

**Deanery Report – Southeastern Deanery
Diocesan Assembly – June 24 – June 26, 2008 – Dallas, Texas**

ALABAMA

St. Simeon the New Theologian – Birmingham - Things are well at St. Symeon's in Birmingham, thanks and glory to God for all things! Vespers, Matins and Divine Liturgy are served each Lord's Day. They report their best attendance ever for Pascha and Palm Sunday and Bright Monday Liturgies. They have 60 children in the community. Their youth keep the Tomb Vigil on Holy Friday and also do a "Psalm-a-Thon" - a Psalm-reading vigil at the church in the Fall - taking pledges for the amount of Psalms read, as a church fundraiser and great spiritual experience for our youth. Currently there are 3 catechumens and 3 inquirers. St. Symeon's started a mission outreach in Montgomery, AL in the summer of 2007, led by two families from their community. Read below to see their progress.

St. Gregory the Great – Tuscaloosa – After these long 19 years in a rented building, St. Gregory the Great was forced out to make way for progress ... "Condominiums!!" The Church had heard of the sale and began looking for a new location about 18 months ago. St. Gregory's met for six months at a small Catholic Church down town, while looking for land or a building. Due to the high cost of land and building downtown, St. Gregory was forced to look outside of the down town area. A building, consisting of 6,557 sq. feet - and 3 acres of land, was purchased in March of this year. The building consists of a temporary Chapel, education classrooms, a Library, a soon-to-be kitchen, a combined fellowship and office space, room for the sisterhood's bookstore and a large space for a permanent worship space. St. Gregory received 2 souls to the Church this Pascha, with an additional Catechumen who will be received later this year. Recently, a Greek family who had begun visiting St. Gregory's may, through prayers and by God's grace, continue to be a part of our community. As you can imagine there is much work left to do in Our Lord's Vineyard. Through the prayers of the Diocesan faithful and the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, it will be done! His Church will continue to grow.

St. Luke Mission - Anniston – Recently the mission, under the leadership of soon-to-be ordained priest Fr. Basil Henry and his wife Cana (Maria) – in cooperation with the bold and unstoppable work of Dr. Carla Thomas and her family, have taken not a giant step but a complete leap of faith. They have acquired two magnificent Tudor stone mansions in central Anniston with the intent of having one (Hamilton House) as the mission proper, the medical facilities of Dr. Carla and the Law offices of Cleo Thomas – her husband. The complete vision of a Conference/Retreat Center is very vivid and probable in the not too distant future. Look out world...Anniston is on the move! As Dr. Carla asked one time, "Fr. is it okay to have more catechumens than Orthodox faithful? Well...NOT REALLY!!...but it won't be like that for long!

Montgomery Mission – Chaplain Timothy Ullman, Maxwell AFB, is most diligently serving several faithful families in the Montgomery area. They are presently meeting in a local Episcopal church, graciously offered for their services. Fr. Timothy described a rather healthy Holy Week for the community, and their willingness and diligence to form an OCA mission in Montgomery with several enthusiastic families, good leadership and healthy pedigree (see Birmingham).

GEORGIA

St. Innocent – Macon – Recent Events: Iconography workshop; Konevets Quartet Music Program.

Planned Events: October 2008: Frederica Mathews-Greene speaking at St. Innocent with possible work in the Metro Atlanta area as well.

26 faithful actually support the parish; about 30 - 40 attend services monthly. They have had four baptisms/chrisinations and now have four catechumens. A Baptist minister and his family attend and expect to join after they separate from their church. His strength is Social Work and may possibly pursue ordination in the future. The main objective for St. Innocent parish is to catechize those who live a long distance from the Church and can't attend many services or classes. They are holding on financially.

They have an active Prison Ministry from Fr. Chris, which is dedicated to St. John Maximovitch. One of the men served by the ministry will be released to a Transitional Center in Macon and begin to attend services at St. Innocent. They have an OCF chapter at Mercer University which was just approved. They will be meeting soon and picking the patron Saint for the chapter and are scheduled for a sub-chapter at Wesleyan College also.

