

MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT

July 2022

Submitted by Joseph Kormos

Key focus areas of the Mission committee are:

- Provide support for existing missions
- Identify effective locations for future mission plants
- Examine re-planting/renewal efforts associated with existing heritage/legacy parishes within the Diocese.
- Build a sense of mission in existing parishes in the diocese.
- Provide parish development support for existing parishes in the diocese.

Committee

The Diocesan Mission committee includes Frs. John Kennerk, Elijah Mueller, Thomas Mueller, Joel Weir, Joel Wilson and laypersons Gator Greenwill and Erik Hjelle, Larissa Thornton, David Short. Joe Kormos is facilitator and consultant to the committee.

Four online meetings of this committee were held since the last Diocesan Assembly. (Oct. 2021)

Mission Location Explorations

Mission Explorations are ongoing in:

- Aurora IL (Population 300,00 – 5 mile radius). This is an outreach of St Joseph’s parish Wheaton IL and is led by Fr Joseph Kopka.
- Muncie Hartford IN. (population 220,00 -20 mile radius) This exploration is being led by Fr Joel Weir, Dean
- South Bend IN – on hold

Special Project Funding

A request for funding assistance was received from St Stephen’s Mission in Lima OH for a stair lift device. The committee agreed to pay 75% of the cost (~ \$2800) from the Mission Projects Fund.

“Grow A Mission” Project

In January 2021 Archbishop Paul to requested this committee identify and develop priorities that turn into plans/ costs for tools, methods, services, support, assistance etc. for strengthening the Diocese’ mission program.

As a result the mission committee settled on a project called **Grow –a – Mission**¹.

Its goals:

- Build/enhance awareness within the Diocese of duty to spread the faith.

GROW A MISSION

Share the Gospel & Spread the Faith

Outreach – bringing persons to Christ – is a fundamental tenet of our Christian life and the life of every parish. One of the ways the Diocese of the Midwest supports outreach is through the planting of new “mission” communities.

EVERY PARISH CAN SUPPORT THE SPREAD OF

ORTHODOXY IN AMERICA

But How?

All too often, we struggle with the question: How do we do this? What can we do – actually do – to bring people to Christ? Here are a few simple steps to help individuals and parishes get started:

- ▶ Watch the video above and share it with your parish.
- ▶ Donate or invest financially in the growth of new missions.
- ▶ Use the resources below to learn more about mission communities.
- ▶ Initiate a conversation in your parish to discuss how you can participate.

¹ As this report is being read this project will have been recently launched via a letter to parishes.

- Encourage parishes to explore planting/spawning a new community.
- Generate conversation within the parish/among leaders causing parish to look outside itself; to be part of the diocesan community.
- Familiarize Diocesan faithful with existing missions and the need/opportunity for assistance.



The project has the following elements:

- Four minute video
- Special web landing page <https://domoca.org/grow-a-mission/> including a link to all existing missions, info for parishes to contribute funds to with OCCIF to help fund missions, information about starting a mission.
- Letter to rector and parish council lay chairs asking each parish to consider this information and identify the parish’s specific response from a variety of alternatives.
- Discussion questions for guiding parish discussions.
- Response form to be forwarded to Deans.



Parish Development Forum Online

The Diocese of the Midwest co-sponsors the Parish Development Forum (formerly the Small Parish Forum) along with the Archdiocese of Western PA and the Bulgarian Diocese.



Once again the Forum was held online in July 2022. The Forum was attended by 111 clergy and Laity representing every OCA Diocese as well as the Greek, Antiochian, and Ukrainian (US and Canada) jurisdictions. The largest group of attendees were from the Midwest Diocese.

Theme for the Forum was *“The Parish as a Vessel of Ministry: Increasing Our Capacity for Ministry”*. Bishop Daniel was the keynote speaker.

Agenda, recordings, presentations and background materials can be found at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-r_igxtWJaVb34ulxq7giwYyt9vNI0qg?usp=sharing

The 2023 Forum will be held as an in-person event.

