# REPORT TO THE CLERGY-LAITY CONGRESS, 2008 ON THE OFFICE OF PARISH DEVELOPMENT

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With the help of a grant from the Archbishop Iakovos Leadership 100 Endowment Fund, the Archdiocese introduced the Office of Parish Development in July, 2004 at the Clergy-Laity Congress in New York City. Since that time, the office has functioned as the Archdiocese's "feet on the ground", and has offered direct support to parishes in need of information and assistance in the area of parish development.

## OFFICE OF PARISH DEVELOPMENT MISSION:

- Our mission is to educate and assist our Greek Orthodox faithful in the areas of Stewardship, Capital Campaigns, Endowments/Planned Giving, and Grant Research.
- Our goal is to strengthen commitment (in terms of time, talent and treasure) to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- We will assist and promote existing and future ministries at all levels of the church, using personal, written and mass media avenues.

## ACROSS THE ARCHDIOCESE

From its formation, the Office of Parish Development has shared the vision for its ministry at the Clergy-Laity Assemblies of the Metropolises of Atlanta, Denver, Detroit, Chicago, and the New York Direct Archdiocesan District. The Development Officer has also conducted numerous development workshops at parishes across the country. These workshops are interactive, and also provide a positive forum to disseminate general information about the Archdiocese, its programs, and its ministries. These efforts are focused steps in Office of Parish Development's first goal to:

## I. Provide individual parish and regional development workshops

### Stewardship Workshops

Information tailored to your parish's unique needs presented with several goals in mind - not only to inspire greater giving in those who participate, but also to lay the groundwork for stewardship campaigns to follow.

### Regional Development Workshops

Workshops detailing the basic principles of fundraising that provide important guidelines for conducting effective development initiatives for stewardship, capital, and endowment campaigns.

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Stewardship and development workshops have been conducted at various parishes in across the country and more are scheduled for the remaining months of 2008.. Parish priests, parish council presidents and members, stewardship chairs and committee members, parish treasurers, administrative assistants, building committee chairs and members—all will benefit from attending future sessions. Contact the Development Officer for more details on how this ministry can benefit your parish.

Another goal of the Office of Parish Development is to provide ongoing counsel to parishes interested in raising funds for long-term projects and:

## II. Provide fundraising information and assistance for expansion/renovation of parish facilities and new capital campaigns

Areas of assistance include the following:

**Capital Campaign Planning Studies**
Before undertaking a major capital campaign, it is advisable to have an *objective* third party assess the parish's fundraising potential. A planning study provides this feedback to a parish as it identifies the right steps to take to maximize the campaign's effectiveness.

**Ongoing Capital Campaign Assistance and Management**
A successful campaign begins with a strategy built from experience. It is conducted through tried-and-true methods. Most parishes do not have fundraising professionals on staff to guide this important effort.

Workshop sessions were held at the previous Clergy-Laity Congress held in Nashville during the summer of 2006. The response was tremendous, with presentations given a rating of 8.7 out of possible 10. 67 parishes requested assistance in Stewardship, 88 requested assistance with Capital Campaigns, and 45 requested assistance in the area of planned giving. Several parishes have been assisted since that time with successful capital campaign initiatives, and additional parishes are currently being assisted.

Our general plan of action for a successful parish fundraising effort is based on our direct experience and personal involvement with Greek Orthodox parishes across the United States. By establishing a fundraising atmosphere based upon faith in Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and a strategy built from experience, a strong campaign foundation can be established to support parish goals.

Throughout the non-profit world, religious, educational, medical and philanthropic institutions make it easy for individuals to make significant gifts through their estates. They provide financial guidance on the tax advantages of charitable lead and remainder trusts, gift annuities, and other vehicles readily available that can benefit both the individual and the institution. Therefore, a third goal of the Office of Parish Development is to:

## III. Provide information and assistance in Planned Giving and the development of Endowments

Planned giving can be very rewarding, allowing to you to see your gift at work while receiving tax benefits as well. Areas of assistance include the following:

**Endowment Planning Workshops**
Many of our parishioners have the ability to make the most significant gifts of their lives through their estates. With guidance, a parish can communicate with parishioners about planning to make such a lasting gift.

**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION**
The Development Officer communicates regularly with the Directors of other Archdiocesan departments. Efforts are coordinated among departments for greatest results.

**BROCHURES**
Brochures detailing our assistance offerings have been developed, and are currently available. The first details the mission and service offerings of the Office of Parish Development. The second includes general information about Planning Giving and Endowments. A third details how we can assist parishes in the area of Grant Research and Grant Proposal writing. Future brochures will focus on providing additional helpful information to our Greek Orthodox faithful.

**WEB SITE:**
A web site has been designed and includes resources and tools to assist parishes at the beginning of new development projects. For further information, please visit us at www.development.goarch.org.