

VESTNIK



Fund for Assistance to the
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia
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The mission of the Fund for Assistance is to support the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, specifically, the moral-spiritual education of youth, aid to its clergy and distribution of emergency relief to its missions.



Giving Tuesday



Youth Conference



Haiti

37th Annual St. Herman's Youth Conference

Another success thanks to you



United by similar experiences and faith, Americans, Russians, Canadians, Australians, Serbians, Greeks and people from all stages of life and careers came together for the biggest St. Herman's Conference turnout of the decade. More than 200 participants made their way through the lobby of the Hyatt Hotel in Arlington, VA, where familiar and new members mingled and quickly became friends.

The conference took place December 23-27th, 2016 and was graciously hosted by St. John the Baptist Cathedral in Washington, DC. Courtesy of the local committee, cathedral's rector, and FFA board member Archpriest Victor Potapov and St. John's Sisterhood, participants had the opportunity to attend an All-Night Vigil and Divine Liturgy in the epochal cathedral. Edifying lectures for young Orthodox participants were prepared by honoured guest speakers such as Priest Patrick Viscuso, priest scholar and canonist of the Greek Orthodox

Archdiocese in America, and Archpriest Peter Perekrestov, senior priest from Joy of All Who Sorrow Cathedral in San Francisco.

Special thanks to FFA donors



The St. Herman's Youth Conference of 2016 was made possible by the generosity of the donors to the Fund for Assistance (FFA) to the Russian Orthodox Church outside Russia. They have been faithfully supporting the three St. Herman's conferences held every December from the East Coast, Midwest and West Coast. Participants expressed their gratitude to FFA in a memorable video that can be viewed on the FFA website.

You gave participants memorable moments of each day at St. Herman's conference

On the first day of the St. Herman's conference, Saturday, December 24, 2016, Archbishop Gabriel of Montreal, Canada opened with an inspirational speech. He reminded young Orthodox participants the most significant goal of the conference was for spiritual edification and communal Confession and Communion at Liturgy on Sunday as well as social and emotional support. In his closing remarks, Archbishop Gabriel officially opened the conference with his blessing and his traditional statement, *"Since this year we have 200 participants here, I want there to be 100 marriages. Eventually. Maybe in 10 years?"*

Your prayer, pilgrimage and nurtured faith is answer to decline in Orthodoxy

In the U.S., about 800,000 people identify as Orthodox Christians and only 26% attend Liturgy weekly. Fr. Patrick Viscuso gave a presentation called "Being the 1% in a Non-Orthodox World" that focussed on Orthodox ways in the context of multiculturalism and assimilation. There is a steady decline of marriages and baptisms. Some Orthodox youth who attend college will never step into a church again.

Fr. Patrick addressed two major problems that contribute to the decline



of Orthodoxy: nationalism and secularism. His solutions to this daunting challenge are prayer, pilgrimage and to nurture faith that is individualized and sincere.

Fr. Patrick's lecture and the fellowship with the clergy – 16 priests and four deacons – spiritually moved our youth so much that most received Holy Communion on Sunday from five chalices in the presence of the holy relics of St. John of Shanghai & San Francisco (brought to Washington by Fr. Peter Perekrestov).

You gave participants an opportunity to learn about saints

Two days after Fr. Patrick's lecture, Fr. Peter mesmerized participants with his lecture on St. John of Shanghai & San

Francisco. He guided the audience through the story of St. John and told colorful, little-known anecdotes that revealed St. John's inner life.

Fr. Peter spoke about how St. John faced enmity and dislike throughout his whole life and quoted a priest who said, while "we all want to repose with the saints, we don't really want to live with them." He concluded his lecture with footage from St. John's life that revealed him as a human with flaws and character, yet he was unquestionably holy.

Participants enjoyed workshops and discussions because of your generosity

Along with inspiring lectures from prominent speakers, every evening participants attended workshops and discussions such as choir rehearsals, folk singing, games and guitar playing. The singing



by 50 young people at Vigil and Liturgy was magnificent.

Sunday participants were given an opportunity to explore the capital for a few hours as well as take part in an optional photo challenge. The prize went to a group of Australians who managed to visit every

monument in Washington in three hours.

One of the most memorable activities was the gingerbread church competition. Participants had one hour to produce the most impressive or canonically accurate church as possible. After an hour of sticky fingers and competition, some brilliant houses of prayer had been constructed.



