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editor’s letter

Christmas Tapestry

Christmas time is rich with symbols and memories. The sights of trees covered in lights, the fragrance of warm cider, the taste of candy canes and the sounds of carols and the crumbling of wrapping paper brings almost any adult to a child-like state. Christmas memories weave a tapestry of memorable experiences and messages that affect us as persons, families and communities. The Christmas tapestry contains messages of hope, values and relationships. Our tapestries offer a glimpse into our souls and manifest God in our lives. Entwined in our tapestry is a roadmap to salvation.
For me, Christmas time can best be described as “bright sadness.” As a treasured family time, steeped in traditions and customs, it is the ultimate time for recalling treasured memories. Some of these memories evoke sadness in my heart, which longs for all that seemingly has been lost as life continues to unfold itself. From the loss of my youth and all those loved ones who have been taken to their eternal rest, to the loss of the youth of my children, who are now going their own ways, these memories produce a bright sadness in my heart. This sadness is a “bright sadness” because Christ’s birth has made it possible for us to renew ourselves in Him; a renewed life which transcends divisions of time and space. In Christ, we are united regardless of time or geography. When my children, or parents, or grandparents, or great-grandparents can’t be home for Christmas, it is in and through Christ that we can indeed celebrate the feast together. After all, it is in Christmas that heaven and earth become one. It is in Christmas that Jesus comes to us. It is in Christmas that the unseen becomes visible as we behold the Creator as an infant.

Also, in celebrating the Christmas feast, we are given gifts by God, which we can use to help us work out our salvation. For me, the greatest gift is manifested in the very act of gift-giving. When we are generous with each other, we learn to destroy jealousy, which divides and destroys us as a Church and as families. From the murderous act of Cain, to the betrayal of Jesus by Judas and the leaders of the Jews at the time of our Lord’s life on this earth, we have witnessed jealousy as a passion that divides and destroys. However, jealousy is destroyed when we love one another. Jealousy is destroyed when we build each other up and share in the Lord. Jealousy is destroyed when we recognize that Christ meets our needs for salvation, and nothing else matters. Jealousy is destroyed when we celebrate Christ in our midst. Jealousy is destroyed when we recognize that God is with us! Christmas shows us how to defeat this passion and build unity and love among ourselves and our fellow humans.

Another gift manifested in the Christmas tapestry is hospitality. Christmas time remains the time when Christians make a special effort to host and visit each other. As we gather in Christ’s name, we share a holy space. We offer each other the love and hospitality of the Lord. We give each other comfort, and we witness to the Christ who came and comes to us. This is our time to encourage and love each other.

Another major theme of Christmas is humility. The Creator comes to us as an infant. In spite of the hype and exaggerated commercial aspects of this feast, Christ displays ultimate humility and simplicity. In celebrating Christmas, we find real simplicity in the manger. In Christ’s humility we learn to prioritize and how to make God first. In Christmas, the God who comes for us becomes first in our lives. When we embrace the Christ child in this feast, we learn to detach ourselves from that which is unimportant. Our Church gifts us with a forty-day period of fasting, praying and alms-giving. This time is a preparation to renewal and life.

Events of recent days, including the illness of our Metropolitan and the hurricanes that rocked our continent, have reminded me of the fragile nature of life. In Christmas, God has given us one another, and He has blessed us with His presence through the incarnation of His Son. He has blessed us with the Church, and He has opened the way of salvation. In celebrating Christmas, let us commit ourselves to Jesus Christ, His love and His life. Let us commit to unity over division on all levels of family and Church life. This includes our nuclear family of children and siblings, our extended families of cousins and kinfolk, our parish family, our diocesan family, our archdiocesan family, our Antiochian family, and our world Orthodox family. Let us embrace a commitment to love and witness to the family of humanity. Let us love one another in order to confess Christ as Lord. Let us cherish the gifts that God has given us; husbands, wives, pastors and parishioners. Christ is the one who turns sadness into joy. He is the brightness in all things, even our sadness.

Christ is Born! Glorify Him.
Brother Hierarchs, Members of the Board of Trustees, Clergy and Faithful of this God-protected Archdiocese: Greetings and blessings in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ during this Holy Advent season.

As you all know, I was recently hospitalized for two weeks in Virginia where I received excellent medical care. By the grace of the Almighty God, and through your prayers, I have returned home to Englewood where, God willing, I will continue my recovery. I want to express my deepest appreciation for all of the prayers that have come from within our God-protected Archdiocese and from others around the world. I am truly blessed, and I continue to hold fast to the belief that God “heareth the prayer of the righteous.” (Proverbs 15:29) From the depth of my heart, I thank you for the many phone calls, cards, letters, emails and flowers that have been sent with your expressions of love and concern.

As this time of year, as we prepare to celebrate the Glorious Nativity of our Lord, I wish all of you and your loved ones a joyous and peaceful Nativity celebration and pray that God will continue to bless all of you during the coming New Year.

Please continue to remember me in your prayers as you are remembered in mine. May our Incarnate Lord continue to keep you in His care and protect you from all harm and crown you with perfect health.

Paternally yours,
Metropolitan PHILIP
Archbishop of New York and Metropolitan of All North America
Sayidna, at your enthronement you spoke eloquently about your vision for your diocese. Please share this vision with the readers of The WORD.

I share the same vision as His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, that we be the Church that we say that we are in our Parish Constitutions. Our parishes were established to maintain the faith according to the canons, teachings, scriptures, that was delivered to us by the apostles an faithfully preserved by our forefathers. This affirmation must be understood in Christ’s own command to the apostles to “go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). We are not simply to baptize, but to make disciples. Our parishioners need to be disciples, and we need to be disciples who learn under disciples, preserving that same faith.

I think vitally important is our understanding that we never arrive in our discipleship. Adult education for the faithful people is essential because we continue to grow and learn throughout our lives, learning and teaching as we go. That which I know is exceeded by that which I don’t know. We can all learn more about our faith, the faith that God has revealed and reveals.

Sayidna, your enthronement was the last of the scheduled enthronements. Does this mark a new era for our Archdiocese?

Absolutely. We have embraced a new administrative approach with new levels of accountability and responsibility for all the faithful of the Archdiocese. We are now able to bring to the local parish level that which Sayidna PHILIP has modeled and taught. We can share programs for chanters, parish council members, youth ministers, Church educators and our youth. We can present workshops to build up families, parish stewardship, prepare people for marriage. Those things that are done at the Antiochian Village can be brought to more local levels, multiplying the effectiveness. These efforts will not replace the work being done at the Village. They will whet the appetites of the local participants to participate more at the Village, and they will bring some of what was done at the village to more people in more parishes. In the Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest, we have already initiated some of the workshops, beginning with a workshop for parish councils.

Sayidna, at your enthronement you shared some ideas about hospitality at the local parish level. Would you comment on these?

I also shared some thoughts at the Mission and Evangelist Conference held at the Antiochian Village. While some of my suggestions seem to be obvious, many of us don’t put forth the effort to make them happen.

We need to welcome visitors who are seeking Christ and His Church. Our churches should have signs announcing our wor-
Our parishioners are well known for the hospitality extended to guests in their homes. This same kind of hospitality needs to be extended to guests in God’s home.

When we sponsor a new family or member to the church, we should be sure that family or member doesn’t celebrate major feasts alone. They are your family now, and you should include them at Christmas and Pascha dinners.

**Sayidna, how would you characterize your diocese’ greatest assets?**

We have clergy who are men of faith and prayer, who have years of dedicated and faithful service laboring in the Lord’s vineyard. And thanks to God, we have likewise dedicated and God-fearing faithful. Together, the clergy, the laity, and I are to develop a common vision for our diocese, working in peace and harmony for the building up of Christ’s holy Church. We all need one another, as St. Paul says, “what would the hand be without the eyes, or the ears without the head.” We have God-given gifts just the same so that we may work together for His glory.

the bishop is not omni-competent. I am dependent upon the wisdom and years of experience of faithful clergy. I want to support the church leaders as they express their gifts, and I want the church leaders to help and support me.

**Sayidna, which Archdiocese Departments do you oversee and what are your hopes or expectations for them?**

Sayidna PHILIP assigned me to oversee the Communications, Marriage and Family Life, Christian Education and the Convention and Conference Planning Departments.

I would like to see the gifts and talents of the young people who participate at our camps utilized at the worship services of the Conferences. I want the people to share in the excitement and beauty of these youth. I also want the youth to recognize that they are part of the present, not just the future of their church. We need to make room for these talented chanters at the conferences and the parishes.

**Sayidna, are you happy to be a bishop?**

That is a tempting question. I was happy to serve the mission in Beaver Falls. I became happy to serve a parish in Grand Rapids, MI. I will do what Sayidna PHILIP and God have asked me to do.
Q. What If We Actually Give “Tithes and Offerings”?  

A. More New Challenges!

If Orthodox Christians in a North American parish with 100 pledging units or households actually gave tithes and offerings, what would that mean in dollars and cents? God knows exactly, and we do not. We can state some numbers based on very general demographics. The available data in 2005 suggests that the median income-level for North American households is US $50,000. A tithe of that is $5,000. Hence, the General Operating Budget for that parish should receive $500,000 in income just from the tithes of the households (not counting offerings, just yet, of course). Because of local differences in income, the parishioners should be asked to record in a pledge (“promise”) how much their tithe will probably be in the coming year. Note that if God either reduces or increases a family’s income, that household tithe to God is automatically adjusted — downward or upward as the case may be.

