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the donations from the OCA. The parish has also procured space in a local hotel, which has given thirty rooms to house sixty refugees. Father Alexander visited this hotel and spent time with the refugees who were mostly the families of priests.

Later on the same day, Father Alexander met with His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa to further discuss the situation in Poland. During these meetings there were discussions of the OCA's recent fundraiser for Ukrainian refugee aid. Father Alexander was able to see firsthand how the Eleos agency operates and intends to use the raised funds to help the many displaced persons fleeing from the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Father Alexander said "I want to thank Eleos for its tireless work supporting the thousands of refugees requiring help. As they care for the refugees they obey the instruction of the Apostle Paul 'Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares' (Heb. 13:2). We are pleased that the large outpouring of support from the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America, over \$700,000, is being used by Eleos to help the displaced persons begin the difficult work of rebuilding their lives after such horrible tragedy."

During their meeting, Father Alexander conveyed the greetings of His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon and the faithful of the Orthodox Church in America. Metropolitan Sawa expressed his gratitude for the outpouring of love and support from a sister Church. The Church of Poland and the OCA enjoy a close and longstanding relationship, with His Beatitude having made an official visit to the church in 2018, and which has only been further strengthened by the funds donated by the OCA.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Tikhon remarked, "I give thanks to God for the warm relationship between the sister Churches of the Orthodox Church of Poland and the Orthodox Church in America. Because of our close ties, we in North America have the opportunity to directly support the good work of the Polish Church in this current refugee crisis to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, and welcome the stranger (cf. Matt. 25:35). I am equally grateful for the generosity of the Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike who have made their donations in the OCA's appeal. In the

darkness of war, people's compassionate and open hands are a small light in a grim moment. In the future, I hope the cooperation and mutual support between our Churches will continue so we might fulfill the words of Christ in His high priestly prayer that "they may be one, even as we are one (Jn. 17:22)."

On Wednesday, March 30, Father Alexander traveled to Bucharest, Romania to meet His Grace Bishop Andrei of Cleveland to make a fraternal visit to the Romanian Orthodox Church. His Grace Bishop Andrei and Father Alexander there met His Grace Bishop Varlaam of Ploiești, Patriarchal Vicar Bishop. The meeting discussed matters of common concern and to present the Romanian Orthodox Church with a gift of \$10,000 from the Orthodox Church in America. The Metropolitan Council voted to give this gift to the ROC for the purpose of helping with the humanitarian crisis in Romania precipitated by the war in Ukraine and as a sign of the good-will and cooperation between our churches.

Recently, Father Alexander held a conference call with Archdeacon Joseph Matusiak and Aleksander Wasyluk to follow up on the state of the crisis and work being done by Eleos since his return from Europe.

Mr. Wasyluk gave further details that the emergency relief donations are being divided into thirds for immediate, short, and long term relief projects. Immediate emergency relief includes basic necessities of food, clothing, and shelter. Stoves, fridges, and other appliances have been bought to set up kitchens to process the three to four tons of food, vegetables, and produce needed to feed the several hundred thousand refugees in Warsaw alone.

Once these basic needs are met, the refugees short term needs are addressed such as enrolling children in schools and day cares, securing equipment and computer access so the refugees can access training and find employment in Poland. The Polish Orthodox Church also is meeting other needs including computer training so refugees can find jobs, cultural integration courses to help Ukrainians navigate Polish society and language, pastoral and spiritual needs through items like prayer books, and care for children such as daycamps and trips. Archdeacon Joseph explained the critical *Con't Next Pg*

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role childcare plays in freeing up time for the parents who need the flexibility for work, training, and other needs.

For long term needs, Archdeacon Joseph explained the local Orthodox dioceses are best equipped to meet these needs of the refugees as they resettle and the final third of the funding is available to the dioceses in the form of grants which they may apply for. Since most of the refugees are being settled in the areas where Orthodox are least numerous, this approach allows each diocese the flexibility it needs to help the refugees in its care in the most effective way possible for each particular context.

The total collection raised by the Orthodox Church in America for the Ukrainian refugee relief fund was \$739,726.45. Thank you to all who donated.

Sunday of the Samaritan Woman Commemorated on May 22

The Holy Martyr Photina (Svetlana) the Samaritan Woman, her sons Victor (named Photinus) and Joses; and her sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskevė, Kyriake; Nero's daughter Domnina; and the Martyr Sebastian: The holy Martyr Photina was the Samaritan Woman, with whom the Savior conversed at Jacob's Well (John. 4:5-42).

