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Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
EASTERN AMERICAN DIOCESAN MUSIC COMMITTEE

July 16, 2010

V. Rev. Victor Potapov
Executive Director
Fund for Assistance to
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
75 East 93rd Street
New York, NY 10128

Dear Father Victor:

On behalf of the Eastern American Diocesan Music Commission (EADMC), thank you for advocating our work through support of our educational endeavors. Now that the final accounting has been completed, I am pleased to submit the attached report on our liturgical music seminar, held this past May in Washington D.C.

As ever, asking your continued support of and prayers for our work, which we hope will be fruitful and God-pleasing.

In Christ's love,

Elizabeth A. Ledkovsky
Chairwoman, EADMC

Chairperson: Elizabeth A. Ledkovsky – www.rocm.org Synodal Cathedral, NYC

Members: Rev. George Johnson – Holy Apostles Church, Beltsville, MD
Jared Brewer & Yuri Petcherkin – St. John the Baptist Cathedral, Washington, D.C.
Eugenia Temidis – Holy Myrrhbearers Women's Choir, Eastern American Diocese, NY

www.eadiocese.org/MusicComm/en.musicindex.htm

Project Report

by Elizabeth A. Ledkovsky, EADMC Chairwoman

Sing Ye With Understanding!

Interactive Seminar I: **Church Choir Fundamentals in the Russian Tradition**

Summary

Hosted by St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Washington D.C. and organized by the members of the Eastern American Diocesan Music Committee, this seminar was held May 28 – 29, 2010. Although it was Memorial Day weekend, the program attracted thirty registrants from as far south as Atlanta and as far north as Montreal. The vast majority of participants were active members of ROCOR Eastern American Diocese parishes, but a few were from other dioceses and/or jurisdictions, namely the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church of American (OCA). The program was conducted over two days at the cathedral hall, led by EADMC members and other faculty. Thanks in good part to the generosity of the Fund for Assistance, the project was financially viable as well as programmatically successful.

Program

The seminar's predominant activities were interactive in nature. Participants were encouraged to "learn by doing" in hands-on workshops. After opening prayers in the Cathedral, the seminar's program began with Inna Petcherkin's workshop, *Basic Vocal Technique for Choral Singers*. Mrs. Petcherkin supplemented her group exercises by providing all those who requested it with private instruction. The vocal workshop was followed by choral warm-ups and the first of several sessions given by Maestro Yuri Petcherkin, on *Practical Methods of Choir Directing*. During these sessions, in addition to receiving lessons and information on basic technique, participants were able to work with the singers and receive constructive feedback and individualized instruction. Mr. Petcherkin personally provided such instruction throughout the two-day program, and further supplemented it with demonstration and commentary to those who stayed in Washington to sing divine services that weekend. A final workshop was led by choir directors Jared Brewed and Eugenia Temidis: *Practical Methods for Arranging Liturgical Music*. This session provided participants with an opportunity to experience various approaches to kliros singing, in recognition of the fact that parishes face varying circumstances with regard to musical resources and personnel.

The interactive workshops were supplemented by several lectures. On Friday, EADMC Chairwoman Elizabeth Ledkovsky gave a talk entitled *Multiplying Talents: The Church Singer's Privileges & Responsibilities*, and Dr. Natalia Zelensky presented a lecture, giving a *Historical Survey of Russian Liturgical Music in Russia & Abroad*, a fascinating and well-crafted overview of

more than 1000 years of church music. The following day, Archpriest George Johnson gave an informal talk in which he echoed Chairwoman Ledkovsky's sentiments, discussing the church musician's role from a priestly perspective. Throughout, the St. John's sisterhood provided excellent hospitality, with generous meals and a constant flow of snacks, water, lemonade, and, most importantly, tea and coffee. A number of volunteers donated their time and talents. In addition, the diocesan media office staff, which had assisted greatly with marketing and design of materials for the event, arrived on Saturday, to provide further support and publicity.

Seminar participants were surveyed at the end of the program. They were unanimous in their praise of the overall program and of the specific workshops and lectures. There was a general consensus that basic education and continued convocation of church musicians is both necessary and vital to the continued development of church musicians, both as individuals, and collectively as drivers of parish life. One specific request for an English-language/mission-focused seminar emerged, and the EADMC is exploring the feasibility of conducting such an event late this year.

The EADMC has used some of this income to establish its own bank account and to incorporate as a 501(c)(3) registered non-profit.

Conclusion

This 'maiden voyage' of the EADMC in its mission to improve the knowledge and skills of diocesan church musicians and contribute to better parish life throughout the diocese may be viewed as an unmitigated success. The committee members are grateful to the Fund for Assistance for its administration's faith in us, and optimistic that future endeavors may also prove worthwhile. May the Lord bless us!
