St. Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards

THE STEWARD

Special edition/ The Nativity of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ/ Theophany.

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 celebrate the Nativity in the flesh of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and His Theophany.

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.

l-r Subdn. Jeremy Scratch, Fr. Matthew Francis, Bishop Ireńeé, Dn. Gregory Scratch, Dn. Jesse Isaac

From the Chair.

As our Church gathered together for it's 16th All-American Council in Seattle, it highlighted my understanding of St. Tikhon's real work on our continent, then as a practical pastor and bishop, and now as a saint and intercessor.

I always relate a story about a service I attended some eighteen years ago in Wilkeson Washington (Holy Trinity Chapel), as a reason why his patronage is not only relevant, but also a example of what faithful life entails.

A friend and myself drove down from Vancouver for the Liturgy on Bright Monday, where we were received with warmth, love and hospitality. Of the many wonderful things about that Bright Monday, the thing that impressed me most was the fact that St. Tikhon himself consecrated this temple some 90 years earlier.

I had venerated relics of St. Tikhon, and prayed to him many times. But I felt this was my first real encounter with the Saint. That he was not some monastic wonder-worker, or clairvoyant fool for Christ from some distant land and time, but simply a bishop who did what he had to do as a Christian in trying circumstances and in an environment alien to Orthodoxy. In this case a mining town in the Pacific North West.

It was a realization for me that the labours of men and women in witnessing the saving love of the Lord, so many years ago, made a difference.

St. Tikhon and many other known and unknown saints, trusted in the Lord's providence and love, my presence that Monday was a witness to this 90 latter. A young art student, the son of a convert priest, and a 8th generation Canadian singing "Christ is Risen" in a temple consecrated by him, and built by a community he cared for.

From the Chair.

This story is not why St. Tikhon was chosen as our patron Saint, but rather it illustrates how his actions and blessings so many years ago still blesses us. His vocation was that of building, cultivating, and encouraging the faithful of this new land whether they be Russian, Ukrainian, Slovak, Canadian, or American etc.

How is this different then what we are to do today in our homes, neighbourhoods, towns and cities? The work of STAS as supported by those men and women who have given over and above the contributions to their home parishes has made a difference.

I have no illusions of greatness about the future legacy of STAS blessing our children and children's children like St. Tikhon has and continues to. But I do know that if each of us applies ourselves to building up the Church stone by stone, person by person, the Lord will bless that work as I was blessed that glorious Bright Monday.

As the STAS operations group finishes off its fourth year, I would like to thank all the faithful members of this diocese who have taken those extra steps in supporting the work of building up what was thought to be impossible so many years ago.

We might be a little short of our goals, but given the nature of this work, & the current financial climate we live in, it is nothing short of a miracle. May Lord bless each and every member of STAS and bring His peace to them in the coming year.

I would also like to commend to your prayers both Dn. Matthew Francis and Subdn. Jesse Isaac who have been ordained to the Priesthood, and Diaconate this December.

From the Chair continued...

From the Chair

Dn Matthew has been with STAS from the beginning and has worked tirelessly above and beyond, to make STAS a working and responsive operation. May God grant him, Matuska Krista and their son Basil, many years in his service as a Priest.

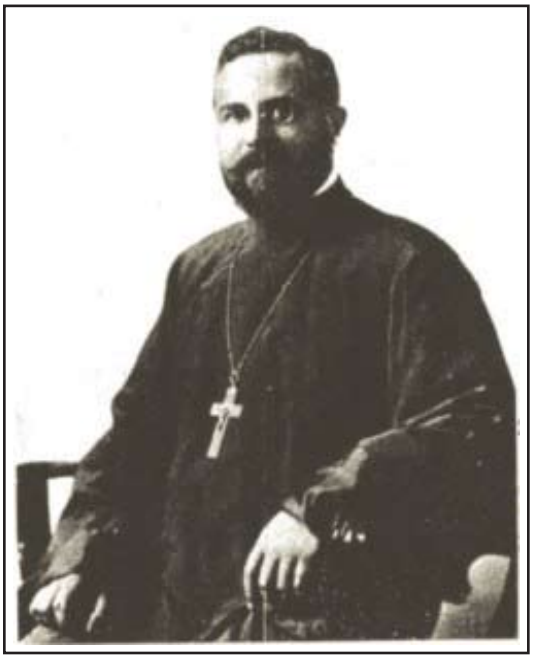
SubDn Jesse Isaac was elected as the Western represented of STAS in 2010 at the Archdiocesan Assembly. Although a late comer to the operations group he has generously given his time helping to make STAS the largest financial contributor to the Archdiocese of Canada.

