

ST. TIKHON ARCHDIOCESAN STEWARDS

THE STEWARD

SUMMER 2012



THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA.
OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

WELCOME

The work of STAS is a way in which we can invest in the mission of the Orthodox Church across Canada through financially supporting the Archdiocese of Canada directly. This support is an above-and-beyond gift that does not replace or diminish ones regular parish stewardship of tithing, is a sacrificial investment in the mission in Canada, cultivating the present and future health, stability and growth of the Church.

STAS funding is used to provide administrative assistance to the Episcopacy, the Chancellery, Deans, and additionally in time, provide support to seminarians (in the form of debt relief), and missions, and may be developed to compensate clergy stipends, to support camps and youth programs, for missionary outreach, and so much more. If you are a STAS contributor, we thank you for your trust in this process of building up the Church in Canada. If you are not member of STAS, or even of the Archdiocese of Canada, we hope you find the work of this program a worthwhile cause to support.

We sincerely pray that the grace of the Holy Spirit blesses and directs this work, as we enter the summer months.

That as He bestowed the gifts of mercy and peace, we might also share those same gifts to those around us, just as Saint Herman did some 200 years ago.

May the Lord bless our work together.



FROM THE CHAIR.

In the past term the St. Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards operations group has slowly but steadily promoted this program in the diocese. More dedicated and strategic presentations were made that broke new ground in parishes that have never had a formal STAS presentation. This engaged and cultivated parish members who were unfamiliar with this type of national stewardship.

The committee's work produced modest but positive results with new memberships and more importantly, a better working relationship with many of the parish rectors.

Presentations made since October 2011 were

Montreal	Sts. Peter and Paul, The Sign of the Theotokos
Ottawa	Annunciation Cathedral
Toronto	Christ the Savior
Edmonton	St. Herman of Alaska
Calgary	St. Peter the Alute
White Horse	St. Nicholi of Zicha
Vancouver	Holy Resurrection, St. John of San Francisco
Langley	St. Herman of Alaska.

Much of the cost of travel to these communities by members of the STAS operations group were piggy backed with either other business trips or other Church business. This efficient planning policy allowed STAS to keep costs down reducing the "expense per STAS Steward ratio".

This winter the operations group produced a print copy of the STAS Steward newsletter. This publication featured an article on the local history of the Archdiocese, stewardship, a letter from the Chair and information about the program. The issue was mailed out to the parishes of the Archdiocese. Our original plan was to include articles from the Steward in the Messenger. In the future we will endeavor to produce an electronic issue (downloadable from the Archdiocesan and STAS websites) and publish editions for specific occasions and events.

FROM THE CHAIR.

This year members of the STAS operations group brought the concept and work of STAS to the All American Council in Seattle (Nov. 11). Subdeacon Jeremy Scratch also attended the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR) Priests and Clergy conference of the diocese of Montreal and Canada, in Toronto (Mar. 12) as part of his work with St. John of Sochava's Liturgical Supply.

What was understood by being at these events was that we all have similar financial problems and challenges (regardless of what diocese it is): Not enough money to support and enrich a greatly required central administration. (A funded administration that can provide greater clergy support, better government and legal compliance and more importantly a better sense of diocesan unity.) The solutions to these problems rest in cultivating a culture of stewardship from clergy and non-clergy (above and beyond what is already contributed).

The difference observed was that despite the same financial issues, our Archdiocese has instituted an effective program that not only accessed where the most need was but, also addressed the needs. Through the creation and cultivation of STAS, the Archdiocese could "tap into" the faithful enabling them to directly lend their support to the building up of the body of Christ in this Country. What FOS (OCA) and the ROCOR diocese are missing is voluntary human resources and the understanding that the faithful want a stable diocese (and will pledge money towards that end).



FROM THE CHAIR.

The challenge that we, Archdiocesan council, clergy and community leadership have ahead of us is to fully utilize the potential of STAS in order to meet our diocese's growing needs (debt relief for clergy, pensions for retired clergy, and the support of missions). We have achieved so much from so little (less than 2% of the faithful membership).

Through greater support at the Deanery and Rector level, imagine what could be done if 2% grew to 4% in a year.

