

Beyond the Plateau

Sharing the Good News and Growing the Parish

nynjoca.org
Vol 3 / No. 2

QUICK FACTS:

Date founded:
2010

Services held at:
All Saints Catholic Church
345 Ridge Road, Lansing, NY

Priest:
Fr. Joel Brady
St. Tikhon's Seminary
Class of 2015

Website:
www.holyapostleslansing.org

FOCUS ON DIOCESAN MISSIONS: Holy Apostles Mission, Lansing, NY

There are a number of ways to start a mission, but the best way is for a group of people in an existing parish who live in a particular area to birth a new mission parish, whose core population they will constitute. This is exactly how Holy Apostles Orthodox Mission was born in 2010, birthed from her mother parish of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Endicott, NY.

History of the Mission

Often, many parishioners live far from the parish center. Endicott and the greater Ithaca area are nearly 40 miles apart – an hour's drive. The commute between the two, especially in inclement weather, can be challenging. Thus began discussions within SS. Peter and Paul Church to establish a mission in the greater Ithaca area. Since there is already a Greek Orthodox parish in Ithaca proper, a place was secured north of Ithaca: All Saints Roman Catholic Church in Lansing had an unused older church building. Holy Apostles Mission began celebrating the Divine Services in summer 2010, with a rotating schedule of clergy, including numerous visits by the Dean, Fr. Alexey Karlgut, soon followed by the part-time assignment of Fr. Timothy Holowatch and then, in 2011, of Fr. James Worthington as the mission's first full-time priest.

Outreach Ministries Begin

From nearly the beginning, the small mission was characterized by an active and full year-round liturgical life and OCF college-student outreach. It is true that no parish can rely primarily on college students to ensure its financial stability or fill its ranks, because most students have limited funds and will move away after they graduate. However, equipping college students for the rigors and the social, moral, and spiritual challenges of that season of their lives – and forming them in the Faith for the rest of their lives – are among the most important tasks any parish in a college town can undertake. Daily services, often both Matins and Vespers, are common at Holy Apostles. Fr. James and later Fr. Joel would frequently be found on the Cornell campus, and students began to make their way to services on a regular basis. The mission runs an ongoing adult education series, "*Know Your Faith*," and as part of that series hosts at least three annual major guest-speaker events, featuring hierarchs, clergy, monastics, and lay writers and scholars. His Eminence Archbishop Alexander of the South gave a presentation to the Cornell OCF in 2015 on the writings of St. Dionysius the Areopagite. Other recent topics include Orthodox perspectives on issues such as food (Rita Madden, who flew all the way from Hawaii), trade unions (Fr. David Garretson), and the environment (Fr. Terry Baz).



Community outreach began early with participation in the Lansing Food Pantry and other forms of charitable work. In 2012, the myrrh-streaming Iveron “Hawaiian” Icon made a visit, and by 2013, the parish was receiving the first of three years of financial support from the OCA’s Church Planting Grant. In 2014, a new iconostas was installed, the mission celebrated its first baptism, and the community could count 12 children among its members. By Theophany of 2016, the Great Blessing of Waters had

become a yearly celebration at Cayuga Lake. That same year, the number of communicants had surpassed 70; and the mission sent its first full-time seminarian to St. Tikhon’s Seminary, Reader Robert West, now in the final year of his Master of Divinity program.

Transition and the Future

In 2017, the newly ordained Fr. Joel Brady became the new priest of Holy Apostles Mission, and Father and his wife, Matushka Meg, welcomed their son Herman (photo, above, of Herman’s baptism in the mission). Holy Apostles has produced its first diaconal vocation with the ordination of Deacon Ivan Bazarov, who was received into the Orthodox Faith at Holy Apostles years ago and later completed the Diaconal Formation Program of St. Tikhon’s Seminary (picture below: Archbishop Michael, Dn. Ivan, Matushka Natalya, and the Bazarov family).

As 2018 draws to a close, the mission finds itself with some exciting challenges. Building funds have grown to over \$80,000, and the rent charged for their worship space has more than tripled, from under \$400 to nearly \$1,400 per month. Plans are underway to find and purchase 3 acres of land within the local area and to secure the services of an architect-engineering firm. Committees are being formed to look into this as well as to investigate possible pre-fabricated construction and prospective lending sources. In the meantime, Holy Apostles Mission continues to worship at All Saints Roman Catholic Church, a space they are rapidly filling, and welcomes all visitors! They are grateful to Archbishop Michael and our Diocese for the blessing given them to start the mission, for the substantial material and prayerful support of the Diocese, the OCA, and all their benefactors over the last 8 years, and to Almighty GOD for His unending faithfulness and bounties!

