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The Word

Volume 61 No. 5

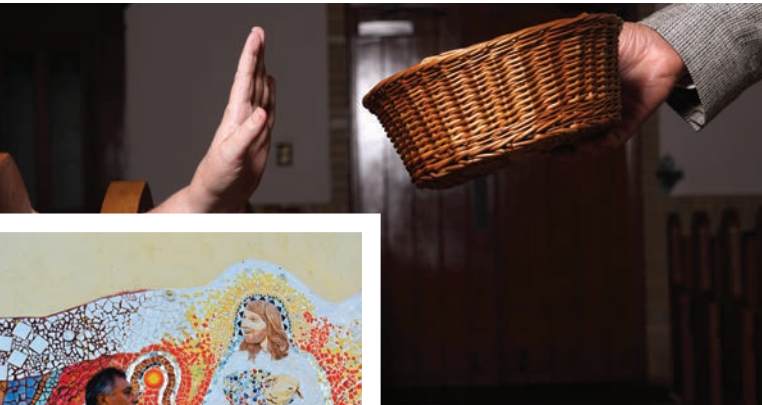
June 2017



53rd Archdiocese Convention
Honoring Bishop ANTON

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The Word



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Letters to the editor are welcome and should include the author's full name and parish. Submissions for "Communities in Action" must be approved by the local pastor. Both may be edited for purposes of clarity and space. All submissions e-mailed and provided as a Microsoft Word text or editable PDF. Please do not embed artwork into the word documents. All art work must be high resolution: at least 300dpi.

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ARE THE COSTS OF CONVENTIONS, CONFERENCES AND CAMPS JUSTIFIABLE?

ONE OF THE LARGEST INVESTMENTS OF OUR ARCHDIOCESE HAS BEEN IN PARISH LIFE CONFERENCES, THE ARCHDIOCESE CONVENTION AND SUMMER CAMPS. IT IS A MAJOR EXPENDITURE FOR THE ARCHDIOCESE, THE PARISHES AND OUR FAMILIES. WHEN I BEGAN CALCULATING THE REAL COSTS, I FRIGHTENED MYSELF. YET THE RETURN ON THESE INVESTMENTS IS ALSO STAGGERING. THESE INVESTMENTS FIGHT PAROCHIALISM AND SMALL-MINDEDNESS, MAKE COMMITTED CHRISTIANS, AND ENHANCE THE SUCCESSFUL MINISTRIES OF OUR PARISHES.

All of these investments are opportunities for us to leave the parochialism of our local communities and gather with bishops, presbyters and fellow Orthodox from other parishes to share dreams, share our faith, support each other, and play. When we gather, we see that our Church is more than my family and friends in town, but many Orthodox from many places. When we gather as the Church, four-square and soccer become more than games. They are opportunities to practice our faith, and see Christ more clearly in all of our relationships. Only at a Parish Life Conference will competing teams study together and share insights and possible questions. Only at church camp is basketball more about making friends than winning. There is no place on earth that better expresses the glory of heaven than when at Archdiocese Conventions all of our bishops, clergy and people

pray the Divine Liturgy together. This banquet is as close as we come to heaven on earth expressing the majesty of Christ and the fullness of our tradition. Tradition, remember, means the Holy Spirit working with us, revealing our Oneness in the life of the Trinity.

Hotels, camps and travel are expensive, but the value of gathering as the one family that we are is priceless. The bonds that our children forge at conventions, conferences and camp are life-long and life-giving, and often make the difference for a successful life in the Church. As adults, we nurture some old friendships and are encouraged by new people and different perspectives. Conferences, conventions and camps will continue for me to be a priority. This is an investment I think that we should continue to make.

Bishop JOHN



The Most Reverend
Metropolitan JOSEPH

The Right Reverend
Bishop ANTOUN

The Right Reverend
Bishop BASIL

The Right Reverend
Bishop THOMAS

The Right Reverend
Bishop ALEXANDER

The Right Reverend
Bishop JOHN

The Right Reverend
Bishop ANTHONY

The Right Reverend
Bishop NICHOLAS

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by Saint Raphael (Hawaweeny)
Founded in English as
The WORD in 1957
by Metropolitan ANTONY (Bashir)

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Fr. Antony Gabriel is collecting the names and histories of all of the clergy who have served our Archdiocese from the earliest days until the present. Metropolitan JOSEPH has asked Dimitri Zeidan to work with Fr. Antony to preserve and display the materials collected appropriately. It is Fr. Antony's hope that the collected materials will help tell our story, which is our history. This will allow future generations to benefit from the experience of those who came before, and to help them understand better their spiritual lineage in Christ through His Church. See Fr. Antony's book for examples of the kind of stories that make up our history. These stories make us laugh and cry. They offer insights and information that will allow us to serve our Lord better.

Contact Fr. Antony Gabriel at economosantony@gmail.com, 520-529-5873, or by mail, and send materials to his home at 6202 N. Via Tres Patos, Tucson, AZ 85750.

Archdiocesan Office

ELEVATIONS

CORBIN, Fr. Michael, to the rank and dignity of Archpriest by Metropolitan JOSEPH and Bishop ANTHONY on April 23, 2017, at St. George Church in Canton, Ohio.

McDONALD, Deacon Vladimir, to the rank and dignity of Archdeacon by Bishop BASIL on Sunday, May 14, 2017, at St. Mark Church in Denver, Colorado. He is assigned as first deacon there.

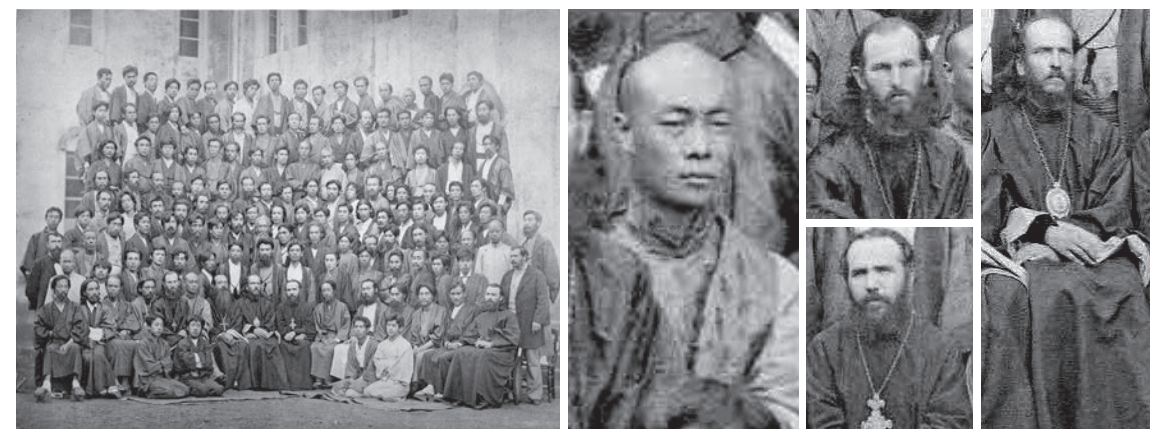
MORRIS, Father Christopher, of St. George Church, Kearney, Nebraska, to the rank and dignity of Archpriest by Bishop BASIL, Sunday, April 23.

ORDINATIONS:

TOCHIHARA, Deacon James, to the holy priesthood by Bishop BASIL on Sunday, May 14, 2017 at St. Mark Church in Denver, Colorado. He is assigned as second priest there.

THE HIEROMARTYR METROPHANES AND THE CHINESE NEW MARTYRS OF THE BOXER REBELLION

Fr. Symeon Kees



Left to right: group photo; St. Mitrophan of Beijing; Hieromonk Vladimir (top); Archimandrite Anatoly (bottom); St. Nikolai of Japan

IN JUNE 1900, DURING THE REIGN OF THE QING DYNASTY, VIOLENCE ERUPTED IN THE CITY OF BEIJING. MEMBERS OF A SECT NAMED THE RIGHTEOUS AND HARMONIOUS FISTS, CALLED "BOXERS" BY WESTERNERS, ROSE UP AGAINST BOTH FOREIGNERS AND NATIVE CHINESE CHRISTIANS. THE BOXERS REGARDED AS ENEMIES ALL SOURCES OF NON-NATIVE INFLUENCE IN CHINA. VICTIMS OF THIS MASSACRE INCLUDED THE CHINESE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN BEIJING, WHICH WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RUSSIAN MISSION IN CHINA. BELIEVERS WERE TORTURED AND KILLED, THEIR BODIES MUTILATED, AND THEIR HOMES BURNED. SOME RENOUNCED THE FAITH OUT OF FEAR, BUT MANY OTHERS SHOWED COURAGEOUS FAITH IN CHRIST AS THEY WALKED TOWARD THE GLORY OF MARTYRDOM.





Icon written by OI Chernyak, commissioned by Archpriest Peter Perekrestov, rector of the Cathedral of the icon Mother of God “Joy of All Who Sorrow” (ROCOP) San Francisco, USA

After the Boxers burned down the Orthodox Church and the mission buildings, Orthodox faithful fled to the home of their priest, Fr. Metrophanes (Cháng Yángjí, 常楊吉). Ordained in 1882 by (St.) Bishop NICHOLAS of Japan, Fr. Metrophanes served as the first native Chinese priest in the Orthodox Church. When the Boxers approached the priest’s home and surrounded it, some of those who had taken refuge there escaped. After breaking through into his residence, the Boxers repeatedly stabbed Fr. Mitrophanes, who had been sitting in the courtyard, and left his body lying under a date tree. The wife of the Hieromartyr, Presbyteria Tatiana, and two of their sons, 23-year-old Isaiah and 7-year-old John, later joined him in martyrdom. Isaiah’s wife (or fiancée according to another source), 19-year-old Maria, desired to remain with Isaiah’s family. Although she helped others escape from the besieged house, Maria joined the ranks of the New Martyrs.