As well a special thank you to Subdn. Jeremy Scratch who negotiated and facilitate the transfer of the STAS bank account this summer. His work (at times tedious, and other times frustrating) has made the functioning of STAS, more efficient. Costing us less to operate, with more flexibility in its administration. May the Lord bless him for many years.

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

Dcn. Gregory Scratch
STAS chair

Imagine, Greek atheists!
I never knew there could be such a thing!
Fr. Michael Andreas in Victoria, 1905



In this issue of the Steward, we take a look back in our history. We recall the labours of a lesser known missionary, who proclaimed the Orthodox faith in Canada. Fr. Michael Andreades had unique gifts in serving an ethnically diverse flock. Having grown up in a Phanariot Greek family in Constantinople, he had left home to study for the priesthood in St. Petersburg. When he came to America, therefore, to serve under Archbishop Tikhon, he spoke fluent Russian as well as Greek. He found this ability a great asset in his work around the northwest. Assigned at St. Spyridon's Church in Seattle, Washington, from 1905-1916, he frequently made journeys into Canada. The following story, recounted by Father Michael in the American-Russian Orthodox Messenger, recounts the earliest documented visit of an Orthodox clergyman to Victoria, British Columbia (now home to our parish of All Saints of Alaska).

September 18, 1905.
Today, I traveled to Victoria, British Columbia, for the baptism of three newborns. I conducted services in the home of Mr. Gungranis, who had constructed a small chapel for the occasion. He is quite religious, but there is another man in the household, a 70-year-old, who has no religion.

Fr. Michael Continued ...

When I arrived there, I discovered that there were some Greeks living in the community who do not believe in anything and had never had their children baptized. I refer particularly to Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Vasilatos, and others. Imagine, Greek atheists! I never knew there could be such a thing.

I called on all of them, and they received me pleasantly, but when I broached the subject of religion, they bristled and told me in no uncertain terms to cease and desist.Of course, I did not press the matter; I merely suggested that they come to services, so that they could at least hear their native language and learn something of what was so important to their fathers and grandfathers.
They promised they would come, and so they did. I conducted Sunday services in Greek at l0 am in the Gungranis household. After the Gospel, I said a few words. Some fifty people attended, including several Americans and one Creole woman. At the end of the service, I baptized the three newborns, sons of Messrs. Gungranis, Mitros, and Panagionas. That same day, I visited Mr. Vasilatos and urged him to give up the burden of sin he had been carrying and baptize his children. With the help of several parishioners, Messrs. Mitros, Gungranis, and others, we managed to prevail upon him and found some godparents for the baptism. That evening, the community gathered at the Vasilatos home and I baptized his three children (the oldest is six), taking care to explain the significance of the sacraments and the responsibilities of the godparents to the godchildren.
The Bancrofts, an uncle and his nephews, still refused my entreaties, but I hope to convince them that the children should be baptized by my next visit...

"Iz missionerskago dnevnika sviashchennika goroda Seattle," American-Russian Orthodox Messenger, April 1, 1906, pp. 136–37.

Fr. Michael continued...

Fr. Michael Andreas in Victoria

May God bless us with many more creative and tenacious missionaries like Father Michael, of blessed memory! By giving to STAS, we will work together to build up the Church, and support the continued proclamation of the Orthodox faith in Canada!

Editors note.

The witness of Orthodoxy on Vancouver Island progressed with both Greek and Ukrainian parishes forming in the subsequent years. An OCA mission was founding in 1972, All Saints of Alaska, and was served from Vancouver, by Bishop Ioasaph, Father Andrey Somow (then deacon), Father Cyril Bulashevich and others. In the mid 80's Father Morbey (former dean of the Cathedral in Ottawa) also cared for the mission. After that the mission was cared for by Fr. Lawrence Farley from St. Herman's In Langley with regular visits.

