



**SAINT ELIAS ORTHODOX
CHRISTIAN CHURCH
OF SYLVANIA, OHIO**
4940 HARROUN RD., SYLVANIA, OH 43560
V. Rev. Fr. Paul Albert, Proto presbyter

SAINT ELIZABETH HOUSE MISSION TEAM

**ANNUAL REPORT
JANUARY 24, 2010**

Rt. Rev. Bishop MARK,
Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest,
Antiochian Archdiocese

V. Rev. Fr. Paul Albert
Archpriest/St. Elias Church

Dr. Samih Bittar
Medical University of Ohio

David Borgman, MBA
Promedica

Dr. Amira Gohara
Medical University of Ohio

Kh. Joan Heifner, PhD
Antiochian archdiocese

Drs. Daniel & Jane Hinshaw
St. Elizabeth House advisory board

Cindy Hopper, R.N.

Richard Kerbawy, Esq.

Keith Walker
Walker Funeral Home

Dr. Medhat Ashamalla

The St. Elizabeth House Mission Team was organized in October, 2006, with the blessing of Rt. Rev. Bishop MARK of Toledo and the Midwest Antiochian Archdiocese and under the leadership of the Very Rev. Paul Albert, St. Elias Antiochian Parish, Sylvania, OH. The mission team is composed of Orthodox professionals and others with a closely allied interest in the purpose of the team. The purpose of the mission team is to assess the feasibility of the development of an Orthodox home for the dying poor in the Toledo area inspired by the example of St. Elizabeth the New Martyr of Russia.

A first step for the mission team in assessing the feasibility of a home for the dying in the Toledo was to determine if there was a need for such a home. This need was verified within the first year of the organization of the team. A second step in the establishment of an Orthodox Home for the dying poor was to identify and secure resources. Resources include the identification of funding sources and the establishment of a pool of trained volunteers. Training includes Hospice training and a specialized component in spiritual care from an Orthodox Christian perspective.

Potential funding sources were identified within the second year of the organization of the St. Elizabeth Mission Team. International, regional, and local linkages were established by members of the team. A visitation team was organized at the parish level. This team provided visitation and prepared and distributed meals of mercy.

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ANNUAL REPORT, JANUARY 2010 CONTINUED...

With the establishment of an Orthodox Home for the dying poor in the Toledo area remaining as the long term goal of the St. Elizabeth Mission Team, two specific goals from 2008 were brought forward for 2009. These two goals were: 1.) To establish a training program for Orthodox Christian volunteers in cooperation with Hospice of NW Ohio. These volunteers would be trained to provide visitation and companionship to residents in community nursing homes and shut-ins of area parishes and for the care and support of the dying in collaboration with community hospice. 2.) To initiate a pilot Palliative Day Care program in Toledo, hosted at the Church. This would provide further opportunity for interested members to develop experience.

In keeping with the goal of the continuation of linkages at the level of the archdiocese, members of the St. Elizabeth House Mission Team, Drs. Dan and Jane Hinshaw presented the key content to lay attendees at the Midwest Parish Life Conference, Cincinnati, OH, in July, 2009.

Fr. Paul & Dr. Amira Gohara with the directors of Hospice of NW Ohio: Dr. John McGreevy (Medical Director), Judy Seibenick (Executive Director), and Tim Galvin (Volunteer Director) in the summer of 2009. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the partnering of Orthodox community volunteers with their training program and hospice visitation. A training session which provided the Orthodox Christian component to compliment NW Ohio Hospice training was offered in the fall of 2009. This training component involved about 20 members of the Orthodox community of the greater Toledo, area.

In summary, the ongoing goals of the St. Elizabeth Mission Team have been met in the year 2009. In addition, the goal of the establishment of a training program with an Orthodox Christian component for hospice volunteers was completed. Goals for 2010 include:

- 1.) The expansion of the St. Elizabeth House Mission Team to include representatives from all the Orthodox parishes in the area.
- 2.) The development of a pilot program for Hospice Respite Day-care hosted by St. Elias Church, targeted for the fall of 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Kh. Joan Heifner, Acting Secretary
January 24, 2010