St. John the Wonderworker - Atlanta – They have seen great growth this year. They have 14 new members; having lost a few families, their growth fortunately is steady. Many have come as a result of viewing their Internet Web Site and learning about the church ... before they even arrive. Their wonderful ministry of the Loaves and Fishes Food Program has a brand new kitchen to serve the poor... and also the church's regular gatherings. Every day - Monday through Friday - they are blessed to feed 60 to 80 men and women ... often it is a hot meal. They received a very nice donation from the IOCC recently; and many Orthodox in the city have helped operate their program on a daily basis. At Christmas time they gave boxes of food and toys to over 80 families and a total of 600 children received a new toy. They continue to have their now "Traditional" Christmas Day Meal for the homeless; and about 150 Orthodox men and women from all over the city helped serve the meal. Their Lenten book this year was THE PATH OF SALVATION which they diligently studied as a parish 'podvig'. Bill (Theophan) Buck, their seminary student at St. Tikhon's, was ordained to the diaconate in February.

St. Mary of Egypt – Norcross – This vibrant and forward-looking community is working out plans for their future growth and physical presence in Norcross. The financial needs for their eventual facilities are what they are presently working on. This is not such an easily handled task, for there are several aspects to the present state of St. Mary of Egypt. The community serves the Missions in Columbus, Ga. and Anniston, Al. The present team of Frs. Peter and Cyprian, alongside Deacons Lazarus and Basil are stretched thin at times. Very soon, almost immediately in fact, the "new" Priest Basil will be serving in and moving to Anniston. There is an anticipation that Fr. Thomas Alessandroni and his family will be moving into the Northeast Atlanta area reasonably soon. There is a great desire for St. Mary's to take on the training of one other Deacon...maybe two?

SMEOCA [St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church in America] has established herself as a very functional Orthodox Christian Counseling Center under the most capable direction of Ms. Megan Brightwell, and we are anticipating that Fr. Thomas's experience in that area will enhance the service SMEOCA provides to the Orthodox and Christian faithful in the Metro Atlanta area. With an extremely diverse community of Russian, Serbian, Romanian and "upgraded" (aka 'convert') faithful in our midst, St. Mary's is looking very longingly at a rather varied and comprehensive future. With an exceptional mix of 'elders,' seasoned faithful, young families, children and newcomers; St. Mary of Egypt is on the threshold of wonderful things.

St. Mary Magdalene - Rincon – This past year they received 3 people into the Catechumenate, bringing their membership to 4 Catechumens, 44 adult pledging members and 9 children. Last year saw 3 more of their men deployed to Iraq, bringing the total of four men on duty. As a result, each Sunday the members bring items for the men; and on Mondays they ship each one of them a full box of odds and ends, along with letters and cards. They have now done this for over a year.

Last June 3rd their new Temple was consecrated by Archbishop Dmitri, and the relics of St. Alexander of Rome were placed within the new altar. Last July 22nd, for their parish feast day picnic, they once again rented a 19 foot tall waterslide called "The Big Kahuna"... to the delight of children and parents. Last November, with the blessing of His Eminence, Fr. James (Bohlman) received one of their laymen into monastic life as the Riasophore Job. Since then Fr. James has held ongoing monastic formation classes for Br. Job, who also accompanies Fr. James to the Monastery of Sts. Mary and Martha, where Fr. James goes once a month to give Spiritual Direction.

This past Sunday of Orthodoxy the mission was granted Parish status.

St. John Chrysostom Mission – Columbus – These faithful folks continue to meet weekly with Reader Services and twice a month, when available, Fr. Cyprian serves the mission. They have several inquirers and catechumens adding life and energy to this mission. The tonsured Reader Joseph Rice leads the mission.

Sts. Constantine and Helen Mission – The mission is comprised of around a dozen pilgrims. They own two acres of land with a refurbished double-wide which enables them to have their own Chapel, kitchen, fellowship room and two classrooms/meeting rooms. They continue to meet on Wednesday and Saturday evenings and on Sundays for Typica, as well as monthly visits from Fr. James and Deacon Vassily from Rincon.

Dahlonge Mission Station – These faithful families meet for lay services. They regularly attend services in Toccoa, Norcross or Atlanta.

St. Timothy – Toccoa – This community seems on the verge of great things. Fr. Marcus, much closer than Fr. Peter, has the newly graduated and ordained Fr. Nikolai Miletkov and his family at St. John of the Ladder. Fr. Nikolai is poised, after some seasoning, to begin regularly serving St. Timothy. For now, Fr. Jacob Kulp continues to pastor this group. It may very well be that St. Timothy Mission, because of proximity and access, can be the newest 'member' of the Carolina Deanery; yet another example of the love and cooperation in our wonderful Diocese.