What would happen if all American Orthodox Christians gave “tithes and offerings” and thereby stopped robbing God (Mal. 3:8-10)? Given two million American Orthodox residents in 500,000 households with a median income of $50,000, the tithe coming to all parishes combined would be 500,000 times $5,000, or $2.5 billion. Compared to the North American economy, $2.5 billion is not much. But, given the amount with which American Orthodox are accustomed to fund the needs of the Church, $2.5 billion is huge.

But note well, $2.5 billion income represents a new challenge to Orthodoxy. When we give Christ’s Church $2.5 billion in tithes via our general operating budgets, we then will have to decide why on earth God gave us this money and how to use it according to His will! He is already giving us the money, but until we see it in church accounts, we will not believe it (Matt. 13:14-15)! He has purposes for this money (Eph. 2:8-10; 2 Cor. 8:6-8). Parishes, dioceses and archdioceses will have to decide how to divide the “pie” and that will call for cooperation and sharing by parishes (such as by tithing on general operating receipts to the diocese), dioceses, missions, institutions, charities and overseas Orthodox. Perhaps the Orthodox teaching of “hierarchical conciliarity” will regain its proper place in our councils and synods! What a challenge for us all!

Tithes are proportional by nature; offerings are not, although neither are they “optional” since God expects us to
give them. Tithes are biblically-linked to income; offerings are not. Hence, there is no mathematical way based on income to plan or budget for offerings based on demographics, as does exist for predicting tithes of income. Each household should budget (for its own planning purposes) for its offerings based on what it believes God would have it do.

For one illustration of what an Orthodox household could do if the family feels so led by God to help make offerings somewhat more systematic, it can choose to budget 5% of available income for offerings during the year to come. (Again, this “5%” is just a convenience for that particular family budget — offerings have no biblically based percentage or proportion to income and they need not come from just income at all!) But, in this illustration, perhaps 1% is going to International Orthodox Christian Charities, 1% to Orthodox Christian Missions Center, 1% to Orthodox seminaries and other educational efforts; and 2% reserved to be given to all manner of worthy projects in and beyond the community. There is no practical way to “guesstimate” aggregate totals given the variety of giving outcomes possible. Still permitting “20/20 hindsight reasoning” for a moment, if “5% of income” turned out to be a reasonable demographic tool, our offerings would total $1.25 billion.

Given the uncertainty over offerings which faces planners, what can be done for a special parish project such as a building effort? The congregation can be asked to pledge (“promise”) whatever it is that each household believes God would have them give as an offering, given the basic facts of its cost and its understood appropriateness. The pledges (“promises”) of offerings to the building fund may be spread over years to come and become part of the financing plan for the project. Pledges of offerings for a project may be of assets such as parcels of land, of intangible investments such as stocks and bonds, and so forth — not just from income. Ongoing Orthodox Christian charities and ministries generally do deal with the problem of predictability in offerings by asking for annual pledges. Note that for any of this to work properly, we all must give “tithes and offerings.”

Remember, tithes are 10% of current income and increase; offerings are not proportional and may be from wealth and assets or income. Neither tithing nor offering implies “rich folks” alone are to give (Luke 21:1-4). The poor widow Christ observed offering her two mites, offered 100% of her assets. If you lose your job and have no income, your tithe is zero. Your offering is between you and God!

Now, let us have five closing words of caution.

1) Everyone’s income is different, so everyone’s tithe will in fact be different. Never suggest dollar amounts to give, unless the person has asked you to help do the math (moving the decimal point one place to the left usually helps). God knows our hearts and income.

2) When you ask for pledges for tithes (for the general operating budget) and pledges for offerings (such as for a parish building project), do the “requests” six months apart from each other so as not to confuse the faithful. Confusing the stewards may produce a pledging disaster based on unforeseen misunderstandings.

3) The main price to be paid by Orthodox leaders for a good Christian Stewardship performance by all Orthodox is annual stewardship education — orally and print, formally and informally — by the most respected and committed clergy and laity.

4) Local stewardship expectations need to be enunciated in proper articles of parish by-laws. They must be consistent with biblical teaching (see #5 below) and with existing local parish governance. Guidelines help ensure continuity from forgetfulness.

5) A risk of being successful and of seeing huge sums of money given is that we may forget that all this is only by God’s grace. With the danger of idolatry in mind, let us end with a giving overview.

Give as a faithful steward of God. God entrusts us, and we account to Him (Gen. 1:26-27; Mt. 25:14-46; Lk. 12:42).

Giving …

1. Motives = love & humility.
   (Mt. 6:1-4, 21, 24; 1 Jn. 4: 17-5:3)

   (Mal. 3:8-10; Mt. 23:23; Lk. 21:1-4)

3. Results = blessings & thanks.
   (Lk. 6:38; Acts 20:35; 2 cor. 8-9)

If you love Christ, obey Him (Jn. 14:15). Giving is a walk in His love (Eph 5:1-2). Giving is part of being a good steward.

by John Truslow, Jr.

John Truslow, Jr. is a member of St. Elias Parish, Atlanta, GA, and member of the Archdiocesan Stewardship Department Team.
The theme of this year’s conferences and Biennial Convention speaks to the heart of the spirituality that makes us Orthodox Christians.

Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind. Romans 12:2

I would like to begin with a charming story about a monk from a remote village monastery in Greece.

This monk spent years weaving and selling baskets in the hopes of raising enough funds to enable him to travel to Jerusalem and to walk around the Church of The Resurrection three times, in order to find and experience Christ and be saved.

After many years he realized his goal, he put on his “aloosi” and cape and triumphantly walked out of the monastery with his “akazi” or walking stick, sensing that he would soon be a “hajj,” fulfilling an ancient axiom: Heaven and earth cannot contain me but the heart of a pure and pious man. When he marched out of the little monastery, he happened to see a man begging near the front door and when he saw the monk, he asked him where he was going.

The monk replied regarding his dream and intentions to travel to Jerusalem and to walk around the Church of The Resurrection to find the true Christ and be saved.

The beggar pleaded with him, Holy Father, I am a widow with five little children, why don’t you give me what you have saved and walk around me three times and you’ll find The Christ and be saved.

The monk scratched his walking stick on the earth pondering this dilemma, finally he did as the poor man suggested and walked back into the monastery.

He realized the wonder of finding Christ in the face of his

Blessed is he who sows his plant and waters it with his tears so that his work and fruits be pleasing to the Lord. St. Ephraim The Syrian

Renewal Through Philanthropy

The Word
wounded brother, and he found Christ within himself and not in some distant place or in bricks and mortar. “In as much as you have done this to the least of my brethren, you have done unto me” (Matt. 25).

It has been some years since I have attended a Biennial or Special Convention due to ill health.

It is from this experience that I would like to have a brief conversation with you this evening.

The transformation of the mind is born through suffering. There are all types of human suffering, but there is one truth, that suffering gives one “that third eye” or “the eye behind the eye” to perceive reality as it truly is.

In fact, there is a transparency that comes through personal suffering. The world around us and the people with whom we are in contact with are perceived with a different kind of lucidity or clarity. One might say, that true philanthropy is borne in the womb of suffering.

It seems to me, in order to mature as Christians, living in this crazy world, one must undergo a reality check. Sometimes one suffers physically and others psychologically, both can give birth to a new persona, a new person — through the depth of faith or “the deep speaking to the deep,” as the psalmist says, that refines our souls.

In the context of North American life, we all live, more or less “merry lives” until some catastrophe happens. Then we turn to God as some kind of magical wizard who will catapult us out of our tragedies, this is unrealistic.

Orthodoxy is a mystical way of life, or there is no institution that God cannot dispense with. Life in Christ is a process that engages us in every aspect of our life in this world, in joy and in sorrow: this is our own gift to the world.

When one suffers, through whatever God sends us through “joyful suffering,” one can be led to transforming our ordinary lives to extraordinary ones, propelling us to servanthood, serving others. One may call this transcendence through service, that is becoming a vehicle for grace in touching lives with tenderness and love. The theme of this talk is based on “the love for the brethren” or Philanthropy.

On the practical level, that which defines what Orthodox Christianity is, through “praxis” or the practical. That is, the “practice” of symphonic energy or synergy, the divine and human embrace: in the bearing the burdens of others.

Our relationship to the Church can or must be transformed. We are gathered at this convention to do what? To practice what it is to be a member of the Body of Christ, His Church as servants: This is the basis for personal renewal.

When one is engaged in serving, one’s whole perspective changes regarding our roles as pastors and church leaders as not self-seeking, but transforming our own lives in humility and therefore, those with whom we are working with at whatever level of Church life.

The word transformation comes from the Greek “metamorphous.” There is an interesting metaphor with this idea when one sees how a caterpillar is transformed into a beautiful butterfly.

We too can shed our contingencies, our “ego” ways in the world to be transformed in Christ, through the beauty of servanthood, and therefore renewed by what we do for others.

This is why we chant at Easter and Baptisms the very graphic Semitic phrase: “As many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ” A NEW PERSON EMERGES. It has been said that God gave us divinity, but we have given Him humanity.

There is a marvelous notion from the ancients that goes like this:

We will be there what we are here.
We will be given there what we have given here.
Therefore untie the ropes that bind us.

In practical terms, transformation is that goal for each of us.

