 Bethesda, Maryland

Chapter No. 246-246J
**ST. GREGORY of
 PALAMAS "O" CLUB**
 Glen Gardner, NJ

Chapter No. 247
**FELLOWSHIP of
 ORTHODOX
 CHRISTIANS
 in MISSISSIPPI**
 Clinton, MS