During the time of the emperor Nero (54-68), who displayed excessive cruelty against Christians, Saint Photina lived in Carthage with her younger son Joses and fearlessly preached the Gospel there. Her eldest son Victor fought bravely in the Roman army against barbarians, and was appointed military commander in the city of Attalia (Asia Minor). Later, Nero called him to Italy to arrest and punish Christians.

Sebastian, an official in Italy, said to Saint Victor, "I know that you, your mother and your brother, are followers of Christ. As a friend I advise you to submit to the will of the emperor. If you inform on any Christians, you will receive their wealth. I shall write to your mother and brother, asking them not to preach Christ in public. Let them practice their faith in secret."

Saint Victor replied, "I want to be a preacher of Christianity like my mother and brother." Sebastian said, "O Victor, we all know what woes await you,

your mother and brother." Then Sebastian suddenly felt a sharp pain in his eyes. He was dumbfounded, and his face was somber.

For three days he lay there blind, without uttering a word. On the fourth day he declared, "The God of the Christians is the only true God." Saint Victor asked why Sebastian had suddenly changed his mind. Sebastian replied, "Because Christ is calling me." Soon he was baptized, and immediately regained his sight. Saint Sebastian's servants, after witnessing the miracle, were also baptized.

Reports of this reached Nero, and he commanded that the Christians be brought to him at Rome. Then the Lord Himself appeared to the confessors and said, "Fear not, for I am with you. Nero, and all who serve him, will be vanquished." The Lord said to Saint Victor, "From this day forward, your name will be Photinus, because through you, many will be enlightened and will believe in Me." The Lord then told the Christians to strengthen and encourage Saint Sebastian to persevere until the end.

All these things, and even future events, were revealed to Saint Photina. She left Carthage in the company of several Christians and joined the confessors in Rome.

At Rome the emperor ordered the saints to be brought before him and he asked them whether they truly believed in Christ. All the confessors refused to renounce the Savior. Then the emperor gave orders to smash the martyrs' finger joints. During the torments, the confessors felt no pain, and their hands remained unharmed.

Nero ordered that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses be blinded and locked up in prison, and Saint Photina and her five sisters Anatola, Phota, Photis, Paraskevė and Kyriake were sent to the imperial court under the supervision of Nero's daughter Domnina. Saint Photina converted both Domnina and all her servants to Christ. She also converted a sorcerer, who had brought her poisoned food to kill her.

Three years passed, and Nero sent to the prison for one of his servants, who had been locked up. The messengers reported to him that Saints Sebastian, Photinus and Joses, who had been blinded, had completely ***Con't Next Pg***

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recovered, and that people were visiting them to hear their preaching, and indeed the whole prison had been transformed into a bright and fragrant place where God was glorified.

Nero then gave orders to crucify the saints, and to beat their naked bodies with straps. On the fourth day the emperor sent servants to see whether the martyrs were still alive. But, approaching the place of the tortures, the servants fell blind. An angel of the Lord freed the martyrs from their crosses and healed them. The saints took pity on the blinded servants, and restored their sight by their prayers to the Lord. Those who were healed came to believe in Christ and were soon baptized.

In an impotent rage Nero gave orders to flay the skin from Saint Photina and to throw the martyr down a well. Sebastian, Photinus and Joses had their legs cut off, and they were thrown to dogs, and then had their skin flayed off. The sisters of Saint Photina also suffered terrible torments. Nero gave orders to cut off their breasts and then to flay their skin. An expert in cruelty, the emperor readied the fiercest execution for Saint Photis: they tied her by the feet to the tops of two bent-over trees. When the ropes were cut the trees sprang upright and tore the martyr apart. The emperor ordered the others beheaded. Saint Photina was removed from the well and locked up in prison for twenty days.

After this Nero had her brought to him and asked if she would now relent and offer sacrifice to the idols. Saint Photina spit in the face of the emperor, and laughing at him, said, "O most impious of the blind, you profligate and stupid man! Do you think me so deluded that I would consent to renounce my Lord Christ and instead offer sacrifice to idols as blind as you?"

Hearing such words, Nero gave orders to again throw the martyr down the well, where she surrendered her soul to God (ca. 66).

On the Greek Calendar, Saint Photina is commemorated on February 26.



Acts 11:19-26, 29-30 (Epistle)

Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch. When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord. Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

May 14: Repose of Metropolitan Leonty

May 14 marks the anniversary of the repose of Metropolitan Leonty (Turkevich) in 1965. He dedicated nearly 60 years of his life to priestly and episcopal service to the Church in America and was hierarch of the Diocese of the Midwest from 1933-1950, before his election as Primate of the Orthodox Church in America from 1950 to 1965.