Other Chinese Martyrs from the community included Pavel, a catechist, and Ia, the head teacher at the mission school. By the end of the uprising, 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians received crowns of martyrdom. A few years after the Boxer Rebellion, the relics of the Hieromartyr Metrophanes and other Chinese Martyrs were

given rest at the newly-constructed Church of All the Holy Martyrs in Beijing. A surviving son of St. Metrophanes, Fr. Sergei (Cháng Fú, 常福), was elevated to the rank and dignity of Archpriest. His descendants include a daughter and two granddaughters.

St. Metrophanes and the Chinese New Martyrs are commemorated on June 10th. These New Martyrs, including the courageous children among them, inspire us by their heroic words and deeds. As we endeavor to boldly live the Way and proclaim the Gospel, let us call upon the Saints of China to intercede for us and also for the men and women of their native land.

For more information on the Orthodox Faith in China, visit the website (http://www.orthodox.cn/saints/chinesemartyrs_en.htm) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/OrthodoxChina/>) of the Orthodox Fellowship of All Saints of China, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt pan-Orthodox organization that aims to provide information on the Orthodox Faith in East Asia, support Chinese translation of Orthodox texts, and encourages the veneration of the Hieromartyr Metrophanes and the Chinese New Martyrs of the Boxer Rebellion.

Fr. Symeon Kees
St. George, Houston, Texas, and member of the Board of Trustees of
the Orthodox Fellowship of All Saints of China



One of the group photos in front of Holy Martyrs Church celebrating the 250th anniversary of arrival of Orthodoxy in China, taken on June 23, 24th year of the Republic of China (June 10, 1935 on the Julian Calendar), also 35th anniversary of the martyrdom of Holy Chinese Martyrs. photo from “Christ the Eternal Tao”, courtesy of Hieromonk Damascene.

*Acknowledgement:
I would like to thank
Mitrophan Chin and
all who helped us
make contact with a
great-granddaughter
of St. Mitrophanes
to verify certain
historical details.*



Fatherhood: A Kind of Asceticism

AT THREE IN THE MORNING, OUR HOUSE IS QUIET AND DARK. THE DISTRACTIONS OF THE DAY ALL FADE INTO SILENCE – NO TO-DO LISTS, NO ERRANDS, NO CALLS, NOTHING. I LEARNED THIS THE NIGHT WE BROUGHT ELISE HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL, AND WAS REMINDED THE COUNTLESS NIGHTS OVER THE NEXT COMING MONTHS. WE LEARNED QUICKLY THAT I COULD WAKE UP AND FALL BACK TO SLEEP MUCH MORE EASILY THAN MY WIFE, SO I TOOK NIGHT DUTY. AFTER CHANGING ELLIE’S DIAPER, WE WOULD SIT IN THE LIVING ROOM WITH ALL OF THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF LIFE FAR AWAY. I WATCHED THAT PRECIOUS LITTLE GIRL FOR HOURS AS SHE ATE AND SLEPT IN MY ARMS. I DIDN’T KNOW NURSERY RHYMES, SO I WOULD CHANT THE HYMNS OF THE CHURCH TO HER.



Granted, at three a.m. my mind reached for what it could, and I remember one night chanting the Troparion of the Cross, followed by a Nativity hymn, then “Open to Me” and the Troparion of Epiphany. The next morning I laughed at the odd prayer service I had put together mashing up hymns that spanned the entire liturgical year. But I figured I couldn’t introduce her to the Faith too early. This became my routine. I would hold her and pray (quickly trading my prayer book for the Dynamic Horologion on my phone) because, as St. Paisios taught us, “Prayer has great power within the family.” Christine and I went months without eating a hot meal together (truth be told, I don’t know how many hot or even warm meals either of us had in the first six months). I didn’t know it at the time, but things like exhaustion and loss of free time would become our new normal. Fatherhood held something for me I didn’t honestly expect.

Deacon Thom Crowe

In Holy Orthodoxy, we place a real emphasis on asceticism; it’s an integral part of our faith. When people think of asceticism, the first image to come to mind is that of a monk or nun and their hours of prayer, days of fasting, submission to a spiritual elder. Maybe, if we look at little deeper, we see the asceticism of our parish priest, others in our communities, perhaps within our homes; those who keep vigils, feasts, fasts, who pray the hours, study the Scriptures. I don’t mean to downplay those men and women of faith, but, in the last year, I’ve learned about a whole new kind of asceticism in fatherhood.

St. Porphyrios tells us, “What saves and makes for good children is the life of the parents in the home. The parents need to devote themselves to the love of God. They need to become saints in their relations to their children through their mildness, patience, and love. They need to make a new start every day, with a fresh outlook, renewed enthusiasm, and love for their children. And the joy that will come to them, the holiness that will visit them, will shower grace on their children.... Love, harmony, and understanding between parents are what are required for the children. This provides a great sense of security and certainty.” This is our calling as Orthodox Christian parents: To love our children, to devote ourselves to God as parents. We know the bar is set high, and that we are responsible for raising the children God has given us charge over. Our children teach us and help us grow to meet the challenge we face.

When I look at my daughter, there’s a mirror that she somehow holds up to me. I see myself laid bare, open and vulnerable in ways I never imagined possible. I am challenged and pushed by her to become the person that she sees her dad to be. Now that she’s over a year old, she loves to chant during services with her mom (I’ve occasionally heard her sweet voice from the altar). She kisses and venerates icons, both in the parish and at home, smiles when we take her little hand and “help” her cross herself, and becomes excited when we as a family say, “Amen.” I’m encouraged by her faith, a faith so innocent, that trusts. She leads me to long for this and helps me to rely more on God, even reminding me if we don’t pray in the morning (she points and reminds me she has to kiss Jesus and Mary good morning). Despite reading books, listening to podcasts, and attending parenting seminars, I have no real clue what I’m doing here. I now realize I have no clue what I’m doing as a husband or really as an adult; it becomes harder and harder to hide when you have someone who depends so much on you. This honesty with myself has caused me to depend

more and more on God, and I pray more now than ever, continually seeking God’s guidance and wisdom in all that I do.

Romanian theologian Dimitru Staniloae wrote that “Orthodox spirituality aims at the perfection of the faithful in Christ.” “This perfection is rather a mystical union with God through participation in His divine-human life, and Christian perfection requires a whole series of efforts until it is attained.” I haven’t attained that perfection – far from it, actually – and I don’t have all the answers on how to get there. I unworthily go through life, usually trying to follow the example of Christ and His saints, to follow the teachings and practices of the Church, praying and fasting, no matter how many times I fall. I can honestly say, I haven’t experienced anything as humbling and enlightening as seeing my daughter look to my wife and me for everything in her life. She depends on us to feed her, change her, carry her (less now than she did before walking), and comfort her when she’s sad, mad, or scared. She needs us for things she doesn’t know, like making sure she’s on her sleeping schedule and getting her shots. As I look into her eyes and see the way she looks back at me, pure and innocent, full of love and complete dependence, I can, for the first time, concretely understand Christ’s words in St. Matthew’s Gospel, Chapter 18, calling us to “become like children.” I pray I become the father, Christian, and the person my daughter thinks I am and may I learn to see God as she does.

I’ll leave you with this, an Orthodox prayer of parents for their children that I use to pray for my daughter:

O God, our heavenly Father, who loves mankind and are a most merciful and compassionate God, have mercy upon Your handmaiden Elise, for whom I humbly pray to You to care for and protect. O God, be her guide and guardian in all her endeavors, lead her in the path of Your truth, and draw her nearer to You, so that she may lead a godly and righteous life in Your love as she does Your will in all things. Give her Your grace, and mercy so that she may be patient, hard working, tireless, devout and charitable. Defend her against the assaults of the enemy, and grant her wisdom and strength to resist all temptation and corruption, and direct her in the way of Salvation, through the goodness of Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, and the prayers of His Holy Mother and the blessed saints. Amen.

Deacon Thom Crowe
St. Antony, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Hospitality, Gratitude, and Stewardship in the Parish:

CREATING A HEALTHY AND HEALING COMMUNITY

Fr. Joshua Makoul

A HEALTHY MODEL FOR ANY CHURCH COMMUNITY IS A RELIANCE AND FOCUS ON FINANCIAL RECEIPTS FROM FAITH OFFERINGS AND USING THOSE FAITH OFFERINGS TO GIVE BACK TO THE PEOPLE THROUGH INCREASED MINISTRY AND HOSPITALITY. WHILE OCCASIONAL FUNDRAISERS IN THE CHURCH CAN BE HELPFUL AND NECESSARY, MANY DO NOT REALIZE THE DANGERS OF EXCESSIVE USE OF AND RELIANCE ON FUNDRAISERS IN THE CHURCH AND HOW THEY CAN UNDERMINE HEALTHY STEWARDSHIP AND GRADUALLY CHANGE THE ATMOSPHERE AND FOCUS OF A PARISH COMMUNITY. MANY PARISH COMMUNITIES ARE NOT YET AT THE POINT WHERE THEIR DISBURSEMENTS ARE MET SOLELY THROUGH FAITH OFFERINGS, HOWEVER IT IS A CRITICAL GOAL FOR ALL PARISHES TO ACHIEVE. FOR THOSE COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE REACHED THAT GOAL, THEN THIS ACHIEVEMENT MUST BE PRESERVED, PROTECTED, AND VIGILANCE MAINTAINED SO AS TO NOT REGRESS. ALSO, IT MUST BE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE ARE SOME COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE EXPERIENCED A DECREASE IN SIZE AND FAITH OFFERINGS DUE TO A SHIFT IN DEMOGRAPHICS OR LOSS OF LOCAL INDUSTRY. IN SUCH COMMUNITIES FUNDRAISERS ARE OFTEN NECESSARY TO KEEP THE CHURCH OPEN. HOWEVER EVEN IN SUCH SITUATIONS, THE STEWARDSHIP MODEL DISCUSSED IN THIS ARTICLE COULD POTENTIALLY INCREASE MEMBERSHIP AND FAITH OFFERINGS OVER TIME.



