



14 August 2020

Dear Friends and Fathers,

Greetings from the OTSA Executive Committee.

We have a few important and interesting projects underway to which we want to draw your attention, and an update regarding the annual fall meeting.

1. **The Pandemic and Holy Communion Survey:** As the country moves in fits and starts to various stages of opening, our Orthodox Churches have had to reflect on and make decisions about the manner of worship under the circumstances of Covid-19. There has been some diversity of thought about what is best, and some diversity of practice. OTSA teamed together with Alexei D. Krindatch, former Research Coordinator for the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America, to conduct a survey of Orthodox clergy regarding Communion distribution practices and the reality of parish life during the pandemic. This survey went out to all the clergy of Orthodox Churches that are members of the Assembly of Bishops, and we had an excellent response with over 600 clergy participating. Both the full report and the executive summary of the survey and report, entitled “Holy Communion during the Pandemic in American Orthodox Parishes” can be accessed and downloaded here:  
<https://orthodoxreality.org/coronavirus-and-american-orthodox-parishes/>
2. **The Pandemic and Holy Communion Webinar:** OTSA is also co-sponsoring a symposium on the topic of the survey with presentations by both scientists and theologians. The webinar, **The Coronavirus (Covid-19) and Communion Practice in the Orthodox Church** will occur on **Saturday, August 22 from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm (EST)**. Here is the registration link:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_48SgGf1IRxy-9ZpNE-Xc\\_A](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_48SgGf1IRxy-9ZpNE-Xc_A)  
 Please share and distribute the attached PDF flyer.
3. **The Church and the Academy blog project:** As reported in our recent update from July 13, we are initiating a blog project reflecting on issues of academic freedom affecting Orthodox educators and writers. We encourage members to submit short essays (<1000 words) on the topic, to be posted on the OTSA web site and on Public Orthodoxy. While the editor would know the authors of these blog posts, the author’s identity could be confidential if requested in order to enable honest expression. **Please submit your essay by Sept. 1, 2020** to [secretary@otsamerica.org](mailto:secretary@otsamerica.org).

4. **Update on Annual Fall Meeting 2020: The speaker for the Florovsky Lecture will be Fr. Michael Plekon, Ph.D.,** Professor Emeritus, Sociology, Religion and Culture, The City University of New York-Baruch College. The title of the lecture is “Community as Church, Church as Community: Death and Resurrection in the Parish Today.”

In addition, we would like to remind you about the details of the meeting: **Date: Nov. 12-14, 2020**, Thursday afternoon through Saturday afternoon. Location: Virtual, via ZOOM. This year’s theme is Theological Anthropology, and we encourage you to submit a proposal for a paper or a panel presentation that explores this theme. The topic lends itself to a wide range of studies, including- but not limited to- consideration of issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and social and/or economic status.

Requirements for the proposals for the papers and panels include an abstract of less than 250 words and an abbreviated CV of the presenter(s). Presenters have 20 minutes to give their paper and an additional 10 minutes for Q&A. **The deadline for proposals is Sept. 15, 2020.** Please send the proposals to the OTSA secretary, Helen Theodoropoulos, at [secretary@otsamerica.org](mailto:secretary@otsamerica.org) or [helen60076@yahoo.com](mailto:helen60076@yahoo.com).

5. We would like recognize and highlight new publications by our members. Please send to the secretary information about recently published volumes and we will share it with our membership.
6. We have several members for whom contact information is missing or no longer active. We would be very appreciative of our members’ assistance in locating current contact information for these “lost” members. If you have emails or other contact information about any of the following members, please send the information to the OTSA secretary, [secretary@otsamerica.org](mailto:secretary@otsamerica.org). These are the members for whom we do not have current contact information:
  - a. Fernando Arzola
  - b. Fr. David Eckley
  - c. Fr. Nick Triantifilou
  - d. Richard Barrett
  - e. Fr. Oliver Herbel
  - f. Fr. Michael Massouh
  - g. Fr. Gregory Wingenbach
  - h. Fr. Stephen Plumlee
7. **DUES: Please take a few minutes to submit your dues.** We are operating at a deficit, and your contribution will make a difference. You can pay online at <https://www.otsamerica.org/pay-dues/>. If you prefer, you can pay by check; please contact our Treasurer, Fr. Gabriel Rochelle, for further information: [gabrielcroch@aol.com](mailto:gabrielcroch@aol.com).
8. Please encourage colleagues and friends who meet our membership criteria to apply for OTSA membership. We are initiating new projects, energizing our relationship with the episcopacy, and interfacing more actively with Orthodox scholars here and throughout the world, and this is the perfect time for new members to find value in our work and add to it.

9. Finally, we remember with abiding respect and affection these members who have recently reposed:

**Fr. Stanley Harakas (1/2020).** Fr Harakas was a well-known author offering several publications on Orthodox ethics and theology. For decades, beginning in 1966, he was professor of theology, with a specialty in ethics, at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, and for many years also served there and at Hellenic College as Dean. In addition, Fr. Stanley pastored several parishes in Massachusettes and Florida.

**Fr. Anthony Coniaris (3/2020).** Fr. Coniaris pastored St Mary's Greek Orthodox Church in Minneapolis for 39 years. He founded Light and Life Publishing Co. for the publication and distribution of Orthodox materials, was a prolific and popular writer who authored over 75 books pamphets, and was Adjunct Professor of Homiletics at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Seminary.

**Fr. Joseph Allen (8/2020).** Fr. Joe Allen was director of Theological and Pastoral Education of the Antiochian Archdiocese, and founder of the Antiochian House of Studies. He taught Pastoral Theology at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology and St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary. He authored several books on Orthodox theology and, for over 50 years, pastored St. Anthony Church in Bergenfield, New Jersey.

May their memory be eternal!

Respectfully submitted,

Teva Regule, PhD, OTSA President

Helen Creticos Theodoropoulos, PhD, OTSA Secretary