

2022 Parish Development Forum Online – Agenda

All times are approximate and subject to change.

10:00 AM	Opening Prayer: Fr. Alexander Cadman , <i>Clergy Co-Chair Parish Development Forum</i> Welcome: Archbishop Melchisedek and Archbishop Alexander		
	Keynote Address Christian Life, Discipleship and Ministry Bishop Daniel		
	Introduction to the 2022 Parish Development Forum Joseph Kormos <i>Lay Co-chair Parish Development Forum</i>		
Break 10 min			
11:30 AM	Track A Living Active Ministry: Personal Internal, External Track Leader: Fr A. Cadman	Track B Rethinking Education as Ministry Track Leader: Fr. Peter Baktis	Track C Leading and Coordinating Ministries Track leader: J. Kormos
	Segment A1: Internal Ministry – Incorporating Every Generation in Your Parish “In-reach” Ministry Matushka Vera Proctor	Segment B1 Re-envisioning Education in the Parish Fr. Peter Baktis	Segment C 1 Building Your Ministry Toolbox Rebekah Humphreys
12:30 PM	Lunch Forum; Brown bag (30 min)		
1:00 PM	Morning review (15 min)		
Break 5 min			
1:20 PM	Segment A2: Being a Ministry of Presence to the Grieving Sarah Byrne-Martelli	Segment B2: Education as Ministry and Service Ann Marie Mecera	Track C segment 2 Thoughts and Tools to Kick-start Your Ministry Mix Susan Smoley
2:15 PM	Break 10 min		
2:25 PM	Track A segment 3 External Ministry: Creating Opportunities to See and Serve our Parish Neighbors Kenny Kidd	Track B segment 3 Effective Youth Education Dmitri Rentel	Track C segment 3: Making Ministry Happen Obstacles and Pathways to Ministry <i>Panel of Priests & Laity</i>
3:20	Break 10 Min		
3:30	Present case for discussion in track groups (10 min)		
	Case study -explore from the perspective of this track.	Case study - explore from the perspective of this track.	Case study - explore from the perspective of this track.
Break/Room change (5 min)			
4:35 PM	Wrap up 25-30 min		

Track and Segment Descriptions

Keynote Address and Introduction

Welcome

Host Hierarchs – Archbishop ALEXANDER and Archbishop MELCHISEDEK will offer welcome remarks.

Keynote: Christian Life, Discipleship and Ministry

[Bishop DANIEL of Santa Rosa. Locum Tenens Diocese of the Midwest](#)

Christian life and ministry within the local community has solid biblical roots and expresses itself on all levels within the community. We observe this in the very earliest of Christian communities, the Church in Jerusalem. (e.g., Acts 2: 42-47; 4:32-37). In these early local communities within the Church, communities which we might acknowledge as analogous to parishes, we see ministry involving all members of the community and addressing all the necessities and challenges of living together as followers of Christ. Though remaining traditional in many ways, parish ministry has also manifested itself over the past twenty centuries in an almost endless variety of forms. In reviewing the history of the Church, we may find that, though at one time or another relegated almost exclusively to the clergy, a true and fuller expression of parish ministry has always been within the context of lay ministry. This is clearly evident in the Acts of the Apostles.

The Book of Acts details the spread of the gospel and the growth of the Church throughout the Empire, from Jerusalem to Rome. It is important to recognize that the Church did not begin or grow through its own power or initiative. Neither was the Church's early ministry the sole work of the Apostles and their disciples. Indeed, all believers were empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit poured out upon the Church at Pentecost. This remains true today. The work of Christ, both in the Church and in the world, is born of Holy Spirit and the grace "of which we have all received" (John 1:16). Therefore, to speak of the fullness of parish ministry is to also speak of lay ministry.