Fundraisers can take the form of any type of selling in the church or even events such as food festivals. Social events in the church are important and provide opportunities for Christian fellowship. Providing food and meals is often essential at such events. However, what is important, is the focal point of the event, is it to “make money for the church” or is it to provide hospitality which helps strengthen a sense of connection between the person and the church. A help-

ful example is when we invite people to our home for dinner. Do we charge them for that meal? God forbid. If we did, the presence of hospitality in the one serving and the presence of gratitude in the one visiting would be eliminated.

If we are constantly being expected to pay for everything in the church, for every meal, for every activity, and for items being sold too frequently, it undermines that gratitude in us towards God and the church that is

Deacon Thom lives with his wife and daughter in Tulsa, where they are active in their parish and the local handmade movement. Deacon Thom joined the Holy Orthodox Church during his time at Oral Roberts University and has continued his studies in Orthodox theology, obtaining a Master’s degree. He loves to share the beauty of the faith with everyone he can.

so important for healthy stewardship. A natural expression of gratitude is wanting to offer something back to the one who showed hospitality. If there has been too much selling in the church, when we sit down to reflect on our commitment card to the church, we end up feeling “tapped out” and our feeling of gratitude is far less or even non-existent. In fact, the only effect of having to pay out too much for fundraisers in the church has, is to cause us to feel that we already discharged our stewardship, that we already fulfilled our stewardship to the church by buying that food, or working that food stand, or by buying those items being sold in the church! It completely undermines and eradicates that pious gratitude that comes from reflecting on all that the church has done for us. However, there are many other dangers that come from excessive use of or reliance on fundraisers.

Many of us do not realize how dangerous excessive selling in the church can be and how it can alter the face

space, who worked harder, who made the most money, and who is “running the show”. Events such as these can literally divide and split a community. The community can become split over who helped and worked the event and those who did not. This can lead to resentment in those who did and self-righteousness and judgment against those who did not. An event that was supposed to be “fun” suddenly unleashes negative forces upon the parish. Events such as these also lead to fatigue to the point of us not wanting to do anything for months to follow. However, perhaps for reasons that cannot be explained, when there is an event where a service is being offered to the community, where the goal is not to make money, perhaps a free meal or another ministry, there seems to be a marked diminishing or complete absence of these toxic behaviors. There is a different feeling in the air. Why? It is likely because the event is not about making money but about providing a service out of love for

the community. It is called hospitality. Providing a ministry or service to the people and expecting nothing in return. Such activity invites the grace of God and

of a community. In the gospel we remember the one incident where Jesus displayed outright anger. We would do well to remember it and learn from it. Jesus entered the temple and saw the moneychangers doing business. We all know what happened next. He flipped the tables over and made a whip and drove the people out who were doing business in the temple. They had turned the house of the Lord into a place of commerce instead of a place of prayer. The excessive selling in the temple caused people’s attention to shift away from God and instead to money, selling, and becoming obsessed with “how much money we made”. A sickness had set in, a greed, that all too often follows trying to make a profit. This same disturbing phenomenon can very subtly start to occur in a parish if vigilance is not kept. Also, where sickness and greed are, conflict is soon to follow. All too often we see conflicts arise when there becomes too much focus on events that are aimed at selling and making money. These conflicts can poison the atmosphere of a parish and literally cause others to be hurt and wounded in the church and ultimately end up leaving the church. Excessive fundraising in the church has a way of bringing out territorial behavior in us, fighting over who uses what

the Holy Spirit to the community and stirs that most blessed source of gratitude in those of us receiving that hospitality. People who visit are often stunned and overwhelmed at the generosity of the community. They feel more welcome and drawn to such love and grace and want to participate in it.

There are many reasons why we might feel drawn to constant fundraising and food festivals. Some of the reasons are innocent enough however there are some reasons that are more insidious. Some may simply have a sense of nostalgia, wanting to remember the “good old days” and some might feel that it would simply be “fun”. However, when reflecting on how such events can change the face and focus of a community it becomes increasingly more difficult to defend a reliance on or participation in such events. Food itself is not a threat to the parish, in fact quite the opposite, however it is why it is being served that matters. Is it to make a profit or is it to feed others out of love and hospitality, expecting nothing in return? Sadly, there are some insidious reasons or motivations one might strongly desire reliance on these activities. There are some who resent being asked to give money to the church. They believe people should not

have to give and the fundraisers and food fairs become an alternative to the healthy stewardship model of faith offerings which had been earlier discussed. The motivation in this instance is to show just how much money we can make off these food fairs and constant selling so we rely on these and people no longer have to offer back money to the church. However, in espousing such a model (perhaps even on an unconscious level) they may or may not realize how it can unleash all of those ugly and negative forces on the community and dramatically alter the face of the community. Without a healthy community being vigilant, the church can become like a marketplace, filled with people selling their wares all in the name of “making money for the church”. Soon, without realizing it, an atmosphere is created that is the very same that existed in the temple when Jesus turned the tables over and drove the money changers out of the temple.

Some may question, how do we pay for all these services and ministries if we are not always charging people? The goal for any healthy parish should be that as faith offerings increase the parish gives back through increased funding of ministries and hospitality to the people. The key is understanding the healthy stewardship model and how hospitality leads to gratitude which leads to wanting to give back. As the first part of that model increases so does the second part. The purist source of stewardship in the church are

faith offerings. They are the purist form of stewardship because they are born out of gratitude. They are born out of gratitude that comes from when we sit and reflect on the blessings we have received in life and on what God has given us. This gratitude is also born out of reflection on what the church has done for us and our family. We then desire to express that gratitude by giving back a portion of what God has given us. God made the importance of this action of offering back out of gratitude clear through many scripture passages. As a result, the faith offering is pure and it is an act of piety. It is the healthiest and purist form of stewardship for the church. The hospitality in the church exists of services, worship, priest and parishioners being warm and welcoming, as much as possible feeding hungry parishioners without charging them (after all food makes for great social activity), and the ministries aimed at meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the people. It is these activities that blossom into gratitude in the hearts of the people. If we can create such a community, instead of people being driven out, God through the Holy Spirit, will send people to our community to be loved, served, and healed.

Fr. Joshua Makoul is the
Dean of St. George
Cathedral
in Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania

**God through the Holy Spirit, will
send people to our community
to be loved, served,
and healed.**

Sacred Music

IN THE HOLY ORTHODOX TRADITION

Bishop THOMAS and Peter Schweitzer

TO BEGIN, I WANT TO THANK ALL THOSE ENGAGED IN SACRED MUSIC FOR YOUR HARD WORK AND DEDICATION IN OFFERING WORSHIP AND HONOR TO OUR THRICE-HOLY GOD. YOUR MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH IS AN INDISPENSABLE FACET OF ALL ORTHODOX WORSHIP. MAY GOD BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY FOR YOUR SERVICE.

If we examine the origins of sacred music, we must look beyond Holy Scripture and the testimony of the holy fathers. Sacred music has been offered continually at the throne of the Almighty in the singing of the angelic choir, those first-created beings who have been chanting fitting praises to God since before the beginning of the visible creation. By virtue of Christ's incarnation, the heavenly choir of angels is united with the voice of the holy Orthodox Church on earth.

According to Benedict Sheehan, Choir Director and Music Instructor at St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary and Monastery, there are three essential characteristics of Orthodox sacred music. First, such angelic music is vocal. That is, it is sung in some manner, usually with discernible words, and is thus a direct musical offering of the angels' bodily and ratio-

nal nature (according to the angelic sense of a 'body'). The popular Western concept of angels accompanying their singing with harps and other instruments is unknown in Scripture and Orthodox tradition. This is important because, in exclusively singing the praises of God, the angels offer Him something essential to themselves, rather than making an offering by way of a medium extrinsic to their nature. This is one key reason why Orthodox Christian liturgical tradition (including that of the West, until the Middle Ages) does not permit the use of musical instruments in the divine services.

Secondly, Orthodox sacred music is devotional in nature. It is composed to lift one to love of God and desire for Him in repentance and thanksgiving. This is why Orthodox choirs should strive to imbue their singing with zeal, reverence, divine ardor, and love. If our songs are to be truly sacred, we must struggle against any kind of spiritual inertia – both in the style of music we sing, and the manner in which we sing it – offering

to God instead the first-fruits of our energies, with eagerness and warmth of heart. The third element of Orthodox sacred music is a direct corollary of the character of our life as Orthodox Christians, and that is watchfulness. Choirs and parishioners for that matter do not sit during services, but stand attentively, guarding against any inattention or sloth. Likewise, the watchfulness that characterizes sacred music is a guard against vainglory, pride or anything that smacks of a performance. This is one of the reasons why we don't applaud during any Orthodox service.

I conclude by offering you Benedict Sheehan's thoughts on the importance and character of sacred music:

Aside from conforming to Orthodox Tradition in an external canonical sense (that is, for example, a hymn uses a canonical liturgical text), I assert that if any liturgical music is to be considered sacred in the full spiritual sense that is, God-pleasing and God-befitting, as well as possessing the power to "fan the spark" of divine grace within the heart it must possess all three of these qualities without exception, both in the style of its composition and in the manner of its execution. Any liturgical singing that purports to be sacred music and yet lacks or distorts one of these three essential qualities necessarily falls short of the archetypal primordial song of the angels. Such music, though it may possess many admirable qualities, must be considered a "song of men," and not in harmony with the true Orthodox tradition of angelic sacred music that has been resounding before the throne of God since the foundation of the world.

In the words of Blessed Augustine, "Singing belongs to one who loves." Those of us entrusted with this sacred duty must approach it with love of God and as an offering to the Almighty for His glory and our sanctification.

