

2018 Diocesan Assembly: Jacob's Well Report

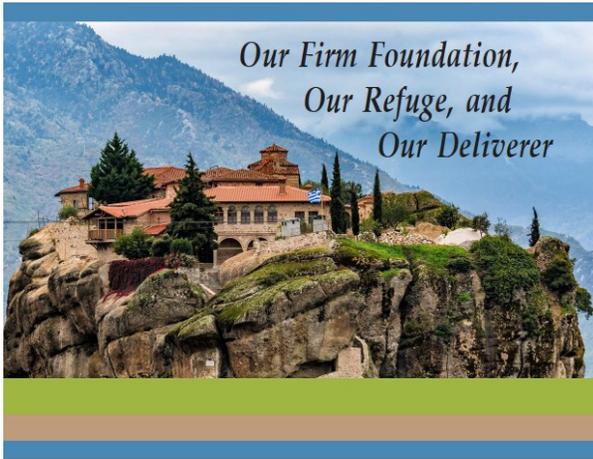
by Fr. John Shimchick

The Fall issue of *Jacob's Well* is completed and should arrive in the mail before the Diocesan Assembly (you can also view it online at: nynjoca.org/files/publications/Jacobs_Well/2018/Fall_2018_Jacob_Well.pdf). Its theme emerged from a conversation with, Nathan Hoppe, the OCMC missionary to Albania,

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who discussed the difficulties of establishing (or re-establishing a Church and community) where the spiritual and moral foundations have been destroyed. The challenge, of course, is not just to those in Albania, but for all of us who face the realization that the only foundation can be Jesus Christ and yet realize the continual struggle and temptations to build upon so many competing alternatives (some of which are inherent within Orthodoxy itself, but not really about Christ).

This issue highlights events within our Diocese and parishes and provides many other features. It offers reflections of several significant pastoral ministries: Fr. Paul Shafran, and the departed priests: Fr. Stephen Mack and Fr. John Nehrebecki. We also note the retirement of Fr. Steven Belonick who served several Diocesan parishes and worked at St. Vladimir's Seminary. He and his wife, Deborah, formed the original vision of *Jacob's Well* and both were its editors. They imagined a vehicle, as the Well in the Gospel story of the Samaritan

woman, which would provide a meeting-place for the distribution of news, but — more important — be the site for an ongoing encounter with Jesus Christ.

This issue – the last I will edit – is dedicated to Fr. Steven and Deborah in appreciation for the vision of what a Diocesan publication could be and for their long friendship and encouragement.

I welcome Fr. Matthew Brown as our new editor and value his energy and creativity. Please send all future materials to him at:

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