Take a look at “A very musical thank you” video the participants made for you, on our website, YouTube, and Facebook.

A spiritually united family – thanks to your support and kindness

Perhaps a little dazed and exhausted, participants of the 37th Annual St. Herman Youth Conference set-off in various directions feeling happier and spiritually stronger. The only other consensus from everyone was that they’d like another conference to take place sooner rather than later.

Liza Ivanov

Haiti: How you gave food and the gift of joy to an 11-year-old girl

Your generosity saved a family from hunger and gave them a new life

"Families like Marine's have food thanks to donors like you!"



Recently, we helped 11-year-old Marine from Haiti. She is one of five children of a single mother. Marine and her two younger brothers couldn't attend school because their mother didn't make enough money to pay for their school fees. Here is Marine's story:

"Only my two older brothers had a chance of going to school. Because Maman was ashamed of not being able to send us to school, we always left the house with her in the morning. We would spend every day in the sun or the rain, away where the neighbors wouldn't see us. We were always sad to see the other kids with their books and in their uniforms.

We had nothing to eat throughout the week. A bowl of rice was all Maman could afford for the

whole family, and we fought for the food with my brothers. Only on Sundays after church did Maman prepare something if she managed to make a few sous during the week.

Since Maman started receiving monthly aid from the Fund for Assistance, we started going to the local school and we are so happy! We have enough money to buy bread and even butter. And there's enough for us to eat even before we go to bed.

We now have books and friends. We play and study. Thanks to your help, we have been able to be children again. Thank you, we are praying for you."

Impact of Giving Tuesday

You help us strive to aid as many Church members as we can

We decided to set ourselves the lofty goal of doubling the impact of our work for our Church as of 2017. We wanted to help twice the number of people and sponsor twice the number of Orthodox conferences to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church.

It was especially wonderful to witness the support of friends. Take a look at these wonderful “unselfies” (selfies promoting something other than self).



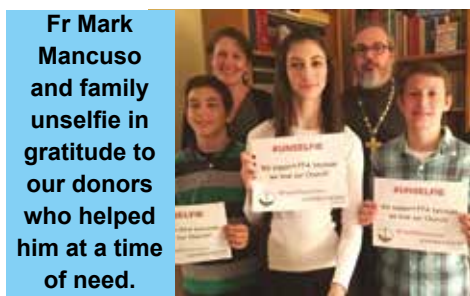
Martin Luther Paul Dumais of Orthodox Mission in Haiti, a seminarian, shows his support statement for FFA.



FFA board member, Pavel Listsin, Dcn Andrei Psarev, and friend #UNselfie to show their love for FFA.



I'm supporting FFA because I want to see clergy & their families not go hungry
FFA president Mark Selawry unselfies to thank all donors who help us reach our goal!



Fr Mark Mancuso and family unselfie in gratitude to our donors who helped him at a time of need.



St. Vladimir Orthodox Church's young adult group (Ann Arbor, MI) and Fr. Gregory Joyce #UNselfie in support of FFA.



Fr. Joseph Farooq and members of the Pakistan Orthodox Mission UNselfie for #GivingTuesday.



FFA Development Manager Alena Plavsic shows her love for FFA.



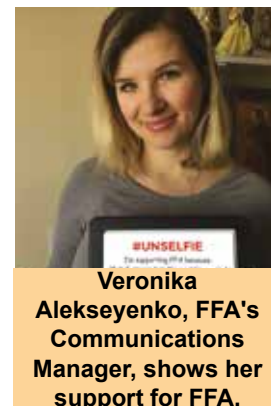
Dasha Lyubovsky from Washington, DC shows her support for FFA.



Clergy wife Elizabeth Drozdowski, unselfies to thank FFA donors who helped her family when they had no where else to turn to.



FFA Board member Lena Zezulina is serious about raising funds for the vulnerable members of our Church.



Veronika Alekseyenko, FFA's Communications Manager, shows her support for FFA.

Thanks to your generous response, we collected nearly \$12,000. Thank you! Unfortunately, we fell short by over \$3,000, so it won't be possible to fully realize our dream. We are not daunted, however, and keep striving to help as many Church members as we can.

Thank you so much for supporting our Church!

Our Promise

Your money – your decision: 100% of all donations directly fund the cause indicated by the donor. Stay updated on how your kindness supports the Church you love: subscribe to our email newsletter on our website:

fundforassistance.org



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Help us save money on paper: sign up for our e-mail updates on our website! Thank you for your support!