Bishop THOMAS and Peter Schweitzer

AN ORTHODOX SPIRITUAL RESPONSE TO CLERGY BURNOUT

IN MY LAST ARTICLE, I WROTE ABOUT FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST AND WHAT THAT ENTAILS ON A PRACTICAL LEVEL. IN THIS PRESENT PAPER, I HOPE WITH GOD'S HELP TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE IN TERMS OF OUR BELOVED CLERGY. IN THE LAST PAPER, I MADE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN BEING *AT* CHURCH AND BEING *IN* CHURCH. ON THE SURFACE, THIS DISTINCTION DOES NOT HOLD FOR OUR CLERGY BY THE FACT OF THEIR ORDINATION. WE MUST NECESSARILY BE IN CHURCH LEADING THE SERVICES. THE WORDS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, HOWEVER, COME TO MIND, "THIS PEOPLE DRAWETH NIGH UNTO ME WITH THEIR MOUTH, AND HONORETH ME WITH THEIR LIPS; BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME" (MATTHEW 15:8). THERE IS A TEMPTATION FOR CLERGY AND FAITHFUL ALIKE TO BE PHYSICALLY PRESENT FOR SERVICES WHILE THEIR HEARTS REMAIN COLD AND HARDENED.

In the last few decades, the topic of clergy burnout has been much discussed and analyzed, even in the Orthodox Church. Prior to writing this article, I spent some time doing research on the subject and found some interesting, if not troubling, tendencies. When the topic of clergy burnout was broached, the authors (save a very few exceptions) employed examples of secular life from movies, television, and contemporary culture. In identifying the problems that typically led to burnout, at least according to these authors, the issues raised were often the same ones that one might find in a stressful secular job or in a corporate boardroom – power struggles, administrative issues, lack of recognition, or lack of pay or vacation time. In other words, the burnout was associated with a lack of satisfaction with the "job."



As one might expect, the solutions to this lack of satisfaction were rooted in modern psychology. In my years as a bishop and a priest, my experience has been quite different. I am not questioning the existence of the phenomenon of burnout *per se* – it exists and I have witnessed it, sadly. My experience of the problem, however, has been quite different from what I described in the preceding paragraph. I have witnessed good and sincere clergy who are worn out and have expressed what others call “burnout.” They were serving at the Holy Altar, but they remained pre-occupied with the administration of the parish or the daily needs of their parishioners. They had come to view their “real work” as something other than the divine services.

In most instances, such a perception was never verbalized. Most of them would not have even been aware of it. Please know that I am writing about good men who gradually found that their priorities had shifted, and I am not judging them. The constant pull of the secular world had gradually eroded their original conviction that the only work that truly matters is the holy divine services.

If personal prayer, continual repentance, and the liturgical life of the Church, are not the primary manner in which our lives are defined, we may easily adopt secular attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors. Father Petroniu Tanase, former Abbot of the Skete of the Forerunner on Mount Athos, noted,

Everything we receive, we see, we hear leaves some marks.... Because you go on the road and see a filthiness [dirtiness]... and without your will, you do not think about it... but the dirt left a stain on you... Farther on, someone is quarreling, you hear some bad words, dirty, swear words.... You

do not agree with them, but they remained in your soul.... To remove them, that means *apatheia* [absence of passions], to be without passion, that is, the evil[s] no longer impress you... to remove them is very difficult.”

The removal of these stains is not accomplished through administrative work but only through the ascetical practices found in the services of the Church. The Church provides us with examples of a well-ordered life in the lives of the saints. For example, St. Mary of Egypt struggled in the desert for forty-seven years, seventeen of which she endured tremendous temptation and suffering. When she recognized the passions welling up in her, she threw herself on the ground, asking for God’s mercy. Rather than imitating her example, we may be tempted to look for comfort by watching too much television or spend time surfing the Internet instead of praying. We justify the behavior by telling ourselves we need to unwind and relax. This can happen to any of us, whether we are clergy or laity, if our moorings are not firmly tied to the liturgical and spiritual life of the Church.

Once we have become unmoored, we have a tendency to blame all types of external factors for our state in life. The sad fact is that we have all become soft. We desire an easy Christianity, without a cross and without ascetic struggle. Saint Seraphim of Sarov was once asked: “How do our times differ from those of the first Christians?” Saint Seraphim replied that we do not share their resolve to follow Christ everywhere and at all times, to be with Him alone until the end.

Before I address the Patristic solution there is another problem that must be addressed. When the clergy notice such symptoms welling up within them, they turn to counselors, psychologists or psychiatrists for

assistance. I am not saying that this is bad *per se*. Unless, however, the counselors share a vibrant Orthodox faith and are steeped in the teachings of the Fathers, how could they possibly be expected to properly diagnose a spiritual issue? Would you visit a veterinarian if you broke a bone? Of course not! Caution is necessary, for what may appear to the secular mind as manifestations of burnout, may be the passions warring within us. The presenting symptoms are similar and only an experienced spiritual guide is able to discern the difference. The Holy Fathers are and will forever remain the preeminent physicians of the human soul. Allow me to cite one example. Boston University psychologist George Stavros, Ph.D., found that those who prayed the Jesus Prayer for ten minutes a day for thirty days found a significant reduction in depression, anxiety, hostility, and feelings of inferiority to others.¹

Providentially, there is always a way back to the Father’s house. We do not have to continue to seek that which is lacking from the husks that the swine eat (Luke 15:16).

During Great Lent of 2017, His Grace Bishop IRENEI (Steenberg) offered a deeply moving and spiritually insightful talk to the ROCOR hierarchs and clergy entitled, “The Cry of the Humbled Heart – the Ascetical Significance of the Great Canon.” I would highly recommend it for your edification, especially if you are struggling with the issues I’ve broached in this article. In his meditation, His Grace explains the circumstances concerning which the Great Canon was composed.

Something particularly relevant for our understanding of the Canon however, but without which we cannot understand the Canon, took place in the year 712. A “robber council” was held, in which the decrees of the Sixth Ecumenical Council – where again, St. Andrew had been present in an official capacity – the decrees of the Council and the Council as a whole were rejected as the Devil attempted to strike a blow against the Church’s confession of truth in the face of the heresy of Monothelitism.

Saint Andrew, for reasons that we do not fully understand, took part in this robber council, accepted it, and endorsed its heretical rejections of Constantinople III. What stirred St. Andrew to this rebellion against the Faith we simply do not know; he was not the only bishop to do so. What we do know is that the following year, in 713, he came to himself, repented of his error, and was received back into the fullness of Orthodoxy.²

The Great Canon is the fruit of Saint Andrew’s repentance. As His Grace noted, the Canon is not

a treatise, but a heartfelt cry from the depths of his heart. His Grace continued,

We have to remember that great tragedy of his life. Only a few years before – we don’t know the exact year of his death – but it’s possible he died as early as 726, which would mean he had fewer than fourteen years of life between his betrayal of God and the Faith and the Church at the robber council, and his subsequent repentance, and ultimately his repose. And it is in this context – of a man who had ascended from the sorry lot of a mute child to the highest offices of Imperial Orthodoxy; from the status of an unknown to the pastor of thousands of souls, who had nevertheless denied his Savior in the most vile of ways, yet had been rescued from his error by that same God and called back to His service – that St. Andrew pens the Great Canon. That is to say, his Canon of Repentance was not a theoretical work of a writer trying to explore themes that he felt were important for dogmatic or principled reasons.

The Great Canon is a cry of an anguished heart. Saint Andrew had been lifted up by God far beyond anything he could have deserved or expected and still he had rejected Him. He had received grace upon grace, and then he had spurned the Giver of grace. And then, in an act of redemption over which St. Andrew clearly spent the rest of his life in utter awe, the same Lord he had rejected and spurned received him back. I do not think it’s too dramatic to say that this experience radically altered St. Andrew’s life, his thought, and his spiritual vision.

While burnout was not the cause that distanced St. Andrew from the Lord, his response provides us with clues as to the way out of this morass. The fundamental diagnosis is the same even though the presenting symptoms are different. The cure is also the same – heartfelt repentance.

Such repentance can only be found in prayer. I am not speaking about the obligatory prayers of the Sunday services. I am referring to a way of life centered on prayer that will lead us to continual repentance, making real in our own lives the admonition of St. Paul to pray unceasingly (1 Thessalonians 5:17). This will not happen overnight but we must make the effort. Struggle is required in order to soften our hardened hearts. Once the heart is softened through a good confession and a renewed commitment to prayer, the prayers that we recite so often come alive for us. The Six Psalms become our conversation with Almighty God, alternating between an acknowledgment of our pitiful state

1. George Stavros, “Spirituality and Health: The Soul/ Body Connection,” Winter 1999.
2. <http://www.pra-voslavie.ru/english/102308.htm>

and God’s abiding love. Through such ascetical practices, the heart is transformed so that we live a life of constant and continual repentance. The holy monks on Mount Athos refer to this as “joyful sorrow.”

Returning to the life of St. Andrew, His Grace provided us with another insightful spiritual pearl that, God willing, may assist those who suffer from the symptoms of burnout. Saint Andrew composed the Canon in order to rekindle repentance within his heart. He feared forgetting his fall and moving on from it. He didn’t want to forget because he recognized that it was precisely that which brought about his repentance and return to his Father’s house. (As a side note, contemporary secular practitioners would counsel just the opposite approach. We must move on and put what is in the past, in the past. Saint Andrew, however, possessed a Patristic mindset and knew better.)

