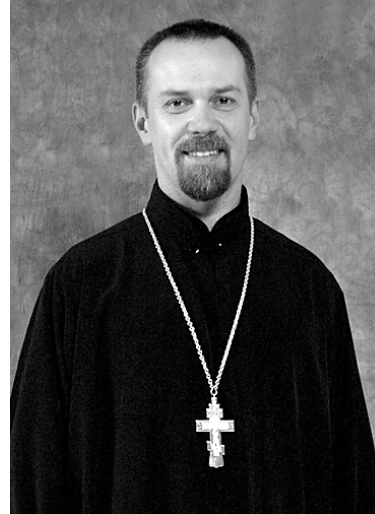


# Fr. John Soucek

## A General Biography



- Birth: Prague, Czechoslovakia (Czech Republic) – October 17, 1967
- Education: Music Education/Voice/Percussion (Marywood University – Scranton, PA)  
Music Performance (Indiana University of Pennsylvania - Indiana, PA)  
Graphic Design Degree (Platt College - Los Angeles, CA)  
Master of Divinity Degree (St. Tikhon's Seminary - South Canaan, PA)
- Ordination: Reader – Tonsured on March 6, 1982 – Holy Trinity Church, New Britain, CT by His Grace, Bishop MARK of Boston
- Sub-Diaconate & Holy Diaconate – July 9, 2006 – St. Tikhon's Monastery Church by His Grace, Bishop TIKHON of Philadelphia and Eastern PA
- Holy Priesthood – April 21, 2007 – St. Tikhon's Monastery Church by His Beatitude, former Metropolitan HERMAN

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Fr. John is the son of Orthodox convert parents – the Protopresbyter Pavel (in blessed memory) and Matushka Paula Soucek. He has one brother, Jacob, who is four years younger. Father John's father, the V. Rev. Pavel Soucek was a graduate of St. Vladimir's Seminary in N.Y. and served as a priest in the Orthodox Church in America for 29 years until his repose on January 15, 2009.

(Fr.) John served in the Church from a very young age, first as an altar-server for many years. At the age of 14, he was tonsured as a reader by His Grace, Bishop MARK of Boston on March 6, 1982 at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in New Britain, CT. In addition to fulfilling duties of a reader in the church, he also began directing the parish choir, becoming very familiar with the liturgical structure of the services while greatly adding to his experience and formation in the service to God.

Upon graduation from Glendale High School (Flinton, PA) in 1985, (Fr.) John was accepted to St. Tikhon's Seminary where he studied theology for two years while taking evening courses at Marywood College (Scranton, PA) as a Music Education and Performance major.

He left his studies at St. Tikhon's and Marywood in 1987 and continued his educational pursuit of music at Indiana University of Pennsylvania for a brief time.

Upon leaving IUP, he pursued a career as a semi-professional musician in Connecticut with other musician friends. During this time he met his wife, Michelle, a fellow performer, whom he married on June 4, 1989.

Newly married, the couple moved to California to pursue career opportunities. During this time they became members of St. Innocent Orthodox Church in Tarzana, CA where (Fr.) John became assistant choir director and then full-time choir director after a couple years, a position he held until 2005.

While in California, (Fr.) John and his wife Michelle welcomed three children into the world. First-born daughter Christina was born on April 5, 1993, second daughter Sarah was born on November 2, 1994, and son John was born on September 28, 2003.

In addition to his music, (Fr.) John worked in the construction field specializing in drywall, plaster and stucco. After working for several companies in lead positions, he left the construction industry for a time during which he owned and ran his own auto detailing business. Then, once again, he returned to the construction field as an independent contractor while still providing auto detailing work on occasion to a select clientele as well as pursuing a professional musical career at the same time.

After several years in these fields, (Fr.) John pursued studies in graphic arts at Platt College in Los Angeles, CA. He graduated in 1999 with a degree in Graphic Design.

Within two weeks of graduation, (Fr.) John secured a job as a graphic artist for a Los Angeles area global multi-media distribution company in their design department. Within two years (Fr.) John was promoted to an Art Director position for marketing & advertising materials for the company in addition to doing design for audio and video packaging. During this time, (Fr.) John also established a successful freelance design business catering to a variety of clients.

