



Parish Development Grants

Parish Development Ministry, Diocese of the Midwest
Orthodox Church in America



Background Information for Applicants

Background

Overview

The Parish Development grant initiative is an activity to stimulate parishes in the Diocese of the Midwest to begin new ministries or further develop existing parish ministries. Modest cash grants are provided to a few parishes as an incentive to begin internal and external efforts oriented to strengthen their parish.

Many parishes have an idea or three — something that the priest or the parish council or a collection of parishioners have discussed but they never quite pulled it together. Perhaps lack of funds was a barrier. Perhaps encouragement was needed. Some parishes, assuming “we could never do that,” even lack a good set of ideas. Parish Development Grants can, at least in small part, begin to overcome these barriers.

This initiative can work in the following ways to help breathe life into parishes:

- Incentivized by the prospect of even a modest grant, many parishes will begin a conversation on “what we can do to become a more vibrant parish – to get ‘unstuck’”.
- Parishes receiving grants will be *required* to take action – they will begin to “turn the crank” on otherwise static parish situations.
- Some parishes not receiving grants may become inspired to enact their project anyway — using internal or parishioner funds.
- Feedback — “lessons learned” harvested from parishes receiving grants — can be used to stimulate new efforts in other parishes that heretofore decided to *watch from the sidelines*.
- The entire Diocese can become engaged in the prospects of new activities which can lead to other future successful efforts.

Grant Process

Past Grants

A summary of some past grants is provided in the appendix of this document.

Deadline: October 10, 2015

Grants will be decided upon by the Parish and Mission Development Committee. Applications are due October 10, 2015. The names of parishes receiving grants and the projects/efforts for which the grants are being awarded will be announced.

Qualifications of Applicant Parishes

Grants are given to parishes not persons.

The parish must be in the Diocese of the Midwest, Orthodox Church in America.

Parishes applying for grants must be up to date on all assessment payments.

Administration of the Grant Program

The grant program will be administered and overseen by the Chair of the Mission/Parish Development Committee.

Parishes receiving grants will be expected to provide interim reports as requested. This will be defined at the time of the award.

Payment terms (lump sum, quarterly, monthly) will be discussed after selection.

Grants are to be used for ministry activities that are or will become part of parish life. A parish can be starting something new or strengthening something already in existence. The new activities/ministries that are the object of the grant can fall into various parish areas — charitable outreach, adult education, worship, evangelization, campus outreach. No legitimate area of healthy, vibrant parish life is, per se, out of bounds for consideration.

Grants will not be made for facilities improvements or simply to supplement a parish budget.

Parishes are required to do *real 'work'* as part of the grant. The grants are not simply cash awards to support struggling parishes. The grants provide financial incentive to stimulate action and effort on the part of parishes that desire to begin a cycle of renewed vibrancy.

If the grant project includes actual out of pocket costs the grant money may, of course be used to underwrite actual costs associated with beginning and operating the ministry.

Proposals for projects which involve effort on the part of the parish, but do not have direct costs attached are also acceptable. In the case of projects without direct costs the grant monies can be used to support other parts of the parish budget. Grant projects which incur direct costs are more likely to be funded than those involving effort only.

Grant Criteria

The following are the criteria used for selecting grants:

Impact

What is the probable impact of the grant on the parish? Does it address a key issue or need of the parish? Does the proposed action shore up a weakness or build upon a strength?

Breadth of Involvement

Does this grant engage a broad cross section of the parish or mission? Will this be undertaken by 2-3 persons leaving the remainder of the parish oblivious to the effort?

Probability of effective execution

Effectiveness of your plan. Convince reviewers that you can and will do what you say you will do and, having done what you have said, that there is a reasonable possibility of a desirable outcome.

Parish Need

Parishes with abundant resources will have a lower probability of receiving an award than parishes that are in difficult financial condition. Nonetheless, strong, financially healthy parishes are not exempt. This is one criterion among many.

Transferability/ Pass it forward

Applicability of results to other parishes. Ideas/proposals that offer a chance to export learning to other parishes will be viewed as desirable. Look for projects that have results that can be shared with others. New ideas or existing activities done in a better way.

Collaboration

Ideas that demonstrate connecting and collaborating with other parishes perhaps to offer greater manpower or incorporate special skills will be viewed favorably. In these instances one parish would be designated as the lead or primary parish.

Short term progress

Since the size of these grants is modest the projects they engender should also be modest. Efforts should hopefully bear initial fruit in 6 to 18 months. We do not want to wait 5 years to share some good news about your effort.

Matching funds

Applications in which parishes demonstrate the ability to multiply the impact of this grant by perhaps receiving a matching donation from a corporation or local organization or individual will be viewed favorably.

More Information

If desired you may contact **Archpriest Thomas Mueller**

414-671-5819

He can:

- provide more information about the grant process,
- offer assistance in defining your project and filling out the application
- offer suggestions for potential grant worthy projects.

Deadline for submitting applications is October 10, 2015

Appendix A - Parish Development Grant Initiative

Diocese of the Midwest, Orthodox Church in America

Past Development Grants – Partial List 2008 -2012

- Bookstore and information booth for regional summer fairs
- Feed the hungry in the neighborhood via the creation of raised “enabling gardening beds” and raising of food.
- Develop, record and place radio spots about the Orthodox faith.
- Lay Ministry of Mercy: Definition and Training
- Develop classes and welcome materials to strengthen the parish’s ability to communicate the Orthodox faith and worship

to those who enter their doors.

- Series of Orthodox Community Outreach Workshops on various topics with various speakers
- Liturgical Arts Workshop for Orthodox youth
- Capturing Stories of Parish Heritage: A Multigenerational Parish Ministry
- Small Group Ministry Pilot Project
- Teens to Teens: Project Mexico Follow Up - Information booklet & coloring book



Gardening beds to raise food



“Sharing the Hope” Class



Liturgical Arts workshop



Mall Kiosk

- Orthodox Exposure - The Mission and Message of the Church: Mall Kiosk
- Support for expanded parish spiritual development newsletter
- Expansion of after school neighborhood arts and training program to include an academic (homework assistance, reading, math) component.
- Development of a whole parish stewardship education program.