I thank God for the intercessions of his Saints Tikhon and Arseny. I am grateful to God for the work of my fellow labours the newly ordained Fr. Matthew Francis, Fr. Dn. Jesse Isaac, and Subdn. Jeremy Scratch, for the tremendous amount of work put in over the past term. Their dedication and commitment to the Lord and this His body is truly inspirational and a blessing to me.

By the by the prayers of St. Tikhon, Archbishop Arseny, and all the saints known and unknown who ministered in our diocese.

Dn. Gregory Scratch
STAS Chair.



ARCHDIOCESAN FOCUS.

THE MYSTERIOUS ARRIVAL OF ST. NICHOLAS IN OTTAWA

Icon images of Christ, the Theotokos, and the saints are almost synonymous with Eastern Orthodox Christianity in today's world. The importance of these paintings, frescos, mosaics, and carvings, as testified by the blood of the martyrs during the 8th and 9th centuries, speak volumes about the incarnation, and about the saints who lived their lives in the Holy Spirit.

Countless records and stories have been written, describing the miracles brought about in the presence of some of these icons. Whether it be the defence of a city from a merciless enemy (Vladimir Mother of God, Moscow 1451, 1480, 1941) or the deliverance from natural disaster (St. Herman of Alaska placing an icon of the Theotokos on a beach facing a Tsunami), these icons and the most holy persons depicted (namely the Lord and his mother, but others as well) are shown to be present with us in our time of need and poverty.

In many cases these icons have suddenly or inexpressibly appeared (the Kursk root icon, discovered by a hunter at the base of a tree), or even disappeared to be rediscovered years later (Port Arthur Icon of the Theotokos), for reasons only known to God. Regardless, their appearance is never a coincidence or accident, even if their intercessions are not visible or proclaimed.

One such occurrence happened in Ottawa, at the tiny St. Nicholas Church (later becoming the present day Annunciation Cathedral). On a Sunday morning (March 25th) A taxi cab dropped off a beautiful pre-Revolutionary icon of St. Nicholas (with silver and enamelled riza). A few days later Fr. Oleg Boldireff, rector at the time received this letter:



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"29th March 1979

Dear Reverend Boldireff

A few days ago I took the liberty of sending to you by taxi an old ikon of St. Nicholas as a gift for your Ottawa Church. That ikon has been in my hands now for some time, and came to Canada some 40 years ago.

It gives me great pleasure to donate it to a church bearing the name of St. Nicholas, and I hope that you and the priests coming after you will occasionally include my wife, my children and me in prayers.

I wish you to know, and if you think it to be proper, you may inform others of that fact, that it appears that this holy ikon has miracle-making powers: Men and women praying from the depth of their heart to God through St. Nicholas in front of this ikon begging that they be cured of the affliction of alcoholism will be heard and their heart's desire will be granted.

*May the Lord bless you with many years of service in His house.
Anonymous Donor"*

No one has ever identified himself as the "Anonymous Donor", leaving this icon's past concealed. But in this time, many hundreds from



ARCHDIOCESAN FOCUS.

THE MYSTERIOUS ARRIVAL OF ST. NICHOLAS IN OTTAWA

St. Nicholas (Annunciation) and throughout Ottawa and the country, have venerated and prayed before St. Nicholas and his Icon, asking for deliverance from, and consolation for their passions, deliverance especially from addictions as was noted in the letter.

Addictions to alcohol, as well as drugs, pornography etc. can remain hidden, even from one's family. And thus the miracles and healings brought by prayers in front of this Icon, often remain known only to the recipients, and their confessors. But miracles and healings have happened. One of them is St. Nicholas blessing the search for a new home (in the present day Cathedral building), and the continued survival and health of the Cathedral community.

The arrival of this icon, although not as epic as finding an icon in the ocean (the Iveron Panagia Portaitissa icon), it is none the less a marker in the life of the Cathedral in Ottawa, becoming one of its identifying elements, not only to the community, but also around the country.

One can not imagine the Cathedral without this icon, anymore then one could not imagine the Church without such a loving and blessed intercessor as St. Nicholas.

Holy Father Nicholas, pray to God for us.

(Editors note: providently, this holy icon, was received on what would become the Altar feast of this community, The Annunciation, Mar.25th new style. And on a personal note, my father, mother (Igumen John, and Matushka Suzanne) brothers and sisters were also received into the Orthodox faith, that same week, in this very same St. Nicholas parish.)