In Spring of 2005, (Fr.) John was invited to sing in the Centennial Choir, under the direction of Fr. Sergei Glagolev, for the 100th anniversary of St. Tikhon's Monastery in South Canaan, PA. (Fr.) John travelled to Pennsylvania for the occasion, after some convincing by friends and family, and participated in the events of the Annual Memorial Day pilgrimage and 100th Anniversary hosted by St. Tikhon's Monastery and Seminary.

During the trip, (Fr.) John was profoundly and spiritually effected by the visit. This he contributes to nothing less than inspiration of the Holy Spirit and opening up to the will of God, resulting in a call to the “next level” of service to God and the Church. (Fr.) John felt compelled to return to St. Tikhon’s seminary to complete the studies which he had begun and left behind twenty years earlier, leaving everything to faith and trust in God.

Four months later, after leaving his lucrative design work, the beloved parish where he was choir director, and the pursuit of his music career, he showed up at a humble duplex in Simpson, PA which would be the new home for himself and his family for the next two years. (Fr.) John resumed his education at St. Tikhon’s Seminary in September of 2005, now accompanied by his wife Michelle, daughters Christina and Sarah, and son John, born with Down syndrome. Michelle had left her career as a school teacher when John was born in order to immerse herself in full-time care for his special needs.

(Fr.) John was accepted into the Master of Divinity program at St. Tikhon’s Seminary. He quickly became closely involved with the seminary choir, often offering his experience in church music by directing the seminary choir. He was also chosen to travel with the seminary mission choir as lead baritone during his time at St. Tikhon’s.

(Fr.) John also volunteered his skills and experience in graphic design and layout for the production of St. Tikhon’s Seminary yearbook: The Tikhonaire. He continues to work on the Tikhonaire staff yearly as senior design and layout editor as well as producing various other materials for St. Tikhon’s Seminary, Bookstore and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania.

On July 9, 2006, (Fr.) John was ordained to the holy diaconate by His Grace, Bishop TIKHON, at St. Tikhon’s Monastery church. During his diaconate, Fr. John frequently served at St. Tikhon’s Monastery church and on occasion travelled with His Grace, Bishop TIKHON of Eastern Pennsylvania, serving with him on parish visitations.

After serving as a deacon for about nine months, Dn. John was called to the holy priesthood. With the blessing of his home diocesan bishop, Bishop BENJAMIN, of San Francisco and the West, upon the recommendation of the Dean of St. Tikhon’s, the V. Rev. Michael Dahulich and with the blessing from then Metropolitan, HERMAN, Dn. John was approved for and given a blessing for ordination to the holy priesthood. On April 21, 2007 at St. Tikhon’s Monastery church, Fr. John was ordained to the holy priesthood by His Beatitude, former Metropolitan HERMAN.

Shortly after his ordination, Fr. John received an invitation from the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania to consider serving a parish in the diocese in the event that a parish assignment in his home diocese of Los Angeles was not immediately available.

The will of God was for Fr. John to accept the invitation and receive an assignment in Eastern Pennsylvania. After being released from the Diocese of the West by His Grace, the

Right Reverend BENJAMIN, Fr. John was offered the rector's position at St. Michael's Orthodox Church in Old Forge, PA which he and his Matushka Michelle humbly and joyfully accepted.

Fr. John graduated from St. Tikhon's Seminary with the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree on May 28, 2007.

On Sunday, June 24, 2007, Fr. John and his family arrived at St. Michael's to begin serving the parish.

In December of 2007, Fr. John was officially installed as the rector of St. Michael's by His Grace, Bishop TIKHON, of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania.

In the Fall of 2007, Fr. John accepted an invitation to join the faculty of St. Tikhon's Seminary as an instructor in Liturgical Arts and Practice. He currently serves on the Seminary faculty as an adjunct professor and senior lecturer in Liturgical Practicum, instructing second and third-year seminarians in the Master of Divinity program.

At the 2009 Diocesan Assembly, Fr. John was elected to serve as a member of the Diocesan Council and is serving in that position for the 2009-2010 term.

Glory to God for all things!