This keynote will address the question of how Christian discipleship and the ministries that arise from it can be better understood and enhanced within the context of Orthodox parish communities in the current day. The opportunities for parish leadership to restore, create, and support ministries within the parish will be highlighted. Acknowledging that we are beginning to come out of the doldrums and challenges of the Covid-19 epidemic, the opportunities to renew existing ministries within the parish will also be investigated and discussed.

Introduction to the 2022 Parish Development Forum

What to expect and how to get the most from the Forum. Review of agenda and the questions to be answered by Forum 2022. Practical aspects of lay ministry.

[Joseph Kormos](#) Co-Chairperson Parish Development Forum

Track A: Living Active Ministry—Personal, Internal, External

[Fr. Alexander Cadman, Track Host](#)

This track will explore and provide practical advice for those actively serving in ministry. Segments include encouraging vocational ministry in the local neighborhood, connecting generations with one another for mutual support, and offering a ministry of presence to those in need into the parish.

Segment A1: Internal Ministry: Incorporating Every Generation in Your Parish’s “In-Reach” Efforts

[Matushka Vera Proctor](#) Contributor

Whether part of a small or larger parish, a successful minister must know the perspectives and needs of the various generations that make up the community so they can work together, learn from another, and serve each other. Since 1990, Matushka Vera and her husband, Fr. Jonathan Proctor, of Holy Trinity Church in St. Paul MN., have had the rich experience of ministering to a decidedly multi-generational parish. In her presentation, she will share the various community endeavors and parish ministries that have evolved in order to recognize everyone's essential place in the parish community, young and old. Participants in the session will learn about the generations that make up parish life today and brainstorm opportunities for organic and authentic activities, unique to a parish, that can be inclusive, accepting, and loving of all those in the community.

Segment A2: Being a Ministry of Presence to the Grieving

[Sarah Byrne-Martelli](#) Contributor

Especially over the past few years, ministers have had to navigate a difficult landscape of loss of life and livelihood, and help family members and fellow parishioners through the grieving process while also hurting themselves. Through a combination of presentation and breakout sessions, Orthodox clinical chaplain Sarah Byrne-Martelli, will demonstrate that being there for a loved one is a holy and powerful work that anyone in the parish can do successfully (not just the priest) with the right guidance and resources. She will offer practical tips on how ministers can focus their attention on the sufferer, comforting them—when tears flow—even though we are discomfited ourselves, and enabling the person to share their story and their pain, authentically and empathetically.

Segment A3: External Ministry: Creating Opportunities to See and Serve Our Parish Neighbors

[Kenny Kidd](#) Contributor

Many people believe that only larger parishes in urban areas can successfully provide food, clothing, occupation, and shelter to the impoverished around them. Kenny Kidd will lead a discussion that addresses this misperception that parishes need to partner or serve in the midst of a city center or somewhere "other" than their immediate parish neighborhood. Examples will be shared of opportunities to engage the faithful in service in the parish neighborhood, even if that parish is along a suburban highway and/or whose parishioners are all commuters. Participants will understand that ministry to the least of Christ's brethren is a blessing that all in the parish can participate in regardless of their "secular" vocation.

Track B: Rethinking Education as Ministry—Adults and Youth.

[Fr. Peter Baktis](#)

While ministry is more than church school --education is a *critical element* of ministry in the parish. This track will focus on creating an environment for lifelong learning. We will examine how Religious Education needs have changed in the post-pandemic and find creative suggestions that allow faith to be lived in action. We will examine how, a fully educated and active diaconal ministry can leverage technology and other means to create affinity groups and support them in their outreach and witness. We will examine the February 5, 2020, OCA Youth Project Coordinator's Report to the Metropolitan Council and identify the needs being expressed by our youth in helping them be empowered witnesses in their communities. The focus of this track is how we need can make the words of Christ to love one another a pedagogical witness in action.

This track is of particular interest for Church school directors, teachers and clergy looking to strengthen parish education as well as all interested parish leaders.

