

# MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT

September 2018

Submitted by Father Thomas Mueller and Joseph Kormos

The Diocesan Mission Committee includes Gator Greenwill and Erik Hjelle and Frs. Joel Weir, Joel Wilson, Elijah Mueller and Chris Maciolek. Fr. Thomas Mueller is Mission Director. Joe Kormos is facilitator and consultant to the committee.

The committee meets via teleconference every three or four months.

Key focus areas of the committee are

- Provide support for existing missions
- Identify fruitful effective locations for future mission plants
- Build a sense of mission in existing parishes in the diocese.
- Provide parish development support for existing parishes in the diocese.

## Efforts since October 2017 (Last report)

In addition to four teleconference calls:

### **Mission Communities Dinner Meeting**

A dinner meeting of priests and lay representatives from all/most missions will take place on Monday evening of the assembly. Organized by Elijah Mueller, the evening's activities will include fellowship and dinner, short reflective talks and an opportunity to share needs, challenges and positive outcomes.

### **Exploration of New Mission Locations**

A thorough top down" view of areas (counties) within the Diocese that are above a population threshold and are growing and are underserved by existing Orthodox churches. Requests were made to each deanery to submit locations for potential mission locations. In addition committee members offered suggestions. A template for review and comparison of potential new mission sites was created.

Various locations were discussed in the above context. Due diligence was done on the Farmington/ Desloges MO area. A mission exploration will begin soon with a goal of assessing viability as a mission location by mid 2019. While the assessment will utilize a dormant parish church, this effort would not be a resuscitation of the existing parish but to plant a new community. Such a community could honor the heritage of the past community, serve any remnant of past parishioners *and* reach out to new.

### **Small Parish Forum**

Sponsored jointly by our diocese, the Archdiocese of Western Pennsylvania and the OCA Bulgarian diocese, the Fifth Small Parish Forum was held at St George Orthodox Cathedral (Bulgarian Diocese) near Toledo in July. Theme was *"Equipping Parish Leaders for Discipleship and Change"*. Attendees included many members of our diocese, other sponsoring Dioceses and other Orthodox jurisdictions.