

THE MONTHLY BULLETIN OF



PANAGIA PANTOVASILISSA HOLY MOTHER QUEEN OF ALL GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

A COMMUNITY FOR ALL

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June and July 2017

By God's Grace, our community built a beautiful new church building because we wanted to grow. During the last few Sundays, we talked about church growth and I thought I should share with you this recently released study about evangelization and outreach in US Orthodox Parishes:

"Go and Make Disciples: Evangelization and Outreach in US Orthodox Parishes" Executive Summary of the Study

by Alexei Krindatch (akrindatch@aol.com)

in cooperation with: Fr. Eric Tosi, Fr. John Parker and Adam L. Roberts

An urgent need exists in Orthodox parishes in the United States for a much stronger emphasis on evangelization and outreach. The national studies conducted in 2015-2016 indicated that without paying serious attention to evangelization and missionary outreach, the Orthodox Church in the United States is likely to stagnate, lose its vibrancy and vitality, and decline in members.

The *"Go and Make Disciples: Evangelization and Outreach in US Orthodox Parishes"* is the first ever national study on evangelization and outreach practices in US Orthodox Christian Churches. It examined the strategies and practices developed by some Orthodox parishes that can be viewed as "exemplary" in their evangelization and outreach efforts. The study summarizes the experiences of these "exemplary" parishes, so that they can be adopted by other - "normal" - parish communities. The selection of both "exemplary" and "normal" parishes for the study was done by seven jurisdictions participating in this study. The examples of what is discussed in the study report include:

- ❖ How do "exemplary" parishes achieve a high degree of involvement of their members in the life of a parish;
- ❖ Four distinct features of religious education in the "exemplary" parishes;
- ❖ The "secrets" of being a parish that attracts and welcomes new members;
- ❖ Eight good practices of welcoming first-time visitors and inquirers about the Faith;
- ❖ Six "lessons" that Church leadership (bishops) can learn from the "exemplary" parishes.

The study found that few clergy in both "exemplary" and "normal" parishes place a strong emphasis on an active "search for and bringing in" new members. Instead, a majority of clergy define evangelism in the Orthodox Church as "passive" (i.e. "Come and see") evangelism. In short, most Orthodox clergy - both in "normal" and "exemplary" parishes - believe that the people will be drawn into the Orthodox Church merely by discovering the power and truth of the Church's teachings and practices and the beauty of Orthodox Liturgy. This finding suggests that - when it comes to the question of "evangelism" -

Orthodox priests rely heavily on their perceived natural attractiveness of the Orthodox Church for many religious seekers.

However, while most priests adhere to similar definitions and general approaches to evangelization, the clergy in "exemplary" and "normal" parishes differ significantly in how they practice these approaches and embody them in reality. That is, all clergy believe in the power of witnessing the Orthodox Faith through the genuine Christian lives of the

individuals and their entire parish communities, but "exemplary" parishes provide a much better example of such life than the "normal" parishes. Similarly, all clergy believe that the richness of Orthodox liturgical life lived out in a parish can attract new disciples to the Orthodox Church, but the "exemplary" parishes offer more inclusive, engaging and meaningful experience of the Orthodox worship than the "normal" parishes.

"Go and Make Disciples: Evangelization and Outreach in US Orthodox Parishes" describes in detail the distinct features of the "exemplary" parishes that make them "stronger magnets" for new members and inquirers about the Orthodox Faith than the "normal" parishes.

This study thus far was based exclusively on experiences, information, and perceptions on the part of the parish clergy. While the priests' approaches towards Orthodox evangelization and outreach are very important since they help "shape" their parish communities, the voices of the laity - both parish leaders and ordinary "people in the pews" - must be carefully

heard as well. Accordingly, the next stage of study on Orthodox evangelism and outreach in the United States will approach our lay church members: old and young, cradle Orthodox and converts to Orthodoxy, those who are very involved in their parishes and those who participate "once in a while."

"Go and Make Disciples: Evangelization and Outreach in US Orthodox Parishes" has seventeen chapters as outlined in the Table of Contents at the end of this executive summary. Of a particular interest for the church leadership could be the chapter on "Six 'Lessons' that Church Leadership Could Learn."