STAS PROMOTIONS REPORT (EXCERPT).

Since STAS began there have been many changes to it's administration. ADEC and the STAS Committee have worked at improving the practical workings of this fundraising program to be more efficient and transparent. As no one member involved with STAS is a professional fundraiser, the learning curve has been substantial. Where we are now is miles above where we began. Changes such as: Archdiocesan Treasurer oversight, instituting ScotiaConnect (for monthly contributions) and STAS participation on Archdiocesan Council, have created a stable foundation for growth.

With a solid administrative foundation in place, the STAS Committee has been able to focus its efforts on growth and what is needed for growth. The following report will focus on the past years promotion and highlight what the STAS Committee believes to be required for greater saturation within the Archdiocese.

STAS Promotion (Contributions)

To accurately report on STAS promotion I will review the growth over the last two years (spring 2010 to spring 2012). This review will be of monthly contributors as this group is accessible to the STAS Committee through ScotiaConnect. In addition to this, the monthly enrollments and contributions make up the majority of the Stewards and funds in the STAS program.



STAS PROMOTIONS REPORT (EXCERPT).

STAS has recovered (from September 2011 to current) 94% of the contributor loss while increasing the average monthly donation marginally.

An important observation to make is that the STAS Committee and Treasurer of the Archdiocese did not have accurate numbers of both Stewards and donations due to the difficulties with ATB prior to September 2011. As such, there were many contributions that were not honored by the relinquishing institution and resulted in “charge backs” at a cost to the Archdiocese. While we know how many enrolled in 2010, we do not know how many were actual regular monthly contributors throughout the program

Reflections from the AAC

The STAS Committee decided to purchase the table at the AAC (\$150) because I was running the St. John of Sochava’s Liturgical Supply booth and therefore able tend to the display booth for STAS. Immediately to the left of the SJS booth was the FOS (Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards) table. I was surprised to find that no one from FOS was present at the booth at anytime other then set up and take down. The display was out of date and poorly photocopied literature was placed on the table. If this is how FOS has been promoted and managed then it is not a surprise that there has been a decline in participation and funds over the past few years. A senior Priest from the south commented to me (after asking about STAS and how it works) that STAS will grow due to it’s goal for a strong diocesan administration.

“People want stability brought from a sense of unity, of being part of something geographically bigger then their parish.” .



STAS PROMOTIONS REPORT (EXCERPT).

STAS Promotion (2013 and beyond)

Through the increased budget for STAS promotion (Spring Council 2011), STAS has established a “national identity”. For STAS to grow and meet the needs of the future a more local approach to the faithful is necessary. The STAS Committee recommends that Deanery level promotion become an integral part of this process. We propose that the Dean incorporate STAS into Deanery meetings by way of hosting a STAS Committee member to discuss and promote the program. In addition to this, we suggest that the Dean (during Deanery parish visits) meet with the local STAS Stewards in order to recognize their on going commitment to the Archdiocese.

Looking forward with the benefit of experience, STAS will grow at a rate of 5-8 new Stewards per year unless we make STAS more local. A more locally promoted program may have a growth rate of 5-8 Stewards per quarter. The STAS Committee are volunteers with existing church, family and work responsibilities. Due to this reality it is necessary to expand the “working group”. Sharing the responsibility of talking about STAS lightens the load for everyone but, also creates more frequent opportunities to enroll new members.

THE STAS COMMITTEE

The STAS committee facilitates the financial support of the administration of the Archdiocese of Canada, through communicating, mobilizing, and promoting the participation the faithful members of this diocese. The committee is made up of Archdiocesan Executive committee (ADEC):

- His Grace Bishop Irene, Administrator of the Archdiocese of Canada
- Archimandrite Alexander (Chancellor)
- Protodeacon Nazari Polotakio (Secretary)
- Nikita Lopoukhine (Treasurer)
- Deacon Gregory Scratch (Chair/Editor of the Steward)

The operations committee is the Chair,

- Subdn. Jeremy Scratch
- Deacon Jesse Isaac
- Priest Matthew Francis

15 LeBreton St. N. Ottawa, ON CANADA K1R 7H1
 Phone 613-233-7780 Fax: 613-233-1931
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