Segment B 1: Re-envisioning Education in the Parish

[Fr. Peter Baktis](#)

The focus will be on the development of lifelong learning and witness. How does the current model of religious education offer to empower and equip people to live a Christin life of witness and service? We will explore current models and lessons from the pandemic and ask: "How are we educating to equip people to live an Orthodox Christian life and witness in an interfaith, and culturally complex world?"

Segment B2: Education as Ministry and Service

[Ann Marie Mecera](#)

Using current statistics and research from the Barna Group World Health Organization Guttmacher Institute, ReligiousNews.com, Wedmed.com, and Caregiver Action Network we will examine opportunities offered in educating and empowering ministries in the parish. Using a diaconate model, we will explore creating affinity groups, ministry training, and building relationships and support for the ministry. How can we use technology to connect people that further enables the ministry needs of the parish?

Segment B3: Effective Youth Education

[Dmitri Rentel](#)

Using the research results from a 2020 Report to the Metropolitan Council we will explore two facets of ministry as perceived today by youth. The rational nature of ministry (which is not always fellowship) and the importance of a lived and realized faith. The need of youth is not just reflected with academic studies or conferences or experts, but by their lives and own voices! By listening to these needs and observing the world around us, we can indeed establish ministries that bring people to a life in Christ.

Track C: Leading and Coordinating Ministry

[Joseph Kormos Track Host](#)

In a context of identifying principles and good practices for strengthening your parish's capacity for ministry, this track will delve into issues associated with effectively coordinating and leading ministries in the parish: Setting goals. Staffing. Equipping those in ministry. Selecting ministries that fit the parish resources and local context. Retiring ministries that are no longer needed or useful. Stimulating fresh thinking. Delegating. Partnering. Setting goals. Staffing ministries with the correct people. Brainstorming to stimulate exploration of fresh ministries. Dealing with obstacles and challenges.

Segment C1: Building Your Ministry Toolbox

[Rebekah Humphreys, Contributor](#)

Leadership? Delegation? Community? Where to begin? Join me to add new tools to your ministry toolbox. We will discuss assessing needs inside and outside of your church community, how to build community partnerships, how to identify and build leaders in your parish and how to get the biggest 'bang for your buck'. Have you ever wondered how you fit into ministry? Do you have wonderful ideas that need to be put into action, but are unsure where to begin? This track will give you many tips and tricks to answer all these questions and more!

Segment C2 Thoughts and Tools to Kickstart your Ministry Mix

[Susan Smoley, Contributor](#)

In Acts 6:1-7, we learn of the first identification and division of ministries among the disciples to serve the needs of the community -- 7 men ordained to wait at tables and more. This session challenges you to push and expand the envelope of ministries in your community--whether its new ones or changing what you are currently doing. It begins with a brief exploration of the qualities of saints known as Fools for Christ and also those of the Myrrh-bearing Women. There's also a list of ministries to quickly peruse. And most importantly, you will be guided through a facilitated session using brainstorming tools to expand your wish list of ministries. We'll conclude with the expanded list and additional resources for you to explore on your own.

Segment C3: Making Ministry Happen: Obstacles and Pathways to Ministry

Panel of Clergy and Lay Leaders

Session led by [Joseph Kormos](#)

This session will cover a wide range of questions and topics associated with planning and implementing ministries, motivating and encouraging parishioners to actively participate in ministry. Managing cultural change to build ministry participation. Stimulating creativity. Retiring someone's favorite --yet underperforming ministry.

Final Session – Case Study

To conclude our day a not-so-mythical case study of the ministry situation in a parish will be offered. Participants from each track will meet to apply what they've learned during the day's previous sessions and to identify improvements to that parish's ministry offerings in the context of the previous content of their track. Participants will convene as a single group to share what they've learned.

Contributor Biographical Information

Bishop DANIEL

Bishop Daniel [Brum] was born in 1954 the eldest of three children born to Orville Antonio and Marjory Brum. He was raised in Riverdale, CA, a rural agricultural community, where he graduated from high school in 1973.