The following table offers an abridged overview of the most salient features of the "exemplary" parishes that distinguish them from the "normal" parishes. The table also indicates the pages of the full study report where each of these features are discussed in greater detail.

Major Distinct Features of the Parishes that Are "Exemplary" in their Evangelization and Outreach Efforts in Comparison with "Normal" Parishes

Area of church life	"Exemplary" parishes	"Normal" parishes
<p>MEMBERSHIP Demography of membership</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 32-35 of the full study report</i></p> <hr/> <p>Other distinct features of membership</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 36-39 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Much stronger presence of converts to Orthodoxy among parishioners; • ❖ Significantly higher percentage of persons with college degrees among parishioners; • ❖ Significantly higher percentage of persons who are new to the parish in the past 3 years among parishioners; • ❖ Significantly smaller percentage of senior citizens (age 65+) among parishioners; • ❖ Significantly higher percentage of households with children at home <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ High ethnic and cultural diversity among parishioners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Steady growth in number of parishioners which is typically accompanied by increasing diversity among members • ❖ More converts to Orthodoxy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Much lower percentage of converts to Orthodoxy; • ❖ Significantly lower percentage of persons with college degrees among parishioners; • ❖ Significantly lower percentage of persons who are new to the parish in the past 3 years; • ❖ Significantly higher percentage of senior citizens (age 65+); • ❖ Significantly lower percentage of households with children at home <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ More homogenous social and ethnic-cultural composition of parishioners • ❖ No significant changes in membership over period of time • ❖ Fewer converts to Orthodoxy
<p>PRIESTHOOD Demography of priesthood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Clergy have typically much longer "tenure:" i.e. they stay longer time with their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Clergy have typically much shorter "tenure:" i.e. they stay shorter time with

<p>-----</p> <p>Changes in priest's understanding of his role of a pastor and leader of a parish over period of time <i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 48-51 of the full study report</i></p>	<p>churches</p> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The original focus on "running programs and administration" shifted towards being a good teacher, preacher and a "role model" for parishioners 	<p>their churches</p> <p>-----</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ As the years go by, clergy are becoming increasingly involved in administration, management and fundraising tasks
<p>INVOLVEMENT of parishioners in the life of a parish and in evangelization and outreach <i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 52-54 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Typically, half or dominant majority of parishioners are actively involved in all aspects of a parish life • ❖ Outreach efforts and evangelization are often perceived as the way the entire parish community lives and sees itself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Relatively small "core" group of parishioners does everything in a parish • ❖ "Program approach" to evangelization: outreach efforts are typically carried out by the designated groups of parishioners
<p>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Along with religious education for children strong emphasis is given on continuing faith formation of the adult church members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Religious education focuses primarily on children and is typically limited to Sunday school

<p>RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (continued from previous page)</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 58-61 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Religious educators are "experimental." They design parish's own religious education programs, employ a variety of forms of learning about faith, and "tailor" their religious education programs to the needs of particular groups within the parish community • ❖ "Total Parish Education" approach with the double goal: a) involve everyone in a parish in continuing religious education and b) encourage as many as possible parishioners to become religious educators and teachers themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Religious educators prefer to use the standard religious education curriculum and formats developed and recommended by their respective dioceses and jurisdictions • ❖ A limited group of parishioners is involved in parish's religious education programs
<p>PARISH GOVERNANCE</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 62-67 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ "Conciliar model" is typical. The entire parish community is involved in the process of decision-making. Decisions are often made by "consensus." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The parishes are typically "run" and decisions made by a limited group of people - the members of parish councils/boards.
<p>SYSTEM OF FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY PARISHIONERS</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 67-69 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Along with "pledging/stewardship" and "tithing" models, many parishes successfully employ a "free will offering" model. In this model, parishioners are encouraged constantly to give to the best of their ability, but are not required to commit in advance any specified amount of money or percentage of their income. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Along with "pledging/stewardship" and "tithing" models, many parishes remain with "membership dues" model: a fixed amount of contributions is required to be considered a member.
<p>PROGRAMS AND MINISTRIES</p> <p>Changes in programs and ministries over</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Parishes typically embrace changes in ministries and keep trying new programs and activities even if they "don't work out" • ❖ Understanding that "nothing is carved in stone," that programs and activities come and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Parishes are more indifferent with regard to developing new programs and ministries • ❖ Parishes tend to "hold" to existing programs and activities

