

## 2020 Rector's Report

2019 was a year of growth and change at Dormition. At our last annual meeting I challenged us to raise the bar for our liturgical worship in terms of attendance and the services we offer. While attendance was not better for every feast in 2019 it was better for some of them, and it marked the first year that we offered Vigil, rather than just Great Vespers, for *all* the major feasts. This is a strong step toward our goal of being a liturgically mature parish that can confidently offer the full range of services. Our attendance also jumped significantly in 2019. Coming in to the year our average Sunday attendance was 65-75. We had an all-time high of 124 at Palm Sunday and have consistently averaged 85-95 since. This is not primarily due to an increase in frequency of attendance but an increase in overall population. We had 10 baptisms and chrismations in 2019, an influx of inquirers, along with some individuals/families who relocated to our area and joined the parish. By my estimate, the total population associated with our parish, frequently and infrequently, is around 150 people. Our parish also welcomed the addition of two priests and their families this past Summer. Their presence enriches our community and will, I hope, open the door for new ministries under their leadership. It also relieves some of the pressure on my schedule. In addition to my responsibilities as your priest I am on two OCA working committees (catechism and rites of reception); am a board member of the Associates of Colonel Philip Ludwell III historical society; and am a managing editor of the online journal Rule of Faith. The fraternity and assistance of my brother clergy is most welcome.

Looking ahead, I see two challenges for our community. The temptation to become cliquish grows along with the parish. We must consciously choose to remain welcoming and willing to make room for others in our communal life. Similarly, the temptation to think that others will be at church so our attendance isn't that important must also be resisted. Faithful participation in liturgical worship is essential to the health of our parish because it is essential to the health of the parishioners. A community that earnestly and regularly prays together is a strong community. I have one goal for the coming year. I want us to continue as we have been going. We will continue to offer Vigil for major feasts; continue with the ministries we have (and perhaps add a couple); continue to serve one another; and continue to support our parish with our time, talent, and treasure so that what God is doing in our community can continue to blossom peacefully, profitably, and soundly to the glory of His holy name.