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St. Ananias in Evansville, Indiana celebrates significant milestones



Filled with grace through the threefold Sun, thou didst illumine Christ's chosen vessel. When thou hadst preached the faith, thou wast strengthened in grace by thy contests. O Apostle Ananias, grant the prayers of those who hymn thee.

Troparion for Saint Ananias (Tone 4)

The weekend of August 24-25, 2019 saw two significant milestones for St. Ananias Orthodox Mission in Evansville, Indiana, pastored by Fr. Daniel Hackney. First, His Grace Bishop ANTHONY of Toledo and the Midwest presided over the Thyranoxia (Door Opening) Service that Saturday afternoon. It is a service for parishes whose temple is not quite ready to be consecrated but are now ready for sacred public usage.

The first day saw many visiting clergy and friends of the congregation. Of note in

attendance was V. Rev. Fr. Nabil Hanna, who labored for many years with respect to mentorship and guidance to make this mission a reality; and Kh. Marilyn Gillquist, whose husband the late V. Rev. Fr. Peter Gillquist, as Director of Missions and Evangelism, partnered with the Diocese of Toledo and Indiana deanery to initiate bringing in a full-time clergyman. The choir was led by Mr. Nicholas Lannert, who as a newly chrismated Orthodox Christian contacted Fr. Nabil some ten years ago requesting that a priest be sent to form what is now a self-sufficient home for Orthodox Christians in the Evansville area, able to sustain its facilities and priest.



Saint Ananias is a daughter parish of St. George in Indianapolis, the church that launched the mission in 1997 with the assistance of several Indiana deanery clergy including V. Rev. Fr. Anthony Yazge and V. Rev. Fr. Athanasius Wilson. Both Fr. Anthony and Fr. Athanasius alternated serving Liturgy in Evansville for years, before the arrival of Fr. Daniel Hackney as the first resident mission planter in 2009. In addition, V. Rev. Fr. James Ellison provided invaluable assistance in designing the altar area and staircase in the temple during the remodeling process of the temple purchased by the mission in 2015. And it was both St. George Indy and St. Nicholas Urbana that sent mission teams to come during the Feast of the Dormition in 2016 to help tear down elements of the nave so that its might be reborn as a place of Orthodox worship.



With respect to finances over the past decade since a mission planter was assigned, the Midwest Mission Council has provided not only the standard funds which begin at five hundred dollars month, and are stair-stepped down over five years; but also block grants such as the \$12,000 grant in 2018 that assisted the mission in remodeling the temple and annex for Orthodox mission. This gracious gift gave our parish a “hand up” so that its ministry might more effectively reach its community.

Many thanks are offered to all our sister churches for their missionary giving. It wasn't merely money that was bequeathed, but lives have been, and are being, transformed through different types of mission grants such as this one, and this is true across the Archdiocese as well.



The next day Subdeacon Sergius Vlas was ordained into the holy diaconate by His Grace Bishop ANTHONY; deacons James Akin and Joseph Olas served as sponsors. Deacon Sergius is one of four members of the parish who have completed the Antiochian House of Studies over the past decade. Currently there is another member who is beginning the course this fall. Regarding these graduates Fr. Daniel Hackney says, "being in a remote area with respect to Orthodoxy (the closest parishes are some two hours away), we felt it important to create as many ties to our Archdiocese as possible; the Antiochian House of Studies is one means to achieve this."

After the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy, the Acropolis Restaurant (owned by members of the parish) hosted a congregational benefit luncheon for the Toledo diocesan chancery in which \$3067.00 were gifted toward helping furnish this home for our bishop and administrative offices of our diocese. It was one way in which our mission could say "thank you" for all of the love and support over the years. May God through the prayers of Saint Ananias bless and keep this ecclesia, this assembly of Orthodox Christians in the Evansville, Indiana area.



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