Finally, the road to holiness necessarily passes through the baptism or the crucible of an interior fire, to be reborn in the newness of the Risen Lord, for servanthood and for the service of others.

The last line of Les Miserables says it so well. “To love another is to see the face of God.” This is the beginning of renewing and transforming our minds. Amen.

by Very Rev. Antony Gabriel

Economos Antony Gabriel is pastor of St. George Church, Montreal, Quebec.
Most of us are beginners when planning for today and for after our passing. Most especially, we tend to be philanthropic beginners, unsure how to wisely plan our giving. But we need not remain so. With the right advice, we can wisely calculate: “How much is enough for us now?” and “How much is enough for our heirs?” Having done so, we will realize much is left over for philanthropic giving to the Church.

Philanthropists can engage in altruism while also protecting their self-interest and the interests of their family in this generation and the next. We can overcome the danger that our “social capital” — the part of our wealth that belongs morally to the community and especially to God — may end up in IRS hands, rather than deserving charities. After all, between giving to the government or to the Church, which would you choose? Wise planning allows one to give to the Church and protect family wealth, without the government taking everything from them or you.

Are these steps complicated? Sometimes. But manageable with help. This discussion, we hope, will prompt you to seek that help, and work with your estate planning attorney, financial planners, and/or the Archdiocesan Development Department and Committee members to see how your assets can best benefit the Church, yourself, and your family.

How, Where, and When to Begin?

The practical journey of planning your giving begins with a basic step: take time to carefully list your assets. You will be surprised by much you have. Then look at the assets that you may give to the Church, including:

- Securities (publicly traded and closely-held);
- Life insurance
- Retirement plan assets

...real estate, including personal residence
- Collections
- Intellectual assets such as copyrights and patents, and, of course,
- CASH

All of these can be given, securing the maximum for both Church and family through proper planning. The giver’s federal and state tax rate (bracket) will determine true savings; the higher the rate, the more saved from each dollar donated. (Careful planning is especially important for addressing the technical issues of giving non-financial [non-cash] assets. Questions involve properly valuing assets, determining deductibility limits, and importantly, calculating the potential loss of future income. Giving non-cash assets has the potential for making larger gifts possible.)

Now let’s turn to another common problem: when to give? Many donors wait until the last minute, which is a common problem of year-end giving. Please do not wait until year’s end to consider charitable donations, especially for the Church. You may find an unhappy answer to the question: the IRS, or the Church? Remember that cash gifts must be received or postmarked on or before December 31 of the year. Non-cash assets are even trickier, so I implore you to act now to determine what you are to give and how.

Examples of Different Types of Giving with Different Tax Advantages

Cash is the most efficient gift for those who itemize tax deductions. You are allowed to eliminate tax on up to 50% from your adjusted gross income (AGI). Any deductions not used may be used in up to five future tax years.

EXAMPLE:

Abraham and Hafeza, part of the 36% federal income-tax bracket, make a $10,000 donation to the Antiochian Archdiocese Youth Ministry. That gift will save $3,600 from their federal income tax. If their state has its own income tax, the charitable gift will reduce state income tax as well.

Another wonderful gift is appreciated assets. These are...
stocks, bonds, real estate, etc. that have gained in value over time. Such gifts are usually deductible at their full value to up to 30% of your AGI. As with cash, the remaining excess deductions may be carried over for use in up to five future years. (NOTE: Even if your asset has lost value, you will get a double benefit if you sell it. Why? Your cash gift from the proceeds is tax-deductible while the capital loss adds a tax-deduction!)

EXAMPLE:
Alexis Aboud invested in a stock several years ago paying $10,000; now it has appreciated to $100,000. If she sells, she will produce a gain of $90,000 and a capital-gain tax of $13,500 [15% times $90,000]. But after a wonderful talk about Church youth at the Antiochian Village, Alexis donates the stock to the Archdiocese, earmarked “Antiochian Village Fund.” She gets a $100,000 deduction, saving her $33,000 in taxes. [She is in the 33% tax bracket.] But, there’s more benefit to come. She also avoids an $13,500 capital gains tax. Total tax savings: $46,500.

Other Steps: Trusts
Other ways for large assets to be tax-protected, family-benefiting, and Church supporting are the employment of a trust. An appreciated asset in a charitable remainder trust allows for its tax-free sale (including capital gains). The reinvested proceeds can generate income for the lives of surviving family. A charitable lead trust avoids your heirs receiving gift and estate taxes on the trust’s principal, while its income supports a charity (the Church). An irrevocable insurance trust can enable life insurance policy proceeds to pass without estate taxes (and even income taxes [IRC 101 (a)1]). (Consult a tax advisor for more details).

The above discussion contains just a few ways Church contributions can reduce your tax liability while aiding your family’s future. Please feel free to call Development Director Ruth Ann Skaff at 301-765-7001 or toll free at 866-765-7001 with questions, or e-mail her at development@antiochian.org. Always consult with your personal tax adviser on how this information pertains to your particular situation.

This month’s guest author is Rev. Robert (Bob) Bethoney, who is attached to St. George Church in El Paso, Texas. Before being ordained, Fr. Bob was a highly successful Wall Street executive for nearly 40 years. Father Bob and Khouriye Elizabeth have a daughter, Alexis, who is currently in pre-law at the University of Texas at El Paso. He is also a valued consultant to the Development Committee.

JANUARY, 2006

1. COLOSSIANS 2:8-12; 17. HEBREWS 13:17-21; LUKE 2:20-21, 40-52
2. HEBREWS 3:5-11, 17-19; 18. HEBREWS 13:7-16; MARK 12:13-17
5. 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-27; 21. COLOSSIANS 1:3-6; LUKE 3:1-18 (strict fast)
6. TITUS 2:11-14, 3:4-7; 22. 1 TIMOTHY 1:15-17; MATTHEW 3:13-17
HOLY THEOPHANY
23. JAMES 2:14-26;
7. ACTS 19:1-8; 24. JAMES 3:1-10;
JOHN 1:29-34 25. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-11;
8. EPHESIANS 4:7-13; 26. JAMES 4:7-5:9;
LUKE 20:27-44 27. 1 PETER 1:1-2, 10-12;
9. HEBREWS 8:7-13; 28. 1 THESALONIANS 2:6-10; LUKE 20:27-44
LUKE 21:12-19 29. 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-15;
10. HEBREWS 9:8-10, 15-23; 30. HEBREWS 13:7-16;
LUKE 21:21-19 31. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-11;
11. HEBREWS 10:1-18; 32. 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-15;
LUKE 21:5-7, 10-11, 33. 1 THESALONIANS 2:6-10; LUKE 20-24 (fast)
LUKE 21:12-19 34. 1 TIMOTHY 5:14-23;
12. HEBREWS 10:35-11:7; 35. LUKE 16:10-15
LUKE 21:28-33 27. 1 PETER 1:1-2, 10-12,
13. HEBREWS 11:8, 11-16; 36. 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-15;
14. HEBREWS 7:36-8:2; 38. 1 THESALONIANS
JOHN 10:9-16 5:14-23; LUKE 16:10-15
15. 1 TIMOTHY 15-17; 29. 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-15;
LUKE 18:18-27 30. HEBREWS 13:7-16;
16. JAMES 2:14-26; 31. 1 PETER 3:10-22;
MARK 8:11-21 32. 1 TIMOTHY 4:9-15;
MARK 8:11-21

Very Rev. George Alberts
I recently visited an Orthodox Church for the first time. There's nothing unusual about that, many people visit Orthodox Churches, except that I have been an Orthodox priest for over two decades. Let me explain. I recently went on vacation to visit some family in a mid-size city in another state. My family and I had plans to attend church with my relative and her children (a Protestant, evangelical church) but late on Saturday evening, problems developed and they were unable to go to church the next morning. Facing the prospect of staying home on a Sunday morning, my wife and I decided to locate an Orthodox Church in the area. With the help of the internet, we managed to find an Orthodox parish a reasonable drive away, downloaded directions from the parish’s excellent website and off we went on Sunday morning. With such last minute plans I had no cassock or rason to wear and not even time to try to reach the local priest by telephone. I decided to simply sit with my family and the congregation during the Divine Liturgy.

We found the Orthodox Church in the next city fairly easily but it was a rather run-down looking former protestant Church in a less-than-desirable neighborhood. While there were many cars in the parking lot, the front door was locked as was a side door. After a few minutes of trying to find our way inside, we managed to find the door and were surprised to find the congregation already singing the Creed during the Divine Liturgy. While the parish’s website announced services at 10 a.m., we arrived only to discover that the Liturgy actually began at 9:00 during the summer.

The Divine Liturgy was quite wonderful. The parish choir was quite good singing mostly in English with a few hymns in the parish’s language, the 100+ people present were prayerful and a good mix of younger and older people. The priest served reverently and was obviously a very caring pastor. In all, I felt that if I were looking for a parish to join, I could be very happy in what seemed like a wonderful parish.

Then came the dismissal and the distribution of the Antidoron. Shortly before this, my wife felt light-headed and left to go find a restroom. My young daughter and I received the Antidoron from the priest but he said nothing to us. We passed dozens of people in the vestibule of the church and no one said anything to us. We finally found my wife sitting in a chair outside of the restroom and found she had a similar experience: dozens of people had passed her and no one said a word. While I could smell the aroma of coffee emanating from somewhere, no one welcomed us to join them. As we were leaving, my seven-year-old daughter summed it
up: Dad it’s like we were invisible. Why didn’t anybody talk to us?

