



'Connections: Orthodox Life in the Digital Age'
Call for Papers

This year's annual Russian Orthodox Youth Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Diocese will be held at Treetops Resort Avoca Beach on the beautiful NSW Central Coast from the afternoon of Monday December 27 until the morning of December 31, 2010. The theme of the conference will be ***'Connections: Orthodox Life in the Digital Age'***.

The conference will consider the place of our Orthodoxy in four keys connections that we make in our lives:

- Connections On-Line
- Connections with Others
- Connections with Church
- Connections with God

We plan to have four main lectures, one dedicated to an important aspect of each of these key connections. In association with each lecture there will be a set of three-five short talks, workshops, or facilitated discussions exploring related issues in more detail. Run concurrently, these workshops will give smaller groups a chance to focus on matters of particular interest to them.

In the ***Connections On-Line*** stream, we will think about the increasing importance of new technology and social media in our lives. What benefits do these things bring, and what risks do they create? As Orthodox Christians, how can we use them for good, whilst avoiding the bad?

In the ***Connections With Others*** stream, we will think about the whole range of human relationships. Particular attention will be given to the kind of relationships to which we as Orthodox Christians are called, and the way in which these relationships differ from those in the wider world. Topics for discussion might include love, marriage, sex, and family and workplace relationships.

In the ***Connections With Church*** stream, we will think about the place of the Church in our lives, and our place in the life of the Church. This will include church services and how they work, why common prayer is important, church attendance, reading and singing, priestly and monastic service, study groups, sisterhoods, developing leadership, parish administration, and missionary work.

In the ***Connections With God*** stream, we will think about Orthodox spiritual life and the time-honoured framework it provides us for forming a relationship with God. Related topics included prayer and fasting, the Holy Scriptures, the Sacraments, an Orthodox way of life, the role of clergy in our relationship with God, and the prevalence in contemporary Australia of alternative spiritual paths.

In a conscious effort on the part of our Diocese to ensure a greater spiritual benefit for our youth, our annual Russian Orthodox Youth Conferences have changed significantly in recent years. It is nevertheless clear that the success of these conferences depends on the enthusiastic participation of the many capable and talented people of all ages – clergy, monastics and laity, men and women – active in the life of the Russian Orthodox Church in Australia.

To this end, the Organising Committee would this year like to extend an invitation to all members of the Russian Orthodox Church to consider making a submission to deliver a lecture or short talk, or to facilitate a workshop or discussion.

To assist those interested in participating, a list of suggested topics is attached. Presenters are free to work with one of these topics, or to propose another that is relevant to the theme.

Those interested in presenting a lecture or short talk are encouraged to discuss their ideas with the clergy members of the Organising Committee, Archpriest George Lapardin and Priest James Carles. Contact details are as follows:

Archpriest George Lapardin

vrev.george.lapardin@syezd.org.au

Priest James Carles

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0428-639156

Syezd 2010 Organising Committee

1 August 2010

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

With the blessing of Metropolitan Hilarion, the following guidelines have been prepared so as to assist those preparing talks and to ensure the success of the conference.

- It is asked that proposed lectures, talks, workshops and discussions all clearly relate to the theme of the conference, and fit within one of the four streams identified;
- For all presentations, we ask that an initial outline paper of approximately one page be submitted to the Organising Committee by email at submissions@syezd.org.au by 31 August 2010;
- The initial outline paper should identify the key points you plan to cover in your presentation;
- An outline paper submitted by a lay person should have the endorsement of a priest;
- Each outline paper will be considered by the clergy members of the organising committee. To ensure a coherent flow of each session and to avoid duplication of effort, the clergy members may suggest modifications to a proposal;
- Those who have submitted outline papers will be advised by 15 September 2010 whether their proposals have been accepted or not;
- The Organising Committee will ask that those presenting a lecture or short talk provide an electronic copy of their final paper by 1 December 2010. These final papers will be published in book form for distribution to conference attendees at the end of the event;
- When presented at the conference, a lecture should not run longer than 50 minutes. A short talk should run no longer than 25 minutes.

SUGGESTIONS FOR LECTURES AND TALKS

Connections On-Line

Sorting fact from fiction: The internet as a source of information

Oversharing: Living life with no secrets

The role of online networking in building Christian fellowship

New technology, social media and compulsive behaviour

Connections With Others

Forming healthy friendships

Preparing for parenting

Living a single life as a young adult

Orthodox Christianity and workplace relations

Sex and the young Orthodox Christian

Contraception

Homosexuality: A practical Orthodox Christian approach in a diverse society

De facto, civil and sacramental marriage: why are they different?

The importance of charitable work

Caring for our clergy

Connections With Church

The Divine Services of the Orthodox Church: Their history, structure and purpose

Why bother going to Church?

Becoming involved in the life of the church

Serving the church in the ranks of the clergy: priest and deacons, subdeacons and readers

Seminary study: What it offers

The monastic life

How can we learn more? Developing study groups in parish life

How are our parishes administered? An overview of the Normal Parish By-Laws

Preaching the Gospel to all nations: Some practical steps

The work of parish sisterhoods

The language of the Divine Services

Clergy kids: Keeping a connection with church

Challenges for converts

Connections With God

Why do we fast?

Reading the Holy Scriptures

The place of the Holy Scriptures in Orthodox Christian life

The role of the sacraments in our lives

Making a good confession: dos and don'ts

Holy Communion: How to prepare, and how often?

Living an Orthodox way of life in the modern world

Father, will you bless me? The role of the priest in Orthodox Christian life

Why Orthodoxy?

Praying with a book, praying from the heart