

Feast Day of the Holy Ascension Parish in Rochester, NY

On the Feast of the Ascension, May 20, 2011 (Old Style), His Grace, Bishop Auxentios of Photike and Hierodeacon Father Photii travelled to the Holy Ascension Church in Rochester, NY, for the parish feast day, where they were joined by His Eminence, Archbishop Andronik of Ottawa and Canada, from our Sister Church, the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, along with Father Anthony Gunin, serving Priest at the Convent of St. Nicholas, in Cleveland, NY, which is under the *omophorion* of Vladyka Andronik. At the Vespers and Matins services on the eve of the Ascension, and at the Divine Liturgy on the day of the Feast, the visiting clergy celebrated together with the parish clergy, Father Nicholas Chernjavsky and Deacon Father Peter Bushnow. Also present at the festivities was the Reverend Mother Agapia, Superior of the Convent of St. Nicholas.

After the Divine Liturgy, a festive meal was held at the parish hall in the basement of the Church, hosted by the parish sisterhood. A letter from Archbishop Chrysostomos, who was unable to be present at the feast, was read at the meal, expressing his fraternal affection for Archbishop Andronik and his immense gratitude for His Eminence's presence at the parish feast, as well as conveying the greetings of the Acting President of the Holy Synod, Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi. He also mentioned his particular love for the Ascension parish and his appreciation for its pan-orthodox witness to Orthodox traditionalism in the context of upholding and maintaining the venerable Slavic background and traditions of its major founders and, at the same time, warmly accommodating converts and those of other national Orthodox traditions in the parish.

As a sign of their further appreciation for the community, Bishop Auxentios presented, on behalf of Archbishop Chrysostomos and himself, a new Chalice set to the parish Rector, Father Nicholas, for use in the community's liturgical life. His Grace also presented Archbishop Andronik with a collection of festal Icons as a sign of their brotherly solidarity. And finally, he thanked the parish clergy and faithful for their inimitable and abundant hospitality and kindness, as well as their loyalty to the Holy Synod and the traditions of the Church.



Photographs: Above, left to right, on dais (bema), His Grace, Bishop Auxentios and His Eminence, Archbishop Andronik. At right, l to r, Archbishop Andronik and Bishop Auxentios. Below, clergy and faithful after the Divine Liturgy. At bottom, left, Bishop Auxentios (r) presents gift to Archbishop Andronik (l); at right, Father Nicholas holds up the Holy Cup in the Chalice set given to the parish in honor of its feast day.