Was our experience unusual? My unscientific polling of several friends and relatives uncovered similar stories. Experiences of people being warmly welcomed in Orthodox Churches is not typical.

Would we have been warmly welcomed if I was appropriately dressed in cassock and rason? Several years ago I was again a visitor in another city and went to the nearest Orthodox Church for the Divine Liturgy, this time dressed properly as an Orthodox priest. Here I had a chance to speak to the priest before the Liturgy began and he greeted us warmly and welcomed us to the parish. But once the Liturgy was over the welcome was the same. No one was mean or nasty, they just ignored us. Again I could smell the aroma of coffee coming from somewhere but we weren’t quite sure where to go and no one invited us.

YOU HAVE A MISSION!

After sharing our experience with my Evangelical relatives, they wondered if the reason why the Orthodox faithful are so neglectful of visitors is because we are not concerned for evangelism. Certainly this is one reason for the neglect of visitors: we have no burning passion or desire to share the Gospel, but this is changing. There is a growing fire burning in the Orthodox Churches of America to engage in mission. We are rediscovering, in the words of Archbishop Anastasios of Albania, that mission is in the very DNA of the Church. Parishes large and small are supporting a growing body of Orthodox missionaries serving around the world. But with these efforts an idea has crept in that mission work is for the professionals, that is, those theologically trained and specially prepared for mission work. Have you ever seen those car commercials with a sports car racing through streets and a disclaimer at the bottom: Professional driver, do not attempt this yourself? We have forgotten that Christ’s command to Go, therefore, and teach all nations … has been given to all Christians and not just the clerical professionals! It was a lay woman, St. Nina, who became the Enlightener of Georgia and is honored with the title Equal-to-the-Apostles. Before St. Herman and his fellow missionaries landed on the shores of Alaska, it was Russian fur traders who laid important groundwork by baptizing some of the native people and sharing their Orthodox Faith.

Every Orthodox Christian is called to share in this work of missions and one of the most effective, yet simple forms of missionary work is known as relational evangelism. If you know how to be a friend to another person, you can do the work of evangelism. Relational evangelism is simply the sharing of our Faith through our personal relationships with other people. It involves being a friend first, showing an interest in another person, listening, caring for another person and only then sharing our Orthodox Faith as a natural extension of our connection with that person. Relational evangelism is that which takes place around the kitchen table or over a cup of coffee. Relational evangelism often begins once the Divine Liturgy is over and everyone goes to the coffee social. St. John Chrysostom wrote of the liturgy after the liturgy celebrated not on an altar of stone or wood but on the altar of flesh or blood which is our neighbor. While we may think that evangelism involves preaching on a street corner to strangers, there is only one example in the book of Acts of St. Paul preaching in a town square (in Athens) but there are numerous examples of St. Paul becoming part of a household (such as that of Jason in Acts 17), and sharing the Faith through these extensive networks of family and friends. Relational evangelism is not preaching, it is sharing with a friend. Relational evangelism does not imply that you have the answers to all the theological questions that visitors to our churches have. Relational evangelism does imply that you are struggling to live the Orthodox Faith and can somewhat model an Orthodox lifestyle despite your obvious weaknesses and sins.

God is sending us people who are seeking the truth of Orthodox Christianity from the theological and moral confusion of much of the Christian world. We must cooperate with the Holy Spirit by practicing this most simple form of evangelism. Can visitors find our churches? Can they find the correct time of services and easily find the door to get in? Will they find people there who are interested in them, who will welcome them, who will listen to them, who will get to know them? Like the theme from the old television show Cheers, we all want to go to a place where everybody knows your name.

by Very Rev. Edward Pehanich

Fr. Edward Pehanich is pastor of St. Nicholas Carpatho-Russian Church, Monongahela, PA.
ORDAINED

YELOVICH, Deacon Elias to the Holy Priesthood on October 23, 2005 at St. Mary Orthodox Church in Chambersburg, PA by His Grace Bishop THOMAS.

DAMICK, Subdeacon Andrew to the Holy Diaconate on October 20, 2005 at St. George Church, Allentown, PA by His Grace Bishop THOMAS. He is attached to St. Philip Church, Souderton, PA while he completes his seminary studies.

SEIB, Subdeacon Dionysius (Dennis) to the Holy Diaconate on October 23, 2005, at St. James Mission in Modesto, California. He is assigned to that parish.

DECEASED

PARSONS, Archpriest John of St. Anthony Church, Halifax, Nova Scotia on October 5, 2005.

THOMAS, Khouriye Julia (retired) of St. John the Divine Church, Lakes Charles, LA on September 5, 2005.

AWARDED

The Antonian Silver Medal to Dr. Nabil Sayegh of Virgin Mary Church, Yonkers, NY on October 15, 2005, presented by Episcopal Assistant Father George Kevorkian on behalf of His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP.

DEPARTMENT OF SACRED MUSIC ANNOUNCES THE LAUNCHING OF THE FEAST DAY MUSIC PROJECT

The Department of Sacred Music is posting on its web site, www.antiochian.org/music, the music for the first two Feast Days of the Church year, the Nativity of the Theotokos and the Elevation of the Cross. This music can be found by clicking onto the boxes at the top of the Table of Contents for the month of SEPTEMBER. There will be listed the selections for September. Click onto the “Nativity of the Theotokos Series” and the “Elevation of the Cross Series” and you will obtain all the music for the respective feast day.

The Department plans to post the Feast Day Music for the remaining feast days as soon as they are completed and prior to each feast day. The music for each Feast Day will include:

1) Refrains for the First Antiphon (Byzantine and Russian selections)
2) Refrains for the Second Antiphon (Byzantine and Russian selections)
3) Entrance Hymn (Byzantine and Russian selections)
4) Troparion for the Feast
5) Kontakion for the Feast
6) Prokeimenon (Byzantine with verse in chant form)
7) Alleluia (Byzantine with verse in chant form)
8) Hymn to the Theotokos
9) Communion Hymn with verses

Great Gift for Christmas and all Occasions throughout the Year!!!


With the encouragement of His Grace Bishop ANTOUN, the Diocese of Worcester combined choirs recorded Make A Joyful Noise Select Hymns from the Divine Liturgy

… the purpose of this recording is to spiritually enrich all who hear it, especially those who are unable to attend the Divine Liturgy due to illness.

We took this one step further and made the CD a fundraiser. The entire profit from the sale of the CD will go to three Orthodox charitable groups … Theophany School, Needham, MA, IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities) and the Antiochian Women’s Project.

We hope that you will enjoy this Christian effort of “Music Making A Difference.”

Submit orders and request pricing information by e-mail or phone: dfranciosi@aol.com or 781.769.2443
Sharing the Faith

From the Director’s Desk

Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In this issue of the newsletter, we bring you wonderful words from our two featured diocesan coordinators, Bob Snyder and Billie Oldziey. As our space is limited here, we have “teased” you with a portion of their articles so that you will go onto the website and read them in their entirety. We are so blessed to have such gifted and spiritual volunteer staff members to serve you.

Mini-Institutes. The “Orthodox Institute Midwest,” and the “Orthodox Institute MidAmerica” were successful. Unfortunately, I forgot my camera for the Midwest Institute (Livonia); however, you can see photos from the MidAmerica Institute (Oklahoma City) in this issue. We were blessed to have both diocesan hierarchs present, Bishop MARK of Toledo, and Bishop BASIL of Wichita. The MidAmerica Institute was held in conjunction with the diocesan Fall Gathering, upon the request of Bishop BASIL. I believe this venue is excellent and urge other dioceses to consider the idea. The staff and I were also busy at teacher trainings around the Archdiocese. Please enjoy photos in this issue, and go to the website “Photo Gallery” for many more.

Finally, if you have not received a mailing for “To Tithe is To Love,” the web is the place to visit. The initial program, which was received late and not implemented by the majority of parishes, is to be used this year. We are asking that the first of the four sessions be in Advent, with the remaining three every four to six weeks thereafter. A Blessed Nativity to you and yours!

Carole A. Buleza

York, Pennsylvania

A Festival for Saints

On October 9, 2005, the children were asked to dress as a saint or Biblical figure and to know one fact about their saint to share with everyone. The social hall was decorated with a “heavenly” theme, where lunch was served. A story about a saint was read, and books on saints were displayed. The children answered questions about saints, did a craft, and played games. As they left, each child was given a treat bag, along with saints activities to take home.

For more details, go to www.antiochian.org/christianeducation and click on Saints Festival.

Department of Christian Education
Regional Coordinators

Please contact the Regional Representatives for updates on trainings and other events in your region.

Eastern: Rev. George Alberts (724)684-547
Midwest: Robert Snyder (330)493-4029
Western: Joseph Tershay (831)335-8350
and for Northwest, Linda Funk (306)934-1695
Can-Am: Jacquelyn Fadel (716)282-8243
Southwest: Vasiliki Oldziey (512)459-6264
New England: Anna Hughes (978)686-3274
Southeast: Betty Randolph (864)639-2204
Introducing

Mr. Robert Snyder
Coordinator for the
Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest

Robert Snyder is the Religious Education Coordinator for the Midwest Region, a position he has held for the last fifteen years. He has been actively engaged in Christian education for the last thirty years as a High School teacher, a teen youth advisor, and, currently, as an instructor in Adult Christian Education. During this time, Robert has conducted many Christian Education Workshops, and written numerous articles on Christian Education for The WORD and the OCEC Christian Education newsletter. He is known in his parish of St. George, Akron, Ohio, for his work as a highly successful youth advisor (achieving, among others, “Teen Club of the Year” award), as a past president of the Parish Council and since 1996, as the recipient of the Protsyngelous Ellis Khouri Merit Award.