In 2002 Father Kaleeg John and his family arrived with five phone numbers (of which only two were Orthodox) and with the Lords help quickly built a strong community, expanding the ideal of Orthodox outreach and mission among other work. In 2010 All Saints of Alaska, along with the BC Deanery hosted the Archdiocesan Assembly.

This past September Fr. Larry Reinheimer was installed as rector.

All Saints of Alaska continues to grow and be a strong part of the pan-Orthodox community in Victoria, working with its sister parishes in witnessing the Lord's saving love, like Fr. Michael Andreas did so many years ago.

Where we are, and where we are going

The St. Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards have begun to fulfill the purpose for which they were created – to support the mission of the Archdiocese of Canada through sustainable, regular, "above-and-beyond" giving.

As we wind the year down , it seems a useful moment to pause and reflect on our progress with STAS, and our priorities for the future. Thanks to God's mercy, much has been achieved in 2011, but we have also not seen our initial goals met. We had for hoped 150 stewards across Canada. As of Sept. 2011, we have enrolled 140 stewards, either as monthly STAS members (95% of funds are monthly contributions) or givers of an annual contribution.

Since the formation of STAS -Aug 2007-we have raised aproxomately $145,000. We
have also operated with a budget well under $5000 in those 4 years (including the approved budget for 2012).

The first goal of STAS has been to provide support to the administration of the Archdiocese. Through God's mercy, and the prayers of St.Tikhon and Archbishop Arseny, this has come to partial fruition in the ministry of Protodeacon Nazari Polataiko as Episcopal Secretary.

As soon as the full STAS funding for the Episcopal Secretary is in place, our second goal is a stipend of $1200.00 per year ($100.00 per month.) for each of the Deans. This is a token amount intended to offset some of the travel costs (in the largest Orthodox Diocese in the world) which might be incurred in the carrying-out of the Deans ministries

Where we are, and where we are going

Many of our priests who have graduated from the American seminaries are burdened with crippling debt loads that encumbers their freedom in ministry. Indeed, financial stress is one of the major factors in why some clergy, albeit reluctantly and with heavy hearts, leave the ministry, in our mission diocese; and take up employment elsewhere in order to simply service their debt-loads and provide for their families. We as the Archdiocese should not 'set up' these choice servants of God for failure or floundering. While parishes are responsible to properly remunerate their pastors, the Archdiocese of Canada can assist in placing priests into parishes without crippling financial handicaps at the outset.

Once priorities #1 and #2 are met in sustainable giving, we believe that the support of newly ordination seminarian priests as our next focus. The support provided through STAS must be meaningful and not a "token." That is to say, the funding in the form of debt relief should substancialy affect the bottom line.

These goals may seem lofty and unrealistic. But the thought that a program based on the simple principle of "above and beyond" giving for the price of a coffee a day, could raise $140,000 in a short time, shows what can be done, if we are good stewards of the talents intrusted to us.

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 Irenee, Administrator of the Archdiocese of Canada
-Igumen Alexander
-Protodeacon Nazari Polotakio
-Nikita Lopoukhine (Treasurer)
-Deacon Gregory Scratch (Chair)

The operations committee is
The Eastern and Western representatives of STAS are:
-Subdn. Jeremy Scratch
-Deacon Jesse Isaac
-Priest Matthew Francis

St. Tikhon Archdiocesan Stewards
Archdiocese of Canada

Winter 2011 . 2012

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St. John of Sochava's Liturgical Supply, www.churchsupply.ca have been supplying Vestments, Cassocks, Riassas, service items, and devotional items to the Orthodox faithful in North- America for the past 3 and a half years. By bringing the convenience of an on-line shop and personal service we have been able to expand our products and services to meet the needs of our customers.

On behalf of St. John of Sochava's Liturgical Supply, we would like to wish to all of our customers and friends a joyous Nativity & Theophany ! With love in the Incarnate Lord,

Protodeacon Nazari Polataiko Subdeacon Jeremy Scratch