It was that tragedy that altered St. Andrew’s heart. Out of a dogmatist, it created a hymnographer; out of a career cleric, a witness; not just a preacher, but a witness of repentance. But that tragedy and its resolution led to another great tragedy in St. Andrew’s life, one that he appears to have even less understood, one he could not explain. In the face of all the grace that his soul had experienced, of all that he had concretely and experientially come to know, the inexplicable happened within him: his soul seemed to forget. He did not forget, not intellectually, not historically, but that was precisely what tormented St. Andrew. He could remember his fall; he could remember the Lord’s mercy, and yet deep within him, in the inner recesses of his heart, his soul seemed not to remember to repent, to carry on with a life of repentance. He could tell himself to do so, but his soul didn’t seem to listen.”³

When our hearts become dry and hardened, the example of Saint Andrew provides a curative example of what our next step should be. Rather than plunging further into administrative duties or extra-spiritual work, we renew the commitment to the prayer rule. If we remain steadfast and committed to this, we will find prayer an infinite oasis of nourishment, rest, and comfort. The long services will become transforming and an opportunity for personal refreshment rather

than an arduous obligation. Once again, His Grace gives us an example in how the Divine Scriptures become alive for us.

David repents, to show me repentance. The command to clear the Promised Land of the Canaanite tribes is a command for my asceticism, to clear the promised land of my heart from every sin and passion. The parting of the Red Sea is the path of my salvation, demonstrating how and by what means, namely Holy Baptism, I should be let out of bondage and into the fullness of life. And so I look at their story and I see my own. Abel, Cain, Noah, Uzziah, Lamech, David, Solomon, even Pharaoh – they are all me. Their stories are mine – at least in part – and again, this is not because they are mere metaphors or, God forbid the thought! – simply non-historical allegories. They are real people. But the One Body of Christ extends across the whole of History, and I gradually learn that my life is tied together with theirs, and theirs reveals mine. I can learn from their mistakes, because their mistakes are alive in my heart, and I can learn from their repentance, because that, too, is available to me, if only I would rise up and seize it.⁴

A life lived in repentance is the only life worth living. We will find that the old, secular bromides, such as, “You deserve to be happy,” or, “You deserve to be recognized,” will be understood for what they are: panaceas that destroy the spiritual life. Repentance is the antidote to all the passions, and has the transformative power to make us true disciples of Christ. Repentance transforms our hearts and our minds, healing the nous, so that we see ourselves as God sees us – fellow workers in the Lord’s vineyard, rather than competitors with our brother clergy; servants and fathers to the spiritual children the Lord Jesus has entrusted us. Perhaps, most significantly, we will find the peace, joy, and love which we seek.

In this scenario, burnout is a *non sequitur*. My prayer for you is the prayer of St. Paul for his children in Christ: “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

BISHOP JOHN'S COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS FOR ST. VLADIMIR'S SEMINARY MAY 20, 2017

WHAT I WISH I HAD KNOWN 39 YEARS AGO

Thirty-nine years ago I left this campus with gifts similar to yours. Like you, I have been blessed to have studied under some of the greatest Orthodox theologians of the time. Like you, I enjoyed or endured a community that was sometimes supportive and at other times challenging. I forged friendships with peers that would sustain me for a lifetime. Like you, I experienced some of both Crestwood’s and New York’s air, accents and crowds. And like you, my time at St. Vladimir’s came with the responsibility to live among God’s people and fulfill my royal priesthood with the added responsibilities that come with the knowledge and understanding gained here.

As difficult as my mission was to be, ministering to people of different generations, from varied ethnic and socio-economic strata, from hippies to Babbas, your challenge is greater. In addition to dinosaurs of my generation, you will live among post-modernists who imagine themselves to be the center of the universe, and who believe themselves to be self-contained, needing no “other” for fulfillment. You will minister to people for whom truth is, at best, relative. For many, including baptized Orthodox Christians in our pews, people believe themselves to be self-sufficient, needing no other, and, amazingly enough, “no other” includes God.

I must confess, I came to seminary confident that I knew quite a bit about my faith and parish life. I had served in the altar from a very young age, had been an officer of our teen group, and had served as a member of the choir and parish council. Every semester I realized I knew less and less, and today I am the least confident in my grasp of theology. I am committed, however, to an understanding that this is indeed the process of education, particularly when encountering the ultimately unknowable. In any case, we serve as best we can, striving to be faithful to God and the complex people that we serve.

Are you ready to commence your lives as churchmen and women? Let me share what I wish I knew when I started my church life some forty years ago.

From this holy place, I went forth with gifts that included relationships with holy mentors. These men and women loved God and loved His Church, and almost all of them have now gone to their rest. For a while, at least, they were available to me. I remember offering a lecture on human sexuality at an Orthodox clergy conference, with Frs. John Meyendorff, Thomas Hopko and Paul Lazor in

the audience. That was a memorable, yet intimidating, day for me. Somehow, at least for a day, these mentors had become something like peers. This is not to say that I can claim to be a theologian, but we are all church workers, and as such, they were willing to be for a while in the audience. They had no obligation to offer their validations, but they accepted me as a fellow churchman and were willing to sit on the other side of the desk. Today, dear graduates, our relationships change, as you are no longer seminarians but co-servants in Christ’s ministry. You would do well to maintain your relationships with those who have shared themselves with you these past days.

Among the gifts I received from this place were studies in Scripture, history, canon law, liturgical theology, liturgics, music, pastoral care and dogmatics. When in class, I thought that these subjects would be helpful as background, never realizing how I would need to call upon these lessons daily and directly to meet real pastoral needs, defend our teachings, and answer honest questions from parishioners. As I reflect, I wish I had done more of the readings.

Among the gifts, too, were relationships with peers, which today I value in equal measure with those of the mentors, and with my studies. The men and women with whom I studied side-by-side would help me understand what is normal in my own development as a

churchman, and offer support and perspective to help me problem-solve, adjust to married life and grow as a person. Do the work you need to do in order to keep these relationships alive. You will need them in the future.

All of these gifts I have used over the last thirty-nine years as I endeavored to meet my needs as a person, the needs of my family, and the needs of God’s people, among whom my bishop sent me to live as his representative. I was to serve them by tending to the corporate prayer; showing them God’s compassion in confession and counsel; providing hospitality that demonstrated God’s love; sharing time with them, showing God’s caring for them; and journeying with them as we grew-up, or at least aged together.

Thirty-nine years ago I was twenty-four years old and



3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

serving a parish as a priest. Some of you will serve God in the church as priests or deacons, other as leaders, and still others as counselors. Sometimes the witness of one who is not ordained is more powerful, because people can't think that you are witnessing because it is your "job" as a clergyman. In any case, all of us who have been gifted with our encounters at this holy place will serve God's people and be judged by how we represent God. This, I contend, is despite our varied roles and capacities. Because you have been here, God will use you within His royal priesthood to meet the needs of His people.

Today I wish to call your attention to the uniqueness of our vocation: unique, because each of us will be used by God differently. This is so because of the experiences that we brought with us when we came here. It is also true because of the uniqueness of our life-journeys, which will include different people, circumstances and challenges. I strongly urge you to embrace your age. Don't be a father at age 25 to a 70-year-old. Be like a son who has been to seminary and comes with much to learn and much to share. Win them over as persons, and let them use you and your holy relationship to encounter God. Come on "too big," and they will run away, or cut you in half! Allow yourself to have fun with all the kinds of wonderful characters that God has called to live in His church.

I can't say that every moment of my life was fun-packed and glorious. I can't even say that my time here at this sacred place and thirty-three years in the parish was always fun. But the joy of witnessing God's work in the lives of my family, parish and community from the inside was spectacular. Life in the Church allows us to see God working as closely as if we were on the stage of an improve, seeing the plot made up and unfold before our eyes. Such is our life as churchmen and women. How blessed it is to be constantly in the epicenter of God's work, and able to see it, too.

Friends – and I call you friends because I share with you honestly what is on my mind and in my heart – I paid a lot of attention to keeping balance in my life. Balance, and setting appropriate priorities, are achieved only by deliberate and consistent work. Work to monitor and control your time, energy, and resources. It is an effort to order the use of these gifts deliberately, and with a vision of our goals, charge, and mandates. Work to identifying our real needs and meet them. In my opinion, our priorities must be set in the same order that God through His Church gives us His gifts.

Now, this is not to say that if a parishioner is dying and in need, you should go fishing. Rather, be sure to use your flexibility as the manager of your own time to meet both needs, not foregoing your own priorities. You can visit the

hospital, or arrange for another priest to make the visit before your trip. Use your flexibility to make up for missed family obligations when the schedule of Church priorities is beyond your control. Too often, we teach people to have unreasonable expectations of us; then we get frustrated when we can't meet them. We need to gently and firmly teach, teach and teach. Fighting is different from teaching, and fighting is not productive. We must gently model and teach what is reasonable, fair and holy.

The first sacrament for all Christians is baptism. In this sacrament we are initiated into the Church and enter into an intimate relationship with God from inside the body of Christ. So my first priority is my relationship with God and my needs to maintain and nurture that relationship. This includes time for prayer, including listening to God through study and quietness as well as sabbath or regular rest. It also includes maintaining the varied relationships with other people that I need to be fed and stay healthy. Let me ask you, what can I offer my wife and family if I am compromised by not being right with God? It is somehow a gift to my family to model a healthy relationship with God and to receive the truth and inspiration that comes from God through prayer, reading and relating to mentors, peers and protégés.

The second sacramental and liturgical dance around the Gospel Book is that of marriage. Marriage is a gift that keeps on giving, and keeps on taking. Successful marriages are dynamic and developing. We become more and more united with each other and God as we succeed in becoming more and more vulnerable, open, honest and intimate. God has given us each other to find Him. This takes lots of work, as we praise God together and meet the challenges He gives us in our lives. When we model making our spouses and families a priority, we better serve the parishioners who are learning more from our lives as examples, than from our preaching and teaching. We serve our parishioners better when we take better care of our families and ourselves.