Introducing

Mrs. Vasiliki Oldziey
Coordinator for the
Diocese of Wichita and MidAmerica

Vasiliki “Billie” Oldziey holds a B.A. in Humanities and Dance and a certificate in Movement Analysis. She is currently working as a substitute teacher and a vision and hearing screener for the Austin, Texas school district. She has taught church school at St. Elias in Austin for the past 18 years and is the director of the church school program. She was the founding editor of the quarterly publication, The Children’s Magazine for Orthodox Christian Children. For the past five years, she has been studying iconography with master iconographer, Vladislav Andrejev and writing icons for private prayer. In the past, she served as the Southwest Region Writing Festival Coordinator and led workshops for church school teachers.

Graduation Day
by Robert J. Snyder

Graduation Day . . . we look forward to it with great anticipation. It’s a rite of passage from adolescence to adulthood. However, most teachers will tell you that the schooling received prior to graduation is only a preparation for “learning to learn — ” a lifetime of learning. How much more so with our Christian education! Unfortunately the idea of lifetime learning, and the goals of excellence, continuing education, and self improvement aren’t widely held when it comes to Christian Education.

The age of graduation from church school differs from parish to parish. Surveys indicate that it happens somewhere in the teen years. In my experience it peaks just prior to receiving a driver’s license. Teachers and students manage to endure religious education programs until fifteen or so. Unfortunately, the attitude of, “Now I am out of Junior High (or High School) so I don’t have to go to church school classes any more — that’s for kids,” extends beyond the classroom to other areas of Christian life, such as attending liturgy, fasting, and praying.

It’s easy to see why our children fall into this trap. Young people do not see adults going to class, studying in the home or anything that resembles continuing Christian education. From their observation religious education is for “children only.” For most, the message of our Christian education programs and graduation ceremonies is that we have learned “it all” by the age of sixteen.

Continued online at www.antiochian.org/christianeducation

Icons — God With Us in Our Homes
by Vasiliki (Billie) Oldziey

As Orthodox Christians, we have been taught that our homes are “little churches.” This has been true since the early church of the Apostles, when the first services were held in the homes of the faithful. St. Paul extends greetings to his fellow Christians in Romans 16:5: “Greetings also to the church that meets in their house.” And if this is to be true, then our “little churches” will have not only the Holy Bible, but candles to light, incense to burn, and icons; lots and lots of icons.

Growing up, icons were always a part of my life. In a corner of the bedroom I shared with my older sister were icons of Christ with the Theotokos and icons of our patron saints. Each night before we went to sleep, my mom would light the electric “kandili” in front of the icons. Once it was lit, I could see the faces of the Theotokos and Christ glowing with warmth in the soft light. Then, and only then, could I go to sleep, knowing I was safe in their presence.

At my Yiayia and Papou’s house, my Yiayia had a prayer alcove where she said her daily prayers. I can still see her kneeling at her little altar, in her nightgown and robe, surrounded floor to ceiling by the icons she had brought with her from Greece. I would hide and listen to her whisper her prayers in Greek. She would turn to me and invite me to join her, but I hung back waiting for her to finish.

Continued online at www.antiochian.org/christianeducation
Teacher Training Workshops Across the Archdiocese

**St. Elias Church**
Sylvania, Ohio
October 8, 2005

Top to Bottom: 1. The participants with Carole Buleza, and Abby Wackenheim, presenters. 2. The Icon of St. Raphael written by Fr. Paul Albert, pastor. 3. Carole Buleza with Carol Haddad, Church School Director, and Fr. Paul Albert. 4. Classroom door showing that each class has a patron saint.

**Orthodox Institute MidAmerica**
St. Elijah Church
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
October 21-22, 2005

Teacher Training Workshop
St. John the Evangelist Church
Eagle River, Alaska
July 15-16, 2005

Teacher Training Workshop
St. Philip’s Church
Edmonton, Alberta
June 3-4, 2005

by Joanne Olsen, Church School Director

One afternoon, our parish priest, Father Elias Ferzli, invited me to come to our church to meet Father Bernard Funk, the pastor from St. Vincent of Lerins Antiochian Orthodox Church, in Saskatoon. Upon arrival, I had the opportunity not only to meet Father Bernard, but his lovely wife Linda as well. Through conversation, Linda spoke about the Church School teacher workshops that she presented through our archdiocese. Father Elias and I looked upon this as a wonderful opportunity for our church. I am a strong believer in the old saying, “Our children are our future,” and I was very excited about the workshop and the promise it held for our children. The better informed and educated we are as people, the better educators we will become. I was looking forward to meeting other Church School teachers within our city and to the gathering and sharing of ideas.

On June 3 and June 4, 2005, the first ever Church School Teachers’ Workshop was held at St. Philip’s Antiochian Orthodox Church in Edmonton, Alberta. The workshop was very well attended with 26 teachers represented from 5 different jurisdictions over the two days. Some of the topics covered over the 2 days included: Orthodoxy, lesson planning, and curriculum and resources. This was a hands-on workshop that enabled us to interact with others teaching similar ages. The topics covered definitely will enhance the quality of teaching in our churches.

It truly was a blessing to have so many teachers that share one faith under one roof committed to learning more to enrich the lives of our children.
Announcing 2006 Dates!

WINTER CAMP
— for Campers in Grades 7-12
  Session I       January 13 - 16
  Session II      February 17 - 20

SERVICE WEEKEND
May 13 - 14
— for teens, chaperones, advisors, young adults & alumni

FAMILY CAMP
— bring the entire family!
  Memorial Day Weekend       May 26 - 29
  Labor Day Weekend          September 1 - 4

SUMMER CAMP
— for Campers ages 9 - 17
  Session I (2 weeks)       June 18 - 30
  Session II (2 weeks)      July 2 - 14
  Session III (2 weeks)     July 16 - 28
  Session IV (2 weeks)      July 30 - August 11
  Session IV (1 week)       July 30 - August 6

VILLEDGE ADVENTURES
— dates & info available soon for 4 different programs for teens ages 16 - 18 ...

  VILLEDGE ROADTRIP
  CHANTING CAMP
  EXTREME VILLEDGE
  ICONOGRAPHY CAMP

Visit our website for the most up-to-date information …
www.antiochian.org/villagecamp

201 Saint Ignatius Trail
Bolivar, PA 15923
Phone: 724-238-9565
Fax: 724-238-6415
E-mail: avcamp@antiochian.org
## Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund

**Parishes**

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Fr. John Salem of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Houston, TX presents a $125,000 contribution for hurricane relief efforts on behalf of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese to IOCC Board member Leonidas Lee Kapetanakis. Subsequently, an additional $100,000 was given to IOCC for a total contribution of $225,000.
This just in: “Young adults fifteen to seventeen are excited consumers and extremely impressionable. Now is the time to influence their choices.” Wonder where this quote came from? Three letters, M-T-V. Music Television, or MTV, told this exact quote to their advertisers this past February of 2005. Think you or your children are safe from these kinds of immoral standards being forced onto you each time you turn on the television? Think again. As of August 2004, 350 million American households were watching MTV, thirty-nine percent of the viewers being under the age of eighteen.

As we all know, the media is clearly trying hard to sway America’s standards for what is wrong and right and what is considered good or bad and it takes a strong Christian and a strong support group, as well as a strong mind to stand against the changing winds.

In Romans 12:2, Paul the apostle tells us, “And do not be conformed by this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind …” As you can tell right off the bat, this is easier said than done. With advertisers and the media as strong as they are, it is very hard not to be swayed into the path of unrighteousness. Being a young Orthodox Christian myself, attending a state university that is ranked as the nation’s third partying school, I know to the full extent how hard it is to try and not be conformed. And I know that without faith or a strong backbone one can only try to avoid becoming another average American with little, if any, self-respect or standards.

After reading Romans you learn that you must not be conformed to this world, not only for your own sake in this life, but also in the eternal one. If you live and are conformed to the way of God then you will die and still be with God. For Jesus Christ lived and died so that we can do both … live and die and still be in His grace. In Romans 14:7, Paul says, “For none of us lives to himself and no one dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again that He might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.” Once you understand this concept then you realize that, by not conforming to this world or indulging in its earthly pleasures, you are not only benefitting your life as you live, but also your life in death.

In Ephesians 1:18, Paul further explains the idea when he refers to “the renewing of your mind.” He not only speaks literally about one’s mental control over his or her actions, but he refers to the mind as “the eyes of your understanding,” further translated by the Orthodox Study Bible, as “the eyes of your heart.” Continuing with this notion that you must renew your mind or the eyes of your heart, you must first find out what exactly the “eyes of your heart” is. When you think of someone’s heart, you think of something that gives you emotion and makes you feel. Looking at this in a literal manner, if your heart had eyes, their function would be to see what is around them, as eyes normally would do, but since they are eyes of the heart, they would give compassion to what they see and see things in a more Christian-like man-
The Word

The Orthodox Study Bible explains the “eyes of the heart” as how a person can see and comprehend God. Now that we know what the mind is, we must learn how to renew it, as Paul says we must do.