Raised in the Roman Catholic tradition, he enrolled at Saint Patrick's College Seminary, Mountain View, CA, where, during his freshman year, he first encountered the history of the Orthodox Church and frequently attended services at Saint Nicholas Church, Saratoga, CA, at that time under the rectorate of Mitered Archpriest George Benigsen, who welcomed him and encouraged him to explore Orthodox Christianity further. In the early 1970s, he began reading the Church Fathers and tried to integrate what he was learning of Orthodoxy into his regular courses of study.



He received a BA in Humanities, with specialization in history, philosophy and English literature, from Saint Patrick's College Seminary in 1977, after which he entered Saint Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park, CA, where he continued the study of Church history. In 1981, he received his Masters of Divinity degree and was ordained to the Roman Catholic priesthood. After ordination, he served in a variety of capacities and was especially involved in the Portuguese-American community. He also served as diocesan Director of Vocations and as editor of the Portuguese-language page of the diocesan newspaper.

In 1992, he was asked by his bishop to pursue further studies and, in 1995, he completed the academic work and received a degree in canon law (JCL) from the Catholic University of America, Washington, DC. His relationship with Orthodoxy continued as he continued research within the context of the Orthodox Church councils. During this time, he seriously contemplated conversion to Orthodox Christianity. Ultimately, it was his study of canon law that impelled him to respond to the call to embrace Orthodox Christianity.

He petitioned to be received into the Orthodox Church in America in 1997 and was vested as an Orthodox priest by His Grace, Bishop Tikhon of San Francisco and the West at the Monastery of Saint John of Shanghai and San Francisco on the Saturday of the Praises of the Theotokos the same year. He then served briefly at Saint Nicholas Church, Saratoga, CA before his assignment to Saint Paul the Apostle Church, Las Vegas, NV. In August 1998, he was transferred to the omophorion of His Eminence, Archbishop Peter and the Diocese of New York and New Jersey and assigned Rector of Saint Gregory Palamas Mission, Flemington, NJ, where he gained a new appreciation for the hard work and special challenges faced by mission priests. In 2000, he was appointed Secretary to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Theodosius and, later, to His Beatitude, Metropolitan Herman.

In December 2005, he expressed his desire to return to parish ministry and, in July of the following year, he was transferred to the Diocese of San Francisco and the West and appointed Rector of Saints Peter and Paul Church, Phoenix, AZ, where he continues to serve.

On October 21, 2014, the Holy Synod elected him to serve as auxiliary to His Eminence, Archbishop Benjamin of San Francisco and the West as Bishop of Santa Rosa, CA. He was consecrated to the episcopacy on January 24, 2015. Bishop Daniel served on the Statute Revision Task Force and currently serves as Chairman of the Commission on Canons and Statutes, a member of the Legal Advisory Board, as a member of the Canonization Commission, and, following the repose of Archbishop Paul on Pascha 2022, as *locum tenens* of the Diocese of Chicago and the Midwest.

Fr. Peter A Baktis

Father Peter Baktis received a BA from Concordia College, Bronxville NY, MDiv from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, a MDiv and MTh from The General Theological Seminary, and a Master of Strategic Studies US Army War College.



He has served 25 years of active service as an Army Chaplain (COL) retiring 2015. He was the Associate Pastor of the Cathedral Church of the Protection of the Holy Virgin NYC, Rector of St. Nicholas Orthodox Church, Jamaica Estates and currently the Rector of Mother of God Joy of All Who Sorrow Orthodox Church in Princeton, NJ.

Father Peter has published several articles in both Theological and Military Professional Journals. He is currently a board member of the Dialogue Institute, Temple University and second vice president Military Office Association of America Pines and Lakes Chapter in NJ. He is the Orthodox Church in America representative to the National Council of Churches USA convening table of Interfaith Dialogue and is the representative for both the Jewish-Christian Dialogue and Christian-Islam dialogue sponsored by the NCC. He resides in Hopewell NJ.