A memorial service was held at Holy Trinity Cathedral, Chicago, IL, where he served as priest and bishop.

Born in Volhynia on August 8, 1876, and ordained in 1905, Father Leonid Turkevich was appointed rector of the newly opened theological seminary and pastor of Saint Mary Church in Minneapolis, MN by Saint Archbishop Tikhon of the Aleutians and North America in August 1906. On October 27 of the same year, Father Leonid and his wife Anna arrived in Minnesota, where he immediately devoted himself to the formation of the future pastors for the North American flock and shepherding the parish that had been brought into Orthodoxy some 15 years earlier by

Saint Alexis Toth

John 4:5-42 (Gospel)

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the

city, and said to the men, Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ? Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

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Father Leonid's bright intellect and strong ecclesiastical erudition, molded by his upbringing in a priestly family and schooling at the Kyiv Theological Academy, quickly brought him to the forefront of North American clergy. As one of Saint Tikhon's closest advisors, he was elected chairman of the First All-American Sobor (Council), held in Mayfield, PA in 1907. At this and subsequent councils, his leadership guided the continuing formulation of the Church's ongoing missionary vision in North America.

When the seminary was relocated to Tenafly, NJ in 1912, Father Leonid moved east, continuing his work at the seminary and eventually succeeding Saint Alexander Hotovitzky as dean of New York City's Saint Nicholas Cathedral and editor of the American Orthodox Messenger, the Church's official periodical.

Father Leonid was one of two priests selected to join Archbishop Evdokim in representing the North American Diocese at the *Con't Next Pg*

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All-Russian Church Council in Moscow in 1917-1918, at which he championed the restoration of the patriarchal system of Church governance abolished by Tsar Peter the Great two centuries earlier.

After the council, Father Leonid returned to America via Siberia, witnessing along the way the horrors the newly-established Bolshevik regime was inflicting on the Church and her faithful. Back in America, Father Leonid's experiences at the Moscow Council clearly filled him with a vision and model for subsequent All-American Sobors and Church life.

When Father Leonid was widowed in 1925, elevation to the episcopacy was proposed to him almost immediately. Initially, he rejected this out of concern for the continued upbringing of his five children. But in 1933, he accepted monastic tonsure with the name Leonty, and was consecrated Bishop of Chicago. While he had been a hierarch for scarcely more than one year when the Fifth All-American Sobor was convened in November 1934 to elect a

successor to the late Metropolitan Platon, many considered Bishop Leonty as the most viable candidate. However, when the sobor's delegates debated the proper procedure for electing a Primate, Bishop Leonty suggested that they simply acknowledge the senior hierarch, Archbishop Theophilus, as Primate. To this suggestion, the delegates responded with a resounding cry of "Axios," electing Archbishop Theophilus.

Until 1950, Bishop Leonty continued shepherding his Midwest flock, while serving as Metropolitan Theophilus' foremost assistant in guiding the Church through World War II, a decade-long period of ecclesiastical synergy and peace with ROCOR, the reopening of theological seminaries in America, and a failed attempt of ending estrangement from the Church in Russia.

By the time Metropolitan Theophilus died in 1950, the clergy and faithful knew that only Archbishop Leonty could be the next Metropolitan of All America and Canada. Indeed, at the Eighth All-American Sobor in December 1950,

he was elected Primate by a nearly unanimous vote. During his tenure, structure was given to the Church through the adoption of a governing

Statute in 1955. With his blessing, the first English-language parishes were established; various pan-Orthodox initiatives, including the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas and the Orthodox Christian Education Commission, were undertaken; and preliminary steps were taken to heal the rift with the Russian Church, ultimately paving the way to autocephaly for the Orthodox Church in America.

After 15 years of service as Primate, Metropolitan Leonty peacefully fell asleep in the Lord at his residence in Syosset, NY, on May 14, 1965, and was interred at Saint Tikhon's Monastery, South Canaan, PA. Those who were blessed to have known Metropolitan Leonty cherish his humility, prayerfulness, meekness, dignity, kindness, generosity, forbearance, thoughtfulness, sense of humor, vision, erudition and wisdom.

This biography was written by OCA archivist Alexis Liberovsky and originally appeared in the The Orthodox Church magazine, Vol. 2, No. 7/8, July/August 2006.

The text of the booklet, titled "Essays of Orthodox Theology" may be found on our Diocesan website..

May the memory of Metropolitan Leonty be eternal!

**CHRIST IS
RISEN!
INDEED HE IS
RISEN!**

**מִן תְּמַאֲבּ! מִן חֵישְׁמָה!
(HaMashiach qam!
Be'emet qam!)**

Hebrew (modern)