As I said before, the mind or “eyes of the heart” have the purpose of making a person more compassionate and more Christian-like. In order to become a stronger Christian and in return renew your mind, you must first obey the main ten rules, formally known as the Ten Commandments. These rules were given to show how true Christians should act and live their daily lives. By following the Ten Commandments, you are already on the path to renewing your mind. This, in effect, strengthens your faith in God, which means that you are not as vulnerable to conforming to this world compared to a non-Christian or a person of little faith.

Once you understand how to be transformed by the renewing of your mind, you must think of what is trying to conform your mind. The first thing that jumps into our heads is the media. Did you know that by the time a student graduates from high school, he or she has already watched 23,000 hours of television? Compare this to how much time is spent in class and you find that the average student spends 11,000 hours in school, making a whopping difference of 12,000 hours! Seeing that the media gets 12,000 more hours of a student’s attention than a teacher does, it is imperative that there must be something else to fill the void of where the teacher stops teaching and the television starts corrupting.

In order not to be conformed to this world, the gap between education and the media must be united by a third influence in order to assure one’s mind of what is actually right and wrong. Naturally, this third influence is the Church. What the students and young adults learn on television and considered “The Real World” by the media is far from the truth. The Church teaches us how we should be living our lives as Christians, as opposed to how the media wants us to live our lives.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Your own mind is a sacred enclosure, into which nothing harmful can enter, except by your permission.” While the media’s and society’s standards, or lack of standards, are near impossible to avoid, you must learn that you don’t need to conform to the media. Instead, you need to learn that nothing harmful can enter your mind, except by your permission. You have a choice to either accept or deny what is presented to you as okay or not okay, and while this choice may be hard to make sometimes, the Church is always there to lend a helping hand and lead you back to the path of righteousness. This is why it is so important to follow Paul’s words to “not be conformed by the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind . . .” Renewing your mind consists of following the Ten Commandments and being a compassionate and loving Christian.

If this speech hasn’t persuaded you in the least bit to become more Christian-like, then maybe this will. As a good friend of mine once told me, “don’t burn your bridges.” Once you die, you will be with God, and imagine how He’ll feel when He sees you have rejected Him your whole life, so that you could indulge in worldly pleasures and sin and then finally, not by choice, you are stuck with Him. Don't burn your bridge from this life into Heaven because, if you do, well, I just have four letters for you. H-E-L-L.

Leah Chalhoub, 18, is a member of St. Mary Church, West Palm Beach, FL.

I want to extend my most sincere thanks to everyone who has sent messages to me on the occasion of my Name’s Day, the Feast of Saint Phillip the Apostle. Your kind and thoughtful remembrance of me is deeply appreciated. May our gracious Lord always surround you with His heavenly blessings.

+Metropolitan Philip
Primate
Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America

Leah Chalhoub, 18, is a member of St. Mary Church, West Palm Beach, FL.
Boston, MA — Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF) is announcing its annual College Conferences to be held December 27th-31st at Antiochian Village in Bolivar, PA and St. Nicholas Ranch in Dunlap, CA. Over the past ten years thousands of college students, high school graduates, and young adults have gathered for the 5-day events sponsored by OCF, the official campus ministry effort of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA).

Over five days, participants attend workshops, engage in humanitarian work, and most importantly, enjoy the fellowship of other Orthodox Christians. Their time spent at the conferences, as one student put it, “fortifies their faith.” This intense experience brings Christ into focus as a new year begins. The College Conference features popular keynote speakers, exciting workshop topics pertaining to relevant young adult issues and struggles, as well as fun evening activities. This year’s theme is “Abide in Me, and I in you” (John 15:4-5). OCF is honored to offer two distinguished and dynamic keynote speakers: Fr. Thomas Hopko, Dean Emeritus of Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, at the East Coast conference and Rev. Hieromonk Jonah Paffhausen, Abbott of the Monastery of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco, or the West Coast conference.

The College Conference has become a powerful influence in the spiritual lives of Orthodox Christian young adults. Gina Johnstone, a graduate of UCLA and member of their OCF group, shares, “My friends and I are always sad when the conference ends because we know it will be an entire year before we’ll see some of our friends again and receive the wonderful spiritual nurturing. One of my good friends told me after last year’s conference that the conferences renew her faith for another year. I can’t wait to renew my faith this year!”

These conferences, which are planned and run by college students who are members of OCF groups, aim to promote unity among Orthodox young adults and to rejuvenate their faith as they continue on their personal journey to salvation. OCF Program Director Joseph J. Samra remarked, “These conferences have become a vital part of so many young adults’ lives; they become re-energized in spirit and in their faith.” The cost of attending is $200, which includes registration, room, and board. There are scholarships available on a first come, first served basis.

For more information or to register for the OCF College Conference, go to http://www.ocf.net. Interested participants can apply directly online or download and mail their registration.

OCF is the official campus ministry effort of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA). It is a Pan-Orthodox effort, overseen by an Executive Committee and aided by a fifteen-person Student Advisory Board. The office is located in Boston, MA, where a full-time staff develops OCF programs and resources.
Eli was brought up Quaker. He was often beside himself at the non-confrontational and all-embracing faith of his Quaker fathers. What did they stand for? Truth was relative. How could so many divergent beliefs all be true? What is truth?

Eli, like a number of other students at St. John’s College and the U.S. Naval Academy in historic Annapolis, Maryland, began to seek and find the truth of Christ because the Orthodox Church was there for him during this unique time of formation in his life.

Two years ago, with the blessing of Metropolitan PHILIP, we began ministering to the college students of Annapolis, making time to meet with them, answering their questions, challenging and encouraging them as they seek the Truth of Christ and His holy Church. In addition to having a regular pastoral presence on the campuses, we began offering weekly Vespers followed by studies in the Orthodox Faith.

Last year, two new chapters of OCF (Orthodox Christian Fellowship) were founded and are now led by two converts who came to Orthodoxy through this evangelistic ministry. Now there are several more students journeying to Christ and His holy Church.

Erica and Cooper are two of them. They met on our retreat last year, have since married, and now are on their way to the catechumenate. Both were raised Protestant. In fact, on our retreat last year, only one of the students was Orthodox and yet these evangelicals, agnostics, and Roman Catholics embraced Orthodox worship and the Orthodox teaching on vocation they were given. Why? The reason is that they are thirsting for the Truth who is Christ.

Capt. Tim Feist is professor of history at the U.S. Naval Academy and one of those thirsting for the Truth of Christ. He found out about our ministry at the Naval Academy and began meeting weekly with me to discuss the Orthodox Faith and its application in our daily lives. He is now a catechumen and faculty advisor for our OCF at the Naval Academy.

Our college students face many challenges in our post-modern, relativistic, and sometimes anti-Orthodox society. It’s during college that many adolescents develop into the adults they will become by the time they graduate. One way or another, they will be shaped by their experience in college during this formative time in their lives. I believe that the Church needs to be there for them.

Last year I attended a meeting with other civilian chaplains at the Naval Academy. Standing before 1,400 new plebes (the freshman class of midshipmen), no less than eight Protestant evangelistic groups were introduced before me. Other groups have been quick to realize the importance of having a daily presence on these important campuses where tomorrow’s leaders are formed.

We now have the opportunity to make this ministry full-time in order to help more students (and faculty) find their way “home” to Christ and His Church.

To meet this challenge, our OCF ministry has formed the Annapolis College Ministry, a full-time outreach ministry which will bring college ministry here to a new level. We have begun daily evening prayers, in addition to our weekly Vespers and study in the Orthodox Faith. Many more students are discovering Orthodoxy as the face of the Church becomes more prominent on the campuses.

With full-time ministry, volunteers and funding are needed. At the heart of the Gospel is the Great Commission of Christ: “Go, ye, therefore, into all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them all things that I have commanded.”

Praise God for the vision of our hierarchs to provide for OCF ministry to our Orthodox students. May we also be faithful to their vision in responding to the evangelistic imperative of our Lord as we journey with others to salvation in Christ.

If you would like to be part of bringing the Orthodox Church to the students of Annapolis, please consider making a monthly contribution to Annapolis College Ministry and visit our website, AnnapolisCollegeMinistry.org. Help us reach the students of St. John’s College and the U.S. Naval Academy with the Truth of Christ and the Holy Orthodox Faith. You can also sign up for our newsletter. God is faithful. Thank you and may God bless you!

by Subdeacon Robert Miclean, M.Div.

Subdeacon Robert Miclean, M.Div., is Chairman and pan-Orthodox Pastoral Assistant for College Ministry in Annapolis, MD and a graduate of the St. Stephen House of Studies.
communities in action

St. Michael the Archangel Welcomes Metropolitan PHILIP

As tiny Bethlehem was blessed among the more prominent cities in Judea at our Lord’s Nativity, so the parish of St. Michael the Archangel on Cape Cod was honored by a visit from His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP during the weekend of September 23-25. Marking the fiftieth anniversary of the ordination of St. Michael’s priest, the Reverend Doctor Nicholas Manikas, the celebration included a question-and-answer session with Metropolitan PHILIP, Vespers, a Saturday evening banquet for Father Nicholas, and a Hierarchical Liturgy.

