

Briefly noted

News in the [September 4, 2007](#) issue

**A retired Episcopal priest** has admitted sexually abusing four adolescent boys while serving as rector of St. James Episcopal Church in Skaneateles, New York, from January 1986 to May 1993, reported the Episcopal News Service. James E. Putnam, 66, was suspended for 20 years from acting as a priest after an investigation by the Diocese of Central New York. Bishop Gladstone “Skip” Adams apologized to the victims, their families and the St. James congregation at a meeting at the church August 13. The diocese also informed state police and other dioceses where Putnam had served in the past. “Through his actions he has abused and betrayed” the trust of youth in his care and the authority given to him as a pastor, said Adams, who became bishop in 2001. Putnam, who left St. James to be dean of the Cathedral of All Saints in Albany, New York, served as chaplain to the New York state Assembly from 1994 to 1996. Last year he ran unsuccessfully for a state Assembly seat against the incumbent Republican.

**The Russian Orthodox Church** marked the 70th anniversary of the bloody peak of Josef Stalin’s terror with a procession that began from a remote northern island archipelago that became the prison camp immortalized in Alexander Solzhenitsyn’s world-famous book, *The Gulag Archipelago*. The procession ended on the edge of Moscow at a former “killing field” that has now become a shrine to Soviet leader Stalin’s millions of victims. A wooden cross that accompanied the procession to Butovo, south of Moscow, where mass executions began 70 years ago was erected next to the newly built stone Church of the Resurrection and the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. Patriarch Aleksy II of the Russian Orthodox Church has referred repeatedly to the site as Russia’s Golgotha. From August 1937 to October 1938 alone, at least 20,000 people are believed to have been shot and buried as “enemies of the people” in a field adjacent to the church. The field was a secret facility of the KGB until the early 1990s.