<p>period of time</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 71-75 of the full study report</i></p> <hr/> <p>Top two areas of ministries that are seen as the most important by the parishes</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 76-79 of the full study report</i></p>	<p>go depending on the parish's life-cycle and changing circumstances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Parishes are more likely to expand intentionally and significantly the diversity of new ministries <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Parishes pay primary attention to religious education and faith formation of church members. Parishes offer variety of religious education and faith formation programs that address different subjects and issues and are geared to the needs and interests of the various categories of church members. • ❖ The second in importance are outward oriented "social outreach and charitable work in the local community" ministries and programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Parishes typically add new or improve existing programs in only limited number of areas of a parish life <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Parishes pay primary attention to religious education and faith formation of church members. Parishes prefer to use standard and uniform formats of religious education: e.g. Sunday school for children, Bible study for adults, etc. • ❖ The second in importance are ministries and programs that focus on "social life and fellowship" within a parish
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<p>PARISH COMMUNITY:</p> <p>Relations among members <i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 86-89 of the full study report -----</i></p> <p>Attitudes towards visitors and inquirers <i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 90-95 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Parishes foster mutual care, support and practical help among parishioners. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Strong emphasis on welcoming inquirers about the Faith and first-time visitors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Parishes maintain overall atmosphere of welcoming and hospitality, but do not pay much attention to mutual care and support among parishioners <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ No particular emphasis on welcoming inquirers about the Faith and first-time visitors
<p>PARISH AND ITS LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 103-104 and 107-111 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Most parishes think that they are "well known in the local community and surrounding neighborhoods" • ❖ Majority of the parishes have made "considerable effort" to make themselves better known in their local communities • ❖ The parishes think that they are well known in their local communities primarily because of their participation in various community's events/initiatives and consistent effort to be a "good neighbor." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Minority of parishes think that they are "well known in the local community and surrounding neighborhoods" • ❖ Minority of the parishes have made "considerable effort" to make themselves better known in their local communities • ❖ The parishes think that they are known in their local communities primarily because of their "ethnic" culture and parish-based events (food-sales, festivals, fundraising events, etc.).
<p>RELATIONS WITH NON-ORTHODOX RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS</p> <p><i>Detailed discussion of this subject is on pp. 116-117 of the full study report</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ More parishes are involved in local inter-Christian relations/cooperation. • ❖ The parishes engage in a variety of inter- Christian activities: charitable work, ecumenical worship services, joint social and cultural events (picnics, concerts), work in the area of social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Fewer parishes are involved in local inter-Christian relations and cooperation. • ❖ Ecumenical cooperation is typically limited to either strictly charitable work (running homeless shelters, soup kitchens, food drives, etc.) or to

	<p>justice (addressing issues of immigration, criminal justice reform, urban education, etc.), working together on reducing crime in the neighborhoods, etc.</p>	<p>participation of the Orthodox priests in local clergy associations.</p>
<p>APPROACHES TO "HOW TO WITNESS ORTHODOX FAITH IN AMERICA" (continued on the next page)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Pay attention to personal growth in Faith and personal witnessing by everyone in parish community. When Church and Faith become more "meaningful" for parishioners, it makes them both more engaged in the parish and eager to share their Faith. • ❖ Pay attention to having a vibrant and full liturgical life (not merely formal worship services) as one of the key-elements in successful Orthodox evangelism • ❖ Serve the community you are in - not only your own people. Be present in multiple settings/venues in the local community and offer your own "parish space" for community events and initiatives. <p>❖ Make Orthodoxy "understandable" for the others. Make a conscious effort to disassociate the image of the Orthodox Church as being "ethnic church" and, instead, try to make it more "approachable" for the others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ❖ Orthodox Christians should hold firm to Orthodox Faith and traditions; be proud of them and be willing to explain them to "others," when (and if) they find their way to Orthodox Church; • ❖ Witnessing Orthodox Faith to America can simply be done by setting a personal example of being a good Orthodox Christian and living faithful life