St. Michael’s, numbering approximately 70 families, many seasonal in this vacation spot, bustled with activity in preparation for and during the historic weekend. Many of those families, most especially the children, greeted Metropolitan PHILIP on Saturday morning at the church in the seaside village of Cotuit, Massachusetts. Children from St. Michael’s Sunday School program presented him with a large banner depicting Cape Cod dotted with lighthouses. Inside each lighthouse was a picture of one of the children, who had spent several weeks preparing the gift with the assistance of their Sunday School teachers Natalie Leva, Julia Henderson, and Wendy Lee. His Eminence then answered questions raised by adults and children alike, speaking with wit, emotion, and sensitivity on issues ranging from the unity of the Orthodox Church in America to the role of women in the Church.

The issue of unity was raised first. The primary obstacles to achieving a united North American Orthodox Church come from both the Old World and the New, His Eminence said: interference from the ancient patriarchates and lack of boldness from church leaders here in the United States. “The Bible said, ‘Without vision the people perish,’” His Eminence observed. “The Church must be moving all the time. The Holy Spirit is not a spirit of timidity but of action. We live in a very troubled world, and we Orthodox must put our own house in order, to be effective. What we have here in America is an Orthodox scandal.”

St. Michael’s includes a number of converts from various other churches, and a highlight of the session came when His Eminence recounted his accepting into the Antiochian Orthodox Church the former Evangelical Orthodox Church. With one of those former Evangelical Protestants in attendance — Father Gordon Walker, a shepherd to St. Michael’s in its years as a mission church and a continuing special spiritual mentor today — His Eminence said the experience was “one of the brightest moments of my life.”

His Eminence’s agile wit was on display as he answered questions regarding the role of women in the church, though he spoke with sensitivity to the various roles women can fill and the reasons for the Orthodox stance on women’s participation.

“The Orthodox Church follows the teachings of Christ,” His Eminence said. “When He chose His disciples, He chose men. If we say He was culturally influenced in that, we accuse Him of relativism. But God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.” That women were not chosen as disciples does not mean they are inferior, he said. “In Jesus, all are one … except in the ordination of priests. But there is nothing demeaning about that.” One of the greatest roles women play in the life of
the Church is attracting young people to the faith by their teaching, he said, gesturing toward the children.

On Saturday evening, following his presiding over Vespers, His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP honored the banquet celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Father Nicholas’ ordination to the priesthood. Approximately 225 guests attended, including many visitors from churches where Father Nicholas previously pastored. During his ministry he served six and one-half years at Saints Cosmas and Damian Parish in Marlboro, Massachusetts; 13 years at St. Haralambos parish in Canton, Ohio; and 26 years at St. Demetrios Parish in Weston, Massachusetts. A native of New Hampshire, Father Nicholas retired to Cape Cod, but his work was not finished. In the fall of 2001, in what all concerned call a miracle, he became pastor to St. Michael’s, which has grown from a tiny Orthodox mission of fewer than a dozen families to a full-fledged parish. Those who attended the banquet viewed the plans for an enlarged church building, the vision of the parish.

The present church building was overflowing Sunday morning for Orthros and a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy. Presided over by His Eminence Metropolitan PHILIP, with co-celebrants Father Nicholas Manikas of St. Michael’s; Father Gordon Walker, pastor emeritus of St. Ignatius Antiochian Orthodox Church in Franklin, Tennessee; Father Michael Abdelahad and Father Ephraim Peters of St. George Orthodox Cathedral in Worcester; Archdeacon Hans El-Hayek from the Antiochian Archdiocese; and Subdeacon William Crocker of St. Michael’s, the liturgy was graced by chanters from several different Massachusetts churches and a combined choir directed by Arthur Peros. Amid the beautiful pageantry, drama, sights, smells, and sounds of the Hierarchical Liturgy, His Eminence spoke movingly of the simple but profound sign of the cross in the history of salvation.

“We invoke the life-giving cross,” His Eminence said. “It speaks to us in many languages,” including the language of sacrificial love, the language of forgiveness, and the language of suffering. “Suffering purifies the soul and is bearable if we accept it in the shadow and the light of the cross,” he said. “So make the sign of the cross the right way, and mean it: the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, One God, Amen.”

After the liturgy, Metropolitan PHILIP presented Father Nicholas with a large cross, a personal gift from His Eminence in honor of Father.
Nicholas’ 50-year anniversary.

The service also included a 40-Day Trisagion memorial to Sally Abodeely of Worcester. Mrs. Abodeely was mother-in-law to His Eminence’s brother, and many of her family members were in attendance for the Hierarchical Liturgy and memorial.

In addition, two members of St. Michael’s, Barry and Margo Irwin of Falmouth, Massachusetts, were inducted into the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch.

A reception and luncheon followed the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy.

A Golden Jubilee in the Holy Priesthood

Celebration of 50 Years in the Holy Priesthood of Arch-Priest Hanna S. Sakkab

On Friday, November 5, 2004, at a gala evening in San Diego, California, Abouna Hanna Sakkab was surrounded by fellow clergy, family, friends, and parishioners to mark an amazing milestone in his life. By the grace of God, our Abouna Hanna, on August 15, 2004, completed fifty years of dedicated service in the holy Priesthood to his God and his Church in various communities in Lebanon as well as in the United States.

Among the clergy present were His grace, the Right Reverend Bishop JOSEPH, the Bishop of Los Angeles and the West, who excelled in his speech expressing the many sacrifices Father Hanna had achieved in his 50 years of dedication to God and the Church. Also among the clergy there was the Very Reverend Father Jon Braun, master of ceremony, the Very Reverend Father Yousef Sakkab, and the Reverend Deacon Simon Yousef Sakkab, whose admiration for his uncle was expressed in his comments.

His lovely wife, Khouryeh Mary, his children: Simon, Suzie and her husband, George with their children Peter and Mariam, Rula and her son Justin, Bassel and his wife Mervat, and Dalia; his brother Emile and his cousin Yousef with their spouses from Amman, Jordan, many other relatives and well wishers from near and far were on hand for this auspicious occasion.

The presence of many parishioners of St. George’s Church was a real tribute to the Jubilarian. The love, dedication, hard work and support of this community are what made the evening so successful.

The well planned program included accolades in music, song, comments in Arabic as well as in English, congratulatory wishes, letters especially that of Sayidna PHILIP and Metropolitan GOFRIL (Saleeby) of Europe who knew Father Hanna for 21 years of his service in Beirut. Video clips (from Dr. M. Marge, and the Very Reverend Fathers D. Smith and G. Morelli, who were unable to attend) and a fabulous slide show prepared and commented by Dalia, Abouna Hanna’s daughter were shown.

The highlight of the evening came when Abouna Hanna, so aptly named “Poet of the Archdiocese” by Sayidna PHILIP, recited his poem that he had written especially for this occasion. The melodious flow of his poetry, the beauty of the words, along with an English version (for those of us whose comprehension of the Arabic language is not perfect), touched and moved all of us.

An additional surprise — a birthday cake for Sayidna JOSEPH, presented by Abouna Hanna’s grandson, Justin — enhanced the celebration.

All of the participants of this glorious occasion did not leave empty handed. Every family present received a beautiful gold-framed Icon of the Good Shepherd (donated by Mr. and Mrs. Munir Bandak of Dubai, UAE, brother of Khouryeh Mary) as well as a C.D. of Abouna Hanna chanting, in his beautiful voice, the life of Jesus Christ in Troparia which he dedicated for the occasion.

His cousin Yousef Ya’qoub Sakkab, who arrived from Amman for this occasion as well shared with the audience the highlights of Fr. Hanna’s life in this
beautiful eloquent Arabic.

During the program, Abouna Hanna’s cousin, Joseph Shukri Sakkab summarized the life of the Very Reverend Father Hanna in rhyme.

The following morning His Grace Bishop JOSEPH presided over the Holy Liturgy. Concelebrating with him were several clergymen among whom was the Very Reverend Father Joseph S. Sakkab and his son Deacon Simon J. Sakkab, the brother and nephew of Father Hanna.

In appreciation of fifty years of faithful service of Khouryeh Mary as well, Father Hanna surprised his wife when Sayedna JOSEPH called upon her and inducted her a Dame in the Order of Saint Ignatius. May God grant them all many happy and healthy years.

**East Coast College Conference at Antiochian Village**

I always look forward to the Christmas season for various reasons. When I was younger, I was up before dawn with my siblings on Christmas morning; we just couldn’t stay asleep knowing that there were presents to open and delicious food to eat. As I grew older and became more involved in the Orthodox Church, I gradually became more aware of the religious aspect of Christmas I began to yearn for something more spiritually substantial; I wasn’t sure what, I just knew I needed something more.

When my older sister was in college, she had the opportunity to attend the East Coast College Conference at the Antiochian Village. Even though she didn’t say a whole lot about the conference, I could sense that the trip had somehow fortified her faith in God. Seeing my sister’s reaction made me want to attend the College Conference.