Fr. Alexander Cadman

Father Alexander Cadman, clergy co-chair of the 2022 Parish Development Forum, has 25 years of Orthodox ministry experience. He began his work with the Orthodox Church in America facilitating intensive parish "Boot Camps" through its Office of Church Growth and Evangelism (now the Department of Evangelization), and later represented the OCA on the Orthodox Christian Fellowship Board of Directors from 2009 to 2019 before being elected as its chairman for a three-year term. On the local level, Fr. Alexander founded a campus preaching ministry in Chicago, co-founded a mission in Beavertown, Pa., established a ministry center in State College, Pa., and served as the Orthodox chaplain at Penn State University. In 2008, he was assigned as Deacon and Director of Ministries of Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in State College, where he coordinated more than a dozen outreaches and eventually led a team of clergy and laity in a successful transition of parish governance when the founding rector fell ill to cancer and later retired. In 2021, Fr. Alexander was reassigned by Archbishop Melchisedek to help administer other parishes in the Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania and was ordained to the Holy Priesthood. His current assignment is to the newly established Ss. Mary and Michael Orthodox Parish, a community of two rural Pennsylvania churches that have united with a common vision to grow and minister to the unchurched in the greater Clearfield, Pa. Area.



In his free time, Fr. Alexander enjoys traveling with his wife and three teenage children. Together they have been to 48 U.S. states and have plans to make it all 50 before his oldest enters college. He also enjoys photography, swimming, and hiking.

Rebekah Humphreys

Rebekah Humphreys is the Pastoral Assistant at St. Mary Magdalene Parish in Fenton, Michigan. One of Rebekah's key roles in this position is the management and implementation of effective charitable ministries. She is also the digital content coordinator for the Bulgarian Diocese, OCA. Before entering the pastoral assistant position, Rebekah was a Special Education Independence Facilitator teaching students with mental and physical disabilities social and life skills to enter the workforce. Rebekah was also Michigan's representative to the Kiwanis International Council as well as a trainer for Kiwanis International. With the Kiwanis Organization she specialized in training on youth services, community impact, community involvement and volunteer engagement. She is blessed to have turned her non-profit training experience into a way to serve to the Church.



Kenny Kidd

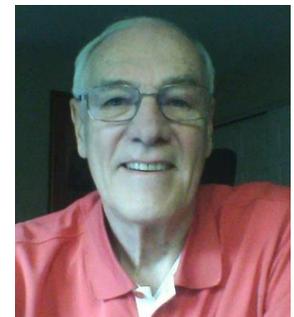
Kenny is the Executive Director of FOCUS North America, an Orthodox non-profit that brings Orthodox faithful together to serve the needs of their most vulnerable neighbors across the United States, including food, clothing, occupation, and shelter needs. A native of Charleston, West Virginia, and a social worker by education, Kenny's career has afforded opportunities to serve on the front lines of homeless outreach/advocacy/services as well as international Orthodox missions before coming to FOCUS in 2017. He was Chrismated into the Orthodox Church on Holy Saturday, 1997, at Holy Spirit Antiochian Orthodox Church in Huntington, West Virginia.



Joseph Kormos

As the Parish Development Ministry leader for the OCA's Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania, Joseph Kormos presents workshops and webinars, authors a parish leadership newsletter and helps to create parish tools for stewardship, growth and parish administration. He has served as leader for three OCA Pre-Conciliar Commissions and as a member of the Midwest Diocesan Council.

As a result of travels and in his role as parish development ministry leader Joe has visited 96 Orthodox parishes in the past 12 years. Materials from this ministry can be found at www.ocadwpa.org/pardev.html



Experienced in communication, team building, project management and an ability to conceptualize fresh solutions, Joe has been a product innovation consultant and product development executive.

Joe and his wife Joyce are among the founding members of Christ the Savior – Holy Spirit Orthodox Church in Cincinnati OH where he serves on the stewardship committee and as choir director. Eight grandchildren seem to find him (mostly) funny.

