

St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Howell, NJ, hosts a venerated copy of the Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God



On Saturday and Sunday, December 14-15, 2019, Eastern American Diocesan Vicar Bishop Luke of Syracuse performed an archpastoral visit to St Alexander Nevsky Diocesan Cathedral in Howell, NJ. Accompanying His Grace was the seminary choir and seminarians from Holy Trinity Seminary in Jordanville, NY. On Saturday evening, Bishop Luke led the all-night vigil in the cathedral, co-served by rector Archpriest Serge Lukianov, Archpriest Vasily Kuzmych (cleric of the Mid-American Diocese), Archpriest Boris Slootsky, Archpriest Seraphim Chemodakov, Priest George Kaplanov, and Protodeacon Leonid Roschko (cathedral clerics), Protodeacon Alexander Kotlaroff (cleric of the Diocese of Australia and New Zealand), and Deacon Michael Pavuk (cleric of St John the Baptist Cathedral in Mayfield, PA).

On Sunday, December 15, Bishop Luke was joined at Divine Liturgy with the aforementioned clergy, as well as Archpriest Rafael Melendez (cathedral cleric), Archpriest Boris Oparin (rector of St Joasaph of Belgorod Church in Brooklyn, NY),

and Protodeacon Paul Drozdowski (cathedral cleric). The seminary choir sang under the direction of Deacon Nicholas Kotar.

At both services, the church was filled with parishioners arriving from New York and neighboring states to pray at the hierarchal Liturgy and venerate the revered wonderworking Pochaev Icon of the Mother of God, which was restored for the first time in many years in memory of the ever-memorable rector of the cathedral, Protopresbyter Valery Lukianov, with funds donated by his family. Many received Christ's Holy Mysteries (Communion being distributed from three chalices).

After the Eucharistic Canon, Bishop Luke ordained Subdeacon Andrey Silov a deacon. He will fulfill his service in St Joasaph of Belgorod Church in Brooklyn.

Upon conclusion of Liturgy, Bishop Luke greeted the faithful with a sermon, in which he underscored that the most critical thing in the life of a Christian is above all to attain the Kingdom of God, confess and receive Communion, turn away from everything that binds us to sin, and to become virtuous.

Fr Serge Lukianov thanked Bishop Luke for his joint prayers and the beautiful singing of the choir, and presented him with a gift from the parish – a check for \$15,000 to help the seminary in fostering future pastors. On behalf of the cathedral sisterhood, Fr. Serge presented His Grace personally and the monastery clergy in a Nativity gift – two sets of podsakkosniks and a set of podrizniks.

A meal was arranged by the sisterhood in the church hall, during which Christmas gifts were also given to seminarians from the parish.

After the meal, Bishop Luke proceeded to the grave of Fr Valery Lukianov, where he served a litia, attended by Matushka Irina Lukianov. The seminary choir sang. During the second part of the day, His Grace along with the choir and seminarians departed for Holy Trinity Monastery.

— Source: eadiocese.org & synod.com