MEET YOUR PARISH



Elena Chivu

She was born in a small village in Teleorman, the south region of Romania on August 15th, 1943. It was during the World War II when her father had fallen when she was only 6 months old. She is the youngest daughter of the 3 sisters. She was told by her mother that, when her father left to war, he held her in his arms and had envisioned he will never see her again. It was a sad truth. Her mother had to raise 3 young girls by herself during the post war period and it was not easy. Elena had a very tough childhood.

Even though she was born on one of the biggest celebrations of Orthodoxy, August 15th, the day of Assumption her name is not Maria, just simply because she had an older sister named Maria.

Elena's mother raised her children to work hard and never missed one single church service until she died. Elena went to elementary and middle school in her own village. She graduated from high school and got married. Later on she became an accountant and pursued this career during communism until retirement in 1990.

She has two daughters: Florina and Mihaela. Florina lives in Romania and has two children.

The other daughter is Mihaela Cornea, member of our parish. Elena has four grandchildren. She started to come and visit her daughter Mihaela in United States since 2004, when Ana Maria, her granddaughter was born.

She basically raised her both grandchildren: Ana Maria and Andrei here.

It was not until long time ago when Andrei was asked who is his mother and he would answer: grandma.

Elena goes and visits her other daughter back in Romania often and she still misses the other two grandchildren very much.

Elena comes to church and enjoys every single service event though she can not understand any word in English. As she says: there is one God and one language: the love from God.



Sonia Bratu

I was born in a small town situated in the foothills of the mountains in Romania on February 24th, 1937. My parents, Nicolae and Elisabeta, had seven children; I was the sixth. I grew up in a loving and hardworking family. My father was a farmer, and our family's main income was raising animals and selling cheese and other animal products.

When I was a teenager, one of the best seamstresses in the region, Anisoara Godeanu, taught me to sew professionally. Sewing became not just a very practical skill, but also my biggest hobby. In 1954, with the help of my parents, I was able to open my own home-based sewing business. Soon after that, my work became well-known in the region. Over the years, I created many beautiful outfits for my clients and my family, and I had the privilege to teach those skills to other young ladies.

In the early 70s, I rose to the challenge of directing a small factory for candles and wax products. Under my leadership, the factory expanded and started producing special occasion candles, which were internationally exported.

I met my future husband, Gheorghe Bratu, when I was sixteen years old, at one of the local dancing events. We dated for six years, and in 1958 we were married. Gheorghe and I were blessed with a son, Adrian, and a daughter, Aurelia. They gave us four wonderful grandchildren: Andra, Matei, Silvia, and Laura.

My daughter, Aurelia, and her husband, Vlad Calin Radulescu, immigrated to the USA in 1994, and soon after that my husband and I retired. After our granddaughters were born, Gheorghe and I travelled every year to the US to spend more time with them. In 2006, my husband's health status started to decline, and I dedicated all of my time to his care until 2008, when he passed away. Several months after my husband's passing, I restarted my yearly journey to the US. Every year I spend six months of the year with my daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughters.

Even though I do not speak English, I never get bored here. I take daily walks, I read, I watch movies on Romanian TV, and I love cooking for my family.

Every day I thank God for allowing me to travel at my age, and for being part of this wonderful church family.