Sarah Byrne Martelli

Sarah Byrne-Martelli, DMin BCC, is an Orthodox lay chaplain and bereavement counselor who has served in Acute Care and Hospice since 2002. She is the author of the forthcoming book from Ancient Faith Publications, "Memory Eternal: Living with Grief as Orthodox Christians." She is the Inpatient Chaplain for the Massachusetts General Hospital Division of Palliative Care. Sarah is endorsed by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese. She attends St. Mary Orthodox Church in Cambridge, MA, with her husband, Dr. Peter Martelli, and their son Rafael. Sarah holds a Doctor of



Ministry from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and a Master of Divinity from Harvard Divinity School.

Ann Marie Mecera

Ann Marie has served the Church since she was in her early 20's. She was Lay Vice-Chair for her parish in Columbus, Ohio, under Fr. Daniel Rentel for nearly 20 years. She has been a member of various OCA task forces, a Pre-Conciliar Commission, the OCA Diocesan Council for the Midwest Diocese, the OCA Pension Board, and past presenter at Parish Development Forum events. In 2013, she founded the St. Phoebe Center for the Deaconess.



Ann Marie wrote the religious education manual for pre-schoolers titled "A Way of Life: Introducing Your Children to the Orthodox Faith", which has been called 'by far the best resource for introducing pre-schoolers and younger children to the faith.' Ann Marie also assisted Project Mexico with its Public Relations for several years. With a degree in journalism from Ohio University, Ann Marie has worked in the marketing field for over 40 years. She is a member of the Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology, and Religion (OCAMPR), and is pursuing Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). Ann Marie lives near Orlando, Florida with her husband Gus, and attends St. Stephen the Protomartyr Church in Longwood, Florida, where she is a catechist and responsible for parish communications.

Vera Proctor

Matushka Vera Proctor is the director of FOCUS Minnesota, a charitable outreach of the Orthodox Christian churches in the greater Twin Cities, and part of a national Pan-Orthodox Christian agency (FOCUS NorthAmerica).

Her educational and professional background is in communications, marketing, and broadcasting and has worked in the fields of advertising, television, arts management, and public broadcasting. Prior to joining FOCUS she was a producer and the show director for a daily nationally distributed classical music program produced by Minnesota Public Radio. Mka. Vera grew up in Chicago, and attended the University of Illinois, the Sorbonne in Paris, France, and attended St. Vladimir's Seminary with an emphasis in Liturgical Music from 1985-1988. She is married to Fr. Jonathan Proctor and they serve a parish, Holy Trinity (OCA), which is located in St. Paul, MN. They are the parents of two adult children and have been part of the Orthodox community in the Twin Cities for more than 30 years.

Dimitri Rentel

Dimitrios (Dima) Rentel is a recent graduate of Carleton College with a degree in Classical and Middle Eastern Studies. In 2019, he worked as the OCA's Project Coordinator in the Youth Department, traveling from camp to camp the entire summer in an effort to assess what state youth ministry was in in America and what might need to be done. He will soon begin a new job at the Telos Center in Boston, a new initiative of the CrossRoad Institute, which serves to create a place where Orthodox young adults can come together in fellowship and test new ministry ideas.



Susan Smoley

Susan Smoley is an Orthodox Christian who has served the church in many areas in varied ways and roles for many years. She lives now in Arlington Heights, Illinois, and is enrolled in a course of study with the St. Macrina Institute of the OCA Diocese of the Midwest. She is a wife and mother, and has enjoyed a career in the federal government and as a substitute teacher in the public schools. Her graduate degrees include a Diploma in Economics from Essex University, Colchester, U.K., while a Rotary International Scholar, and an MBA from the Graduate School of Business, University of Chicago. She completed undergraduate studies in economics and public policy at Kalamazoo College which included study at University of Erlangen, Germany, and Syracuse University, New York.

