

Michigan Deanery Report – Diocesan Assembly, October 2024

Sts. Peter and Paul : Fr. Phillip Dage was installed as the new rector on June 1, 2024. We thank Fr. Paul Albert for his vision, efforts and hard work in planting the seeds for a “mission center” approach in revitalizing an inner city legacy church. We were able to raise enough funds and grants to supplement Sts. Peter and Paul’s Salary Compensation Package for Fr. Dage to be as a full time rector. Thank you to our Diocese, Holy Transfiguration Church in Livonia, MI, and Share the Faith for grant money gifted.

Sts. Peter and Paul celebrated the Grand Opening on September 28th, of their new kitchen facility, and dining area where they (and other church groups) serve 90 meals for people in need on a weekly basis. Fr. Dage also conducts an Akathist to the Theotokos in Spanish on Wednesdays, and looks forward in future in doing the entire liturgy in Spanish.

Holy Trinity: Fr. John York was installed as the new rector on July 1, 2024. Fr. Lev Kopistiansky retired from his ministry at the parish. We thank Fr. Lev for his services at the parish; he was awarded the jeweled cross upon his retirement. Fr. Deacon Der Ghazarian was ordained as a deacon in August, upon the Hierarchical visit from His Eminence. Fr. York is busy getting to know the parishioners and visitations of shut-ins. He added a Thursday weekly morning liturgy to the church schedule plus Festal vigils. Added Faith enrichment classes along with new inquirers instruction twice a month.

The Steering Committee appointed to HTOC has dispersed the allocated funds that were audited by the Diocese, \$7000 for seminary scholarships, \$2000 for St. Irene’s Orphanage, in Kenya. HTOC will move to the fiscal year calendar to coordinate their financial books.

St. Mark: Fr. John Baker extended the liturgical calendar to include full vigils on Saturday nights with a once a month fellowship following the service. Narthex is completed and remodeled with iconography including Creation, and six additional saints. Working on new tiles for the floor and stained glass windows for the church. They continue supporting O.D.O. They received 16 people into the church this year, and have 30 catechumens. They began a charitable (10% of operating budget) outreach fund to help people in need.

Holy Transfiguration: Fr. Michael Butler reported of over 70 new members coming into the church since January 2024! This includes new families transferring to his parish, 18 catechumens, and baptisms and chrismations. It is a good problem. Fr. Lis, who is attached to the parish is a big help for Fr. Butler. Protodeacon Jacob looks to retire at the end of the year and move from the area, he will be missed.

Fr. Butler also sponsored their Second Annual Men’s Retreat, The Cry of the Forerunner, which was well received over 50 participants. The parish allocated a \$10,000 grant to help Sts. Peter and Paul with their clergy compensation package. They are active in helping O.D.O.

Fr. Butler also suggested that the Diocese needs to look into setting up a mission, or a presence in the Brighten, MI/ Howell, MI area. The growth in population and housing is exploding, and many Orthodox Christians in that area are either going to his parish in Livonia or to Fr. Gabriel’s parish (St. Mary Magdalene) in Fenton, MI. Both parishes are experiencing enormous growth in their churches. If we can explore setting up a presence, for example, a satellite chapel, with the cooperation of Fr. Butler and Fr. Gabriel, it would

be very beneficial for our Diocese and Michigan Deanery, as well as for the Orthodox people in that area.

Holy Ascension: Fr. Joshua Frigerio is working on their new property and on the cemetery. They are looking for a Building Contractor and finalizing the building plans for the new church. Investigating on fund raising for this project. They hosted His Eminence for the first time on their patronal feast day, and His Eminence blessed the new cemetery grounds. They do daily vespers in Hillsdale, for the college students and community there at the Episcopal Church.

St. Demetrius: We completed paying off our Mortgage for the classroom building, and will celebrate the “burning of the mortgage” on our feast day with a big “tail gate” party and bon fire. Mission outreach plans for a Thanksgiving Meal/party for ClubLife (Adult Special needs group); Christmas Baskets for community, O.D.O.

Archpriest Fr. Dusan Koprivica

Dean of Michigan Deanery, Diocese of Midwest, OCA