Worship and Church Events Schedule

Sunday, June 4th - Pentecost

Sts. Mary and Martha
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Acts 2:1-11;
Gospel: John 7:37-52; 8:12;
Kneeling prayers of Pentecost
Memorial Service and lunch – Smither Family

Monday, June 5th – Friday, June 9th

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – Vacation Church School

Sunday, June 11th – Sunday of All Saints

Sts. Bartholomew and Barnabas
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Acts 11:19-30;
Gospel: Matthew 10:32-33,37-38; 19:27-30
Memorial Service and Lunch by Collis Family for
Dimitri Veras

Monday, June 12th – Wednesday, June 28th – Apostle's Fast

Wednesday, June 14th

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – Office Hours
7:00 pm – Parish Council Meeting

Thursday, June 15th

6:00 – 9:00 pm – Office Hours

Sunday, June 18th – 2nd Sunday of Matthew

Leontios, Hypatios & Theoduolos, the Martyrs of
Syria
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Romans 2:10-16;
Gospel: Matthew 4:18-23

Agape with birthday cake for June

Sunday, June 25th – 3rd Sunday of Matthew

St. Prokopios the New Martyr; Righteous Febronia
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Romans 5:1-10;
Gospel: Matthew 6:22-33
Agape

Sunday, July 2nd – 4th Sunday of Matthew

St. Juvenal, Patriarch of Jerusalem
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Hebrews 9:1-7;
Matthew 8:5-13
Agape

Sunday, July 9th – 5th Sunday of Matthew

St. Pancratios; St. Dionysios
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Romans 10:1-10;
Matthew 8:28-34; 9:1
Agape – Mashni Family

Sunday, July 16th – Sunday of the Holy Fathers

St. Athenogenes; St. Julia
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Titus 3:8-15;
Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19
Agape with birthday cake for July

Sunday, July 23rd – 7th Sunday of Matthew

St. Phocas; Prophet Ezekiel
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: Romans 15:1-7;
Gospel: Matthew 9:27-35
Agape

Sunday, July 30th – 8th Sunday of Matthew

Sts. Silas and Silvanos; St. Julitta
10:00 am – Holy Liturgy: Epistle: 1 Corinthians
1:10-17; Gospel: Matthew 14:14-22
Agape

FINANCIAL REPORT

	April	January - April
Income	\$ 17,207	\$ 70,773
Expenses	\$ 18,125	\$ 70,537
Total	\$ 918	\$ 236

SUNDAY AGAPE

Many thanks to the Cornea, Moga, Iancu, Roman and Sawaya Families for offering the agape in April! Here is the agape sign-up list for the **next 3 months**.

Please let Rita Watts or Pam Cox know when you could give the agape. Thank you very much!

Sunday	Families signed-up to offer the Agape
June 4	
June 11	
June 18	
June 25	
July 2	
July 9	<i>Mashni</i>
July 16	
July 23	
July 30	
August 6	
August 13	
August 20	
August 27	<i>Opening of the Doors of the New Church</i>

Useful Websites:

www.goclex.org

<http://www.detroit.goarch.org>

<http://www.goarch.org>

<http://www.ancientfaith.com>

Useful Apps

Ancient Faith Radio APP

GOARCH Daily Readings APP

Pray Always APP

The Official Door Opening of our New Church

...will take place on the weekend of **Saturday, August 26th** and **Sunday, August 27th**. Please save the date for this special event in the life of our community!

Messages and Ads for Door Opening Festivities Booklet

A booklet will be published with the occasion of the Door Opening Festivities of our new church on August 26/27. Please email your message or ad to Delores Minor at deminor319@aol.com

The prices are: \$100 for a full page; \$50 for a half page or \$25 for an "In memory of" line.

Tiles for Sale

If you like the tiles in our new church, you could buy some...No, not from the ones already installed in the church, but from the leftover ones. Please contact Ken Kiriapoulos about this.

Family ...
the link to our past,
the bridge to our future.

Please join us as we
celebrate (a little early) our
beloved mother, grandmother
and now greatgrandmother
Sat., July 29, 2017 - 5:30 pm
Holy Trinity Cathedral
1200 Robert E. Lee Blvd
New Orleans, Louisiana

PLEASE NO GIFTS

Mary (Vathis) Pepps
Born: September 14, 1917
In Texarkana, Arkansas

**100
Years**

"old age is a crown of dignity,
it is found in the ways of
righteousness."
PROVERBS 16:29



RSVP to Harriet (504) 941-7681 (home) or (859) 312-2795 (cell) or dedousis@juno.com (email)



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