This year will be my fifth year attending the College Conference. This event is a five-day spiritual retreat during Christmas break for young adults. For five days, participants attend workshops, engage in humanitarian work, and most importantly, enjoy the fellowship of other Orthodox Christians. The College Conference features popular keynote speakers, exciting workshop topics that actually pertain to the things that college students struggle with on a daily basis, as well as fun evening activities. This year’s theme is “Abide in Me, and I in You” John 15:4-5. The OCF is very honored to offer two well-known and dynamic keynote speakers: Fr. Thomas Hopko, Dean Emeritus of Saint Vladimir’s Seminary, at the East Coast Conference and Rev. Hieromonk Jonah Paffhausen from the Monastery of St. John, for the West Coast Conference. Other events include snow-tubing and the Pre-New Year’s Eve Dance on the East Coast and a trip to Sequoia National Forest, as well as dancing, on the West Coast. The cost of attending is $200, which includes registration, room, and board. For more information or to register for the OCF College Conference, go to http://www.ocf.net. Interested participants can apply directly or download and mail their registration.

My friends and I are always sad when the conference ends because we know it will be an entire year before we’ll see some of our friends again and receive the wonderful spiritual nurturing. One of my good friends told me after last year’s conference that the conferences renew her faith for another year. Come and renew your faith!

**St. Michael's, Geneva, NY**

This past August, the Teen SOYO of St. Michael’s Antiochian Orthodox Church in Geneva, NY, hosted our first summer youth retreat spearheaded by Brianna Michalko and Aaron Murphy. Our theme was F.R.O.G., or “Fully Rely On God.” We had a total of 33 teens from many Orthodox churches in the area, including Rochester, Buffalo, Elmira, Boston, Geneva, and Syracuse. The retreat consisted of spending two nights and three days at beautiful Onanda Park on Canandiauga Lake, where we met new friends and reunited with old. It was a jam-packed weekend filled with friendship, fun, laughter, and faith. We had three wonderful guest speakers (Nick Belcher, Father David Smith, and Father Gregory Murphy) who talked to us about the “FROG” approach to situations that we encounter in life. We learned so much, and are very blessed to have had them with us! Overall, the retreat was a big success! We can’t wait for next year!
The People Speak …

Dear Fr. John:

_The Challenge of Our Present_ by Kerry San Chirico, which appeared in the October 2005 issue of _The WORD_ is noteworthy not only for what its author says about Orthodox tradition but — more importantly — what it does not say regarding how the Church should exist in the present and future. This ambiguity is certainly cause for concern. The Church for nearly two millennia has taken great efforts to distinguish truth from error. Ambiguity has certainly not been a part of Orthodox Christian witness nor should it become so today.

Mr. San Chirico’s words reveal a subtle contempt for the historical witness of the Church and is suspicious of the motives and actions of many Orthodox Christians who struggle in fidelity to Orthodoxy and its practices today. These individuals — myself included — are simply not the paranoid escapists and idolaters of the saints that this article points to. Indeed, the author’s choice of such words makes one wonder where his thinking is headed.

In responding to the tragedies of the past, Kerri San Chirico makes a catastrophic mistake in asking his reader to embrace a fundamentalism of novelty and fashion where the present is all we have. This is a recipe for ecclesiastical dysfunction that will ultimately hurt more people than it will help. Faithfulness to the Church and the needs of our neighbor require that we politely decline Mr. San Chirico’s invitation to a fundamentalism of the present and instead renew our understanding of the Church not as a human institution, but as a Gift from God. After all, Fr. Alexander Schmemann was indeed right when he proclaimed, “The law of the Church is to give oneself to what is given, not to seek ones own.”

Andrew Estocin
Cambridge, MA

In the October 2005 issue of _The WORD_, a financial appeal for the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch proclaims that parish priests “work as if [our] life depended on them.” But, in fact, our life does depend on them. As St. John Chrysostom wrote, “For if no one can enter into the kingdom of Heaven except he be regenerate through water and the Spirit, and he who does not eat the flesh of the Lord and drink His blood is excluded from eternal life, and if all these things are accomplished only by means of those holy hands, I mean the hands of the priest, how will anyone, without these, be able to escape the fire of hell, or to win those crowns which are reserved for the victorious?” (On the Priesthood, Book III). The Order’s appeal should be more accurately read, “They work, knowing that your life depends on them.” Brothers and sisters, pray for our Priests.

Melania Marvel
Yakima, WA
Dearly Beloved:

On behalf of the sponsored and aided children of the Children’s Relief Fund, I greet you and pray that you receive this letter in their gratitude and appreciation for the love and concern you have shown them in our Lord’s name.

As we approach another celebration in our lifetime of the Lord’s Nativity, let us rededicate the gift of our own humanity to the humane endeavors for which our Lord came into this world. His coming is our restoration to salvation, which ultimately manifests itself in our philanthropy. To feed, to clothe, to visit, and most of all, to love and have compassion on the needy is, indeed, to incarnate our Orthodox faith.

The Children’s Relief Fund offers three opportunities to assist:

• To sponsor a needy child for $300 annually
• To donate to the general fund which covers a multitude of services to children
• To facilitate the adoption of orphaned children

For those of you who are already participating in our program, we offer you our most profound thanks and gratitude, and we encourage all the faithful in this Archdiocese to support our causes.

In anticipation of your kind and generous response, please accept and use our gift of the enclosed seals as a token of our appreciation for your support, and in closing, please remember that this is our unique opportunity within the Church to join His efforts in bringing care and comfort to needy children.

May you have a blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Yours in Christ,

Father George Rados

CHILDREN’S RELIEF FUND
ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHARITIES

The Children’s Relief Fund (CRF) began in 1982 as a modest project prompted by the need to provide humanitarian assistance to the children of Lebanon, which were and continue to be the innocent victims of a vicious war.

The present situation in Lebanon is even more severe than it was during the war years. The declining economy, unemployment and inflation are tragedies beyond family survival and the need for our help is ongoing.

CRF assistance focuses on educational sponsorship and international adoption. A sponsorship program was then initiated as a pilot activity, which soon developed into a full-fledged outreach program, coming to the aid of hundreds of school age children in desperate need.

The sponsorship program witnessed the creation of two other channels for aid: medical aid and international adoptions – each one offering a channel for American families and all others concerned, to provide a message of love to children in distress throughout the world.

The response was prompt and encouraging from the very start. Over the years, CRF has gained great momentum, as hundreds of families and organizations in the United States and Canada have responded to our appeal, by gently stretching a helping hand to all pleading children.
On the other hand, the children themselves, gratified and thankful, have been an important force behind the continuation of this program. They have been eager to establish links with their donors, continually looking for a friendly response, and in turn expressing their gratitude with a thank you note, a personal picture or a glowing school record.

Every child ceased to be a statistic, but became a live entity, vibrant with the mark of life, searching for a future, waiting to be tenderly touched by Christian compassion and generosity. Here is a handful of little ones whose pleading eyes vividly express the depth of the tragedy in the lives of the children of Lebanon.

We are all called upon to make our small contribution, each in his/her way, and within our resources. The Children's Relief Fund, with the grace of God and your enthusiastic response, has been able within the last twenty three years to set an honorable record, thus meeting the burden of proof of its dynamism and efficiency, and that by coming to the aid of more than 3000 children in Lebanon and neighboring countries.

A modest beginning indeed, but which has enough spark to go the extra mile needed to reach into the hearts of our beloved children. The letters we receive from them throughout the year are heartwarming testimonials that reveal not only appreciation for the generosity of their sponsors, but above all the extent to which the life of a child can be renewed with hope and faith through the little attention and help we give them.

SPONSORSHIP:

Sponsorships are solicited from individuals and organizations who contribute at least $300 a year to a child. Sponsorships do not begin until the initial payment of $150 is received. After that, a child is assigned to its sponsor for one year, to be renewed upon receipt of checks in the consecutive years. Sponsors receive the child’s biography and photograph plus detailed progress reports and letters dictated from the child to a caseworker. All specified contributions and letters are personally delivered to each child by Orthodox Youth Movement caseworkers. At the time of delivery, a member of the sponsored child’s family is requested to sign a receipt. Letters to sponsors are written when caseworkers deliver the contributions. Remember, for $25 a month you can help a desperately needy child living in despair thousands of miles away. That’s 82 cents a day. Imagine your spare change could change a child’s life.

CHILDRENS’ QUOTES:

"Your sponsorship of $300 made a lot of faces smile and made me work harder to achieve my goals."

"Your support and donation is very much needed and appreciated."

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION:

Our program for adoptions in Lebanon continues to prosper. We are currently able to facilitate adoptions from Guatemala through the Hogar Rafael Ayau Orphanage, located in Guatemala City. Details on this program can be sent to interested parties upon request.

ENCLOSED

____ is my charitable gift of $_____________ to sponsor a child ($300.00/year or can be paid in monthly or six-month increments).

____ is a donation of $_____________. We cannot sponsor a child at this time, but would like to contribute to the general reserve for the other programs and emergencies.

All contributions are tax deductible.

Please make check payable and mail to:
Children’s Relief Fund
c/o The Very Rev. George M. Rados
P. O. Box 60692
Potomac, MD 20859

Thank you
Donor(s) ____________________________________
Address _____________________________________
____________________________________________
The Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch
“touching people’s lives” for over 29 years.

Help us to continue to make a difference.

December 18 is the Order of St. Ignatius Sunday. 
Learn more about this wonderful ministry from any Order member in your parish.
Or contact Arlene Assile at: (201) 871-1355
E-mail: theorder@antiochian.org or return this slip to:

The Order
358 Mountain Road
Englewood, NJ 07631

Yes, I want more information about The Order
Name: ____________________________________________
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Phone: _____________________________________________________________________________________
E-mail: ____________________________________________________________________________________

12/05