

Strategic Plan for the (Russian) Orthodox Church in America regarding St. Catherine's Embassy Church Moscow, Russia

Objective

Optimize the St. Catherine's embassy church opportunity regarding:

- Central administration funding sources for the (Russian) Orthodox Church in America (OCA) and to enhance the influence of the OCA and the Moscow Patriarchate in the United States and Russia as it relates to East-West relations of all kinds.
- The full development of the St. Catherine's physical plant in Moscow.
- Funding and influence of St. Catherine's in the City of Moscow.
- Nurture relationships with key donors and potential donors in the United States for support of infrastructure development within the OCA related to St. Catherine's.
- The full programmatic development of St. Catherine's.
- Leadership development opportunities for clergy and laity in cooperation with the Moscow Patriarchate.
- Provide conference facilities to gather influential business, political, education and church leaders to discuss crucial issues affecting Russia and its societal development.
- Nurture the brotherly relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the OCA as it relates to the OCA's responsibilities regarding Orthodox Christian administrative unity in North America and in ecumenical endeavors.

Background

Russia lurches toward an uncertain future. She needs investors to become stable, but her present instability frightens off the very investors she needs. This tension surfaces even in the world of the Church. The Church itself is receiving mixed reviews, and yet her head and spokesman, Patriarch Alexey II, is universally respected and trusted.

At this point in history, the strength of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) depends to a large degree on the personality of her Patriarch. The (Russian) Orthodox Church in America is now in a position to provide a platform for the Patriarch, so that the gains he has made for the Church in Russia can be strengthened and expanded. The Patriarch is at once highly visible, prominent, and stable. He has done much for Russia already, and can do more with support, but our support must be timely. We can help now, and see the Patriarch extend his influence (and the influence of Orthodoxy) to stabilize a society in flux, or we can delay too long and watch the destabilization of Russian society swallow up what gains have been made by the Church under the Patriarch's leadership.

The OCA recently received a gift of church property in Moscow near the Israeli Embassy and the site of Christ the Savior Cathedral which is being reconstructed. The intention of the Patriarch is to support the legacy of Russian Orthodoxy in North America

NOTE: The Russian Orthodox Church is historically the mother church of the (Russian) Orthodox Church in America (ROCA). Since 1970, by mutual agreement with the Moscow Patriarchate the ROCA was renamed the OCA (The Orthodox Church in America). Therefore, in the remainder of this paper we will refer to the ROCA as the OCA. It is our intent in this paper to emphasize the brotherly concern and support shown by the Moscow Patriarchate in making the St. Catherine's Embassy Church property in Moscow available to the OCA, and the OCA's desire to reciprocate as opportunity presents itself.