Thirdly and lastly, before our funerals, some process around the Gospel book in their ordinations. Here I will loosely include those of you who will successfully avoid formal ordination, but will nevertheless serve God through the Church in other capacities. We do well to remember that priesthood is not a *job*, but a *life*. We live among God's people as examples, teachers, coaches, friends, confidants and servants. All real leadership and power in the Church is in serving. In serving, you will be given by those you serve trust and authority. In serving, you will prove your authenticity as a churchman or Christian. In serving, you will influence others and God will work. In serving, you will fulfill your vocation and enjoy the joys of a blessed

life. By witnessing to others, you will see God work in their lives and in your own. This is awe-inspiring; be open to this awe. It is a gift from God and will strengthen your faith and feed you in your own journey.

Among our personal needs, which we meet so that we can meet the needs of others, are prayer, continued study and the three kinds of relationships I have described: those with mentors, peers and protégés. It is said that everyone needs a Paul, Bartholomew and Titus. We need mentors, who can offer us support from their experience and help us learn how to make use of our gifts. Mentors teach us how to avoid common pit-falls, and help us learn our roles. We also need peers, who can remind us that our labor is difficult, especially in these quickly changing times. We need protégés, who can challenge us to grow by understanding what God is doing in our lives and giving language to feelings and thoughts. Protégés challenge us to live honestly and deliberately.

Americans are notorious for not doing the work it takes to develop, nurture and keep relationships. Your parishioners will complain to you about how lonely they feel. When you organize events to bring them together, they will in great numbers not come. People seem to assume that friendships should just happen. Today's technological world is isolating and friendships take lots of work. It is reported that most Americans, excluding spouses, will go to their graves without more than 1.5 meaningful relationships. It is essential for us to work at our relationships to have balance and health. Please, do that work.

Secondly, it is important to lead with confidence, based on your role as leaders in the Church as defined by the bishop who sent you to live among the people. If you fight for your position, it will be understood that your position is up for negotiation. Instead firmly, patiently and lovingly teach about the roles we live in the Church for the benefit of the people and community. A favorite analogy for me is that the world is playing tag. If you chase them, they will run. If you stand still, they will be able to stop running and eventually listen. Approach each soul with all of the respect due a complex creature in the image and likeness of the ultimately unknowable God. If you don't push, they will eventually follow. If you try to sell, they will not buy. A mentor told me once that the priest never wins a fight. If he prevails over another person he gets an enemy that needs to win back his dignity, and if he loses the skirmish, he loses credibility. We need to reframe our disputes so that everyone can win. Sometimes we can put off a discussion long enough for everyone to save face. To be more efficient, sometimes we treat people as if they were all the same. This shows little respect for the person. When you show respect to your parishioner, you counter

the effects of the world and the surprised parishioner will begin to release the anger that he carries from being disrespected in and by the modern world.

Brothers and sisters, you re-present the Church for the faithful and, as social creatures, those you serve want – no, *need* – the love and acceptance of their Church community. You re-present God, whom your parishioner fears is angry and far away. I am convinced that the hostility people have toward their church leaders comes from the basic fear of rejection. So afraid are they of rejection, that they protect themselves with animosity, distance, resistance and anger. Ultimately, the priest and church leaders will stand over their lifeless bodies and proclaim even if their life had been worth living. Church leaders are imagined to have great power, so in return, some do all kinds of things to protect themselves. In such challenging moments, be kind. Be patient. Be loving, and wait. They will grow or leave. In my service to the church, I have successfully outlived every parish member that ever gave me trouble.

When faced with challenges, ask critical questions, like, What is true? What is real? What is fair? and, What is holy? The adage that "what we need most, we learned in kindergarten," has merit. Seminary is helpful, too, but we do well when we simplify and remain honest with God and those we serve. That is your priesthood, the priesthood of everyone baptized into Christ: to be with God before man and man before God. That is your Christianity. As Church leaders, you will teach by example, sometimes with words, but always by living with and within the community.

Thirty-nine years ago, I began a life in the church harvesting fruits that others had planted and pruning trees that would bear fruit for you to harvest. It brings me great joy to see that God's call is still being heard. By being here today, and by your willingness to serve, you validate my choice to work in this ministry. You have made a wonderful choice. You will see God working in the lives of the people you serve. You will see His healing, restoration and forgiveness in the lives of those you live among. You will share an intimacy with parishioners that no one else has an opportunity to enjoy. You will be stretched, challenged and sometimes even rejected, yet here the adage is true: that which does not kill us will make us stronger. God will minister to your pain Himself, and you will mature. You will learn what joy comes after sorrow, and your faith will grow. My dear brothers and sisters, if I had to do it all again, I would choose the same in a heartbeat. You have chosen well to study here and you have chosen well to serve the Lord, our God.

Win them over as persons and let them use you and your holy relationship to encounter God. Come on too big and they will run away or cut you in half! Allow yourself to have fun with all kinds of wonderful characters that God has called to live in His church.

Among our personal needs which we meet so that we can meet the needs of others are those are: prayer, continued study and three kinds of relationships. Again, I believe that to be balanced we need three kinds of relationships; mentors, peers and protégés.

Preliminary

**FOOD FOR HUNGRY PEOPLE
PROGRAM 2015 - 2016
AND WORLD FOOD DAY**

Pounds of Food Collected
Recorded Through March 31, 2017

	FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs		FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs
OTTAWA, EASTERN CANADA AND UPSTATE NEW YORK					NEW JERSEY				
					St. Anthony-Bergenfield	\$945.00	All Year	\$680.00	465
NOVA SCOTIA					St. George-Little Falls	\$125.00		\$1,563.00	
St. Anthony-Halifax	\$950.00		\$940.00		St. Stephen-S Plainfield	\$175.00		\$40.00	
					NEW YORK				
UPSTATE NEW YORK					St. Mary-Brooklyn	\$2,846.59	200	\$2,110.00	
St. George-Albany	\$1,350.00		\$1,000.00		St. Nicholas Cathedral-Brooklyn	\$1,660.10		\$1,498.05	
St. Michael-Geneva	\$160.00		\$1,382.05		St. John the Baptist - Levittown	\$560.00	90	\$180.00	
St. George-Niagara Falls	\$1,104.50		\$1,392.74		Church of Virgin Mary-Yonkers	\$550.00		\$500.00	
St. George-S Glens Falls	\$155.51		\$166.60		St. James Mission-Poughkeepsie	\$0.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year
St. Elias-Syracuse	\$411.00	119	\$485.00	100	St. Anthony-Melville	\$0.00		\$0.00	
St. George-New Hartford	\$414.00		\$68.11		St. Ignatius Mission-Florida	\$25.00		\$425.00	
					ONTARIO				
Holy Transfiguration-London	\$0.00		\$0.00		PENNSYLVANIA				
St. Elias Cathedral-Ottawa	\$6,585.00	2,988	\$8,469.86	700	St. George-Allentown	\$1,000.00	All Year	\$600.00	All Year
St. George-Richmond Hill	\$175.00		\$150.00						
St. Mary-Mississauga	\$800.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year	TOTAL NEW YORK & WASHINGTON DC	\$11,701.79	290	\$12,595.97	465
St. Ignatius-St. Catharines	\$95.40	200	\$443.85	129					
Christ the Savior Mission- Waterloo	\$0.00		\$0.00		CHARLESTON/OAKLAND & MID-ATLANTIC				
					QUEBEC				
St. Mary-Montreal	\$999.00	10,000	\$200.00	10,000	DELAWARE				
St. George-Montreal	\$5,085.00	1,610	\$5,110.00	2,625	St. Andrew-Lewes	\$705.40	All Year	\$604.88	All Year
St. Nicholas-Montreal	\$0.00		\$200.00						
St. John The Babtist. Mission- Laval	\$0.00		\$0.00		DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA				
					MARYLAND				
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND					St. Mary-Hunt Valley	\$1,050.00		\$800.00	
Ss. Peter & Paul-Charlottetown	\$0.00		\$100.00		Holy Cross-Linthicum	\$60.00		\$595.86	
					St. James The Apostle- Westminister	\$155.00		\$445.00	
TOTAL OTTAWA, EASTERN CANADA AND UPSTATE NEW YORK	\$18,284.41	14,917	\$20,108.21	13,554	St. John The Baptist-Lewistown	\$415.00	500	\$301.00	
					St. Gregory-Silver Spring	\$121.87	104	\$202.28	121
NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON DC					PENNSYLVANIA				
CONNECTICUT					St. George-Altoona	\$113.25		\$45.00	
St. Nicholas-Bridgeport	\$750.00	All Year	\$875.00	All Year	St. Mary-Chambersburg	\$1,300.00	All Year	\$467.68	All Year
St. George-Danbury	\$960.10	All Year	\$717.92	All Year	St. John Evangelist-Beaver Falls	\$2,759.11		\$1,743.50	
					St. George-Bridgeville	\$975.00	All Year	\$1,520.00	All Year
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA					St. Ellien-Brownsville	\$2,500.00		\$625.00	
St. George-Washington DC	\$265.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year	St. Anthony-Butler	\$166.90		\$193.80	
					St. Paul-Emmaus	\$225.00		\$225.00	
MARYLAND					St. Michael-Greensburg	\$1,550.45		\$1,145.51	
Ss. Peter & Paul-Potomac	\$1,840.00	All Year	\$3,407.00	All Year	St. Mary-Johnstown	\$2,597.99		\$2,231.96	
					St. John Chrysostom-York	\$1,847.94	2,985	\$979.88	2,347
					St. Michael-Monessen	\$175.50		\$0.00	

	FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs		FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs
St. Elias-New Castle	\$2,260.00		\$2,501.00		Basilica of St. Mary-Livonia	\$100.00		\$50.00	
St. George-New Kensington	\$860.00		\$170.00		St. James-Williamston	\$688.00	251	\$930.00	305
St. George Cathedral-Pittsburgh	\$768.00		\$1,967.36		St. Catherine of Alexandria-				
St. Philip-Souderton	\$2,679.16	All Year	\$2,220.00	All Year	Ypsilanti	\$0.00		\$0.00	
St. George-Upper Darby	\$0.00		\$0.00		Holy Cross Mission-Dorr	\$0.00		\$0.00	
St. Mary-Wilkes-Barre	\$2,094.00	125	\$2,150.00	All Year	Holy Incarnation-Allen Park	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Holy Ascension Mission- West Chester	\$354.53		\$473.17		St. Willbrord Mission Station- Holland	\$144.00		\$0.00	
VIRGINIA					MINNESOTA				
St. Patrick-Warrenton	\$341.55	415	\$379.00	322	St. George-West St. Paul	\$726.18	1,017	\$601.36	3,144
St. Basil the Great-Hampton	\$0.00		\$25.00						
St. Raphael of Brooklyn Mission- Chantilly	\$50.00		\$0.00		MISSOURI				
Holy Trinity-Lynchburg	\$860.41		\$1,073.51		All Saints of North America- Maryland Heights	\$180.60	All Year	\$434.00	All Year
WEST VIRGINIA					St. John The Theologian- Cape Girardeau	\$232.92		\$228.73	
St. Nicholas-Beckley	\$215.00	2,000	\$325.00	2,000	OHIO				
St. George Cathedral-Charleston	\$6,125.00	All Year	\$4,800.00	All Year	St. George-Akron	\$500.00	All Year	\$650.00	All Year
Church of Holy Spirit-Huntington	\$414.15	All Year	\$515.00	All Year	St. George-Canton	\$505.00		\$975.00	
TOTAL CHARLESTON/OAKLAND & MID-ATLANTIC					St. Luke The Evangelist Mission- Chagrin Falls	\$1,196.00		\$1,072.00	
					St. George-Cleveland	\$100.00	All Year	\$555.00	All Year
TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST					St. James-Loveland	\$0.00		\$0.00	
					St. Matthew-N Royalton	\$623.39	7,000	\$878.70	
IOWA					St. Elias-Sylvania	\$400.00	65,000	\$795.00	
St. George-Cedar Rapids	\$1,375.45	All Year	\$2,185.00	All Year	St. George Cathedral-Toledo	\$377.50		\$170.00	
St. Raphael of Brooklyn-Iowa City	\$283.93	All Year	\$27.92	All Year	St. Mark-Youngstown	\$1,400.00	All Year	\$1,700.00	All Year
					St. Barnabas-Sunbury	\$374.81	All Year	\$200.00	All Year
ILLINOIS					ONTARIO				
St. Nicholas-Urbana	\$1,875.00	All Year	\$1,700.00	All Year	St. Ignatius Antioch-Windsor	\$600.00		\$0.00	
St. George-Cicero	\$660.00		\$810.69		WISCONSIN				
All Saints-Chicago	\$3,542.14	700	\$3,964.57	5,464	St. Elias-La Crosse	\$0.00	100	\$451.62	
St. Elias-Peoria	\$25.00		\$25.00		St. Nicholas-Cedarburg	\$294.49	1,125	\$435.83	2,000
St. George-Spring Valley	\$1,407.82		\$1,497.80		St. Ignatius-Madison	\$100.00	2,000	\$525.00	2,942
Holy Transfiguration-Warrenville	\$0.00	113	\$477.00	143	INDIANA				
St. Mary-Palos Heights	\$480.89	835	\$995.42	1,215	All Saints-Bloomington	\$530.00	77,485	\$913.00	57,046
					St. John Chrysostom-Fort Wayne	\$495.00	950	\$643.24	All Year
					Holy Resurrection-Hobart	\$0.00		\$0.00	
					St. George-Fishers	\$1,387.62	526	\$1,416.84	507
					St. George-Terre Haute	\$250.00		\$250.00	
					St. Mary-Goshen	\$235.06		\$177.57	
					St. Mary of Egypt-Greenwood	\$361.00	237	\$324.00	2,276
					St. Ananias Mission-Evansville	\$0.00	150	\$0.00	
KENTUCKY					TOTAL TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST				
St. Andrew-Lexington	\$550.00		\$770.00			\$28,393.13	244,534	\$34,966.60	166,342
St. Michael-Louisville	\$1,170.00	85,600	\$1,050.00	91,300	WORCESTER AND NEW ENGLAND				
Holy Apostles-Bowling Green	\$622.33	1,445	\$214.72		MASSACHUSETTS				
					St. Michael-Cotuit	\$300.00	1,073	\$0.00	
MICHIGAN					St. Mary-Cambridge	\$1,473.09	All Year	\$3,305.65	All Year
St. Mary-Berkley	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. John of Damascus-Dedham	\$2,222.46		\$3,336.62	
St. George-Troy	\$650.00		\$965.00		St. George-Lawrence	\$750.00		\$579.00	
St. George-Flint	\$1,514.00	All Year	\$972.78	All Year	St. George-Lowell	\$1,138.97		\$1,351.04	
St. George-Grand Rapids	\$300.00	All Year	\$1,150.00	All Year	St. George-Norwood	\$1,938.00	415	\$2,165.00	439
St. Nicholas-Grand Rapids	\$2,100.00	All Year	\$3,758.81	All Year	St. George-W Roxbury	\$1,687.50	6,500	\$2,412.00	6,500
St. Mary-Iron Mountain	\$55.00		\$25.00		St. George Cathedral-Worcester	\$3,447.32	30,000	\$3,570.24	200,000
St. Simon-Ironwood	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. Stephen- Springfield	\$0.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year
					Emmanuel-Warren	\$0.00		\$0.00	
					RHODE ISLAND				
St. Mary-Pawtucket	\$1,156.00	1,200	\$220.00	25,000					
					TOTAL WORCESTER AND NEW ENGLAND				
	\$14,113.34	39,188	\$16,939.55	231,939					

	FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs		FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs		FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs		FFHP 2015	WFD 15-lbs	FFHP 2016	WFD 16-lbs
MIAMI AND THE SOUTHEAST					TOTAL MIAMI AND THE SOUTHEAST	\$16,269.36	48,252	\$19,078.98	60,492	St. Luke-Abilene	\$100.00		\$419.00		Three Holy Hierarchs Mission- Wenatchee	\$276.81		\$0.00	
ALABAMA										St. Anthony the Great-Spring	\$247.10		\$344.00		Saint Katherine Mission-Kirkland	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Church of the Annunciation- Birmingham	\$0.00		\$25.00		WICHITA AND MID-AMERICA					Our Lady of Walsingham-Mesquite	\$0.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year	Prophet Elijah Mission-Ellensburg	\$200.00		\$85.00	
St. Michael-Dothan	\$60.00		\$75.00							St. Benedict-Wichita Falls	\$215.00		\$171.84						
					COLORADO										UTAH				
ARKANSAS					St. Luke- Erie	\$1,256.00	820	\$1,038.45	1,482	Forty Holy Martyrs of Sebaste- Sugar Land	\$190.00		\$0.00		Ss. Peter & Paul-Salt Lake City	\$50.00		\$0.00	
St. Nicholas-Springdale	\$0.00		\$75.00		St. Augustine of Hippo-Denver	\$754.44		\$880.00		St. Silouan the Athonite- College Station	\$215.53	329	\$183.26		TOTAL EAGLE RIVER AND THE NORTHWEST	\$9,915.72	1,202	\$7,726.95	0
Holy Trinity-Little Rock	\$600.00	500	\$450.00	400	St. Elias-Arvada	\$10,000		\$10,400.00		Christ the Saviour-Jacksonville	\$0.00	32,340	\$100.00	5,000					
SS. Peter and Paul Mission- Hot Springs	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. Mark-Denver	\$0.00		\$50.00		St. Thomas Mission-Fredricksburg	\$0.00	125	\$362.60	150	LOS ANGELES AND THE WEST				
					St. Columba-Lafayette	\$210.73	All Year	\$483.65	All Year	Holy Cross Mission-Odesa	\$0.00		\$0.00						
					St. James-Fort Collins	\$0.00		\$177.00		St. Andrew Mission-Woodway	\$0.00		\$100.00		ARIZONA				
FLORIDA					St. John Chrysostom-Lakewood	\$671.00		\$597.60							Holy Resurrection-Tucson	\$571.24		\$100.00	
St. George Cathedral- Coral Gables	\$1,696.00	2,000	\$1,776.00		IOWA					WYOMING					St. Ignatius-Mesa	\$264.23		\$303.08	
St. Philip-Davie	\$768.86		\$10.00		St. Thomas-Sioux City	\$320.44		\$207.93		Holy Resurrection-Gillette	\$100.00		\$0.00		St. George Church-Phoenix	\$420.00	All Year	\$940.00	All Year
St. Andrew-Eustis	\$0.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year															
St. George-Jacksonville	\$1,100.00	300	\$2,000.00		KANSAS					TOTAL WICHITA & MID-AMERICA	\$36,705.64	46,834	\$33,557.42	18,407	CALIFORNIA				
Our Lady of Regla-Miami	\$150.00		\$150.00		St. Michael the Archangel-Wichita	\$475.00		\$0.00							Ss Peter & Paul-Ben Lomond	\$874.24	All Year	\$572.59	All Year
St. Anthony the Great-Melbourne	\$123.56	255	\$224.03	198	Ss Peter & Paul-Topeka	\$147.24		\$67.57		EAGLE RIVER AND THE NORTHWEST					St. Raphael of Brooklyn- Thousand Palms	\$501.00	560	\$666.60	
St. Peter the Apostle Mission- Bonita Springs	\$175.00	All Year	\$575.00	All Year	St. George Cathedral-Wichita	\$3,680.00	10,500	\$2,735.55	10,500						St. Michael-Whittier	\$517.82		\$675.00	
St. George-Orlando	\$705.00	41,200	\$344.00	56,200	St. Mary-Wichita	\$50.00	All Year	\$132.39	All Year	ALBERTA					St. Luke-Garden Grove	\$1,478.00	All Year	\$555.00	All Year
St. Basil-Silver Springs	\$210.00		\$240.00		All Saints-Salina	\$0.00		\$20.00		St. Philip-Edmonton	\$1,358.98		\$1,370.87		All Saints Mission-Rohnert Park	\$0.00		\$0.00	
St. Nicholas-St. Petersburg	\$557.20	All Year	\$558.51	All Year	St. Mary Magdalene-Manhattan	\$0.00		\$0.00		Church of the Annunciation- Calgary	\$305.00		\$0.00		St. Athanasius-Santa Barbara	\$0.00	10,000	\$500.00	11,000
St. Mary-W Palm Beach	\$777.00		\$980.00		Holy Transfiguration - Hillsboro	\$369.68		\$643.67		Protection of the Holy Theotokos- Ft. Saskatchewan					St. Barnabas-Costa Mesa	\$1,050.00	All Year	\$1,800.59	All Year
Holy Cross-Ormond Beach	\$1,356.00		\$3,149.73		St. Basil-Kansas City	\$50.00		\$0.00							St. Mark-Irvine	\$600.00	All Year	\$1,000.00	All Year
St. Paul-Naples	\$800.00		\$810.00		Three Hierarchs Mission-Garden City	\$0.00	All Year	\$637.63	All Year						Holy Cross-Palmdale	\$0.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year
St. Andrew The Apostle-Pensacola	\$475.00		\$630.00		LOUISIANA					ALASKA					St. Timothy-Lompoc	\$815.00	All Year	\$410.00	All Year
St. Ignatius-Boca Raton	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. John the Divine-Lake Charles	\$285.85		\$172.00		St. Herman-Wasilla	\$303.35	256	\$1,222.25		St. James-Placentia	\$0.00		\$0.00	
					St. Nicholas-Shreveport	\$425.00	All Year	\$673.82	All Year	All Saints Mission-Homer	\$0.00		\$200.00		Orthodox Church of the Redeemer- Los Altos Hills	\$550.00		\$477.00	
GEORGIA					NEW MEXICO					St. John Cathedral-Eagle River	\$2,402.73	946	\$1,478.00		St. Nicholas Cathedral- Los Angeles	\$6,645.00	30,000	\$12,602.00	35,000
St. Elias-Atlanta	\$1,935.00		\$759.00		Holy Trinity-Santa Fe	\$288.00	685	\$622.74	798	BRITISH COLUMBIA					St. John the Evangelist-Orinda	\$875.00		\$1,352.45	
St. Stephen-Hiram	\$500.00	2,623	\$750.00	2,233						St. Joseph the Damascene- New Westminster	\$250.00		\$0.00		St. Andrew-Riverside	\$330.00		\$300.00	
St. James Mission-Buford	\$660.00		\$650.00		NEBRASKA					Holy Nativity-Langley	\$100.00		\$200.00		St. Anthony the Great-San Diego	\$2,873.00		\$4,347.82	
					St. George-Kearney	\$380.00		\$0.00	477						St. Athanasius-Sacramento	\$400.40	1,028	\$220.00	1,513
LOUISIANA					St. Mary-Omaha	\$408.00		\$168.00		IDAHO					St. George-San Diego	\$0.00		\$268.00	
Archangel Gabriel-Lafayette	\$0.00		\$20.00		St. Vincent of Lerins-Omaha	\$0.00	135	\$0.00		St. John the Baptist - Post Falls	\$189.94		\$0.00		St. Peter The Apostle-Pomona	\$1,126.84		\$500.00	
St. Basil-Metairie	\$0.00		\$0.00		OKLAHOMA					St. Ignatius-Twin Falls	\$549.46	All Year	\$0.00	All Year	St. Nicholas-San Francisco	\$425.00	All Year	\$550.00	All Year
					Church of the Ascension-Norman	\$0.00		\$65.39		Holy Transfiguration-Boise	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. Stephen-Campbell	\$437.58		\$610.40	
MISSISSIPPI					St. Elijah-Oklahoma City	\$4,817.72	All Year	\$3,548.89	All Year	Holy Myrrhbearing Women Mission- Bonners Ferry	\$250.00		\$150.00		St. Matthew-Torrance	\$204.00		\$538.11	
St. George-Vicksburg	\$300.00		\$100.00		St. Antony-Tulsa	\$400.00		\$600.00							St. Michael-Van Nuys	\$2,076.70	715	\$1,830.00	746
St. Peter-Madison	\$100.00		\$0.00		St. James-Stillwater	\$355.32		\$200.00		OREGON					Holy Virgin Mary-W Sacramento	\$505.00		\$250.00	
										St. George-Portland	\$30.00		\$80.00		St. Timothy-Fairfield	\$400.00		\$250.00	
NORTH CAROLINA					SOUTH DAKOTA										St. John-San Juan Capistrano	\$0.00		\$0.00	
Ss Peter & Paul-Boone	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. John the Theologian- Rapid City	\$1,924.00		\$0.00		SASKATCHEWAN					St. George-Upland	\$116.07	All Year	\$0.00	All Year
All Saints-Raleigh	\$1,633.59	1,374	\$2,272.00	1,461						St. Vincent of Lerins-Saskatoon	\$234.45		\$0.00		St. James Mission-Modesto	\$527.81		\$373.50	
St. Raphael-Holly Springs			\$466.50		TEXAS										St. Gabriel-Angels Camp	\$100.00		\$243.00	
					St. Elias-Austin	\$201.18	All Year	\$290.00	All Year	WASHINGTON					St. Simeon-Santa Clarita	\$1,000.00		\$1,420.00	
SOUTH CAROLINA					St. John the Forerunner-Cedar Park	\$0.00	1,500	\$0.00		St. Andrew-Arlington	\$200.00		\$15.00		NEVADA				
St. Catherine-Aiken	\$30.00		\$0.00		St. Michael-Beaumont	\$500.00		\$340.00		St. Paul-Brier	\$1,024.00		\$1,204.00		St. Michael-Las Vegas	\$150.00		\$300.00	
St. Barnabas-Lexington	\$175.32		\$0.00		St. Ephraim the Syrian- San Antonio	\$0.00		\$245.23		Holy Cross-Yakima	\$1,338.99		\$1,621.83		TOTAL LOS ANGELES AND THE WEST	\$25,834.13	42,303	\$33,955.14	48,259
St. Nicholas-Myrtle Beach	\$50.00		\$130.00		Ss Constantine & Helen-Dallas	\$552.00		\$0.00		St. Nicholas-Spokane	\$0.00		\$100.00						
Christ the Savior-Anderson	\$379.58	All Year	\$569.21	All Year	St. George-El Paso	\$1,676.00	All Year	\$1,629.72	All Year	St. Innocent-Everson	\$500.00	All Year	\$0.00	All Year	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS RECORDED THROUGH MARCH 31, 2017	\$9,577.00		\$14,948.74	
					St. Peter-Fort Worth	\$1,588.32	400	\$1,543.00		St. Thomas Mission- Snohomish	\$302.03		\$0.00						
					St. Joseph-Houston	\$500.00	All Year	\$610.00	All Year	Christ The Savior Mission- Spokane Valley	\$50.00		\$0.00		TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS:	\$204,534.73	443,649	\$222,602.95	544,498
TENNESSEE					St. George-Houston	\$2,848.06	All Year	\$2,794.00	All Year										
Holy Resurrection-Johnson City	\$0.00		\$0.00		St. Paul-Katy	\$267.03		\$302.50											
St. Ignatius-Franklin	\$0.00		\$890.00																
St. John-Memphis	\$250.00	All Year	\$400.00	All Year															
St. Elizabeth-Murfreesboro	\$702.25		\$0.00																
St. Nicholas-Jackson	\$0.00		\$0.00																

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN GREGORIAN CHANT AND GENRES OF ORTHODOX CHANT

Orthodox Cantor Translates Musicologist’s Articles

Kevin M. Rooney, cantor at Saints Constantine and Helen Orthodox Church, Carrollton, Texas, has recently published a translation of articles by noted Dutch musicologist Jan van Biezen. Entitled *Rhythm, Meter and Tempo in Gregorian Chant*, and published by Lancelot Andrewes Press, the work consists of three articles translated from the Dutch into English.

Dr. van Biezen is known for his contributions to church musicology, particularly concerning rhythm and tempo in medieval song, Reformation hymns, and Bach’s organ works. His most significant discovery in the 20th Century was that of a fixed rhythm in the Canons and Stichera of the Middle Ages, which he posits had been obscured by an incorrect interpretation by leading scholars of Middle Byzantine chant.

Dr. van Biezen has also found, by close comparative analysis of musical features, an underlying meter, or beat, in the Office Antiphons, plainsong Hymns, and florid melodies of the eight modes of Gregorian chant.

In accounting for this meter, it is possible to arrive at a more accurate interpretation of Gregorian chant that reveals a certain vocal style reminiscent of other genres of Orthodox chant and folksong.

The translator, Mr. Rooney, is a product of the Orthodox Western Rite tradition, and the son of a priest. Though skilled in Byzantine chant, he has a special interest in the history, theory and application of Gregorian, or western, chant. He is currently investigating the historical liturgical and musical developments which resulted in the loss of this early method of chant which van Biezen has espoused and verified. He is also working on developing a method of applying this understanding of chant to contemporary liturgical settings.



USING OUR PRAYER BOOKS

BY BISHOP ANTHONY OF TOLEDO AND THE MIDWEST
(REPRINTED FROM *DIAKONIA*, A NEWSLETTER OF THE ANTIOCHIAN WOMEN OF OUR ARCHDIOCESE)

If I were to offer to conduct the London Symphony Orchestra, not really knowing the movements and melodies, the pace and entry points, even Beethoven’s Ode to Joy might make the people cry for the wrong notes struck and the mistakes made. Even an exquisite artistic achievement like that would include a sour note when someone who does not know what he is doing tried to present it.

Our prayer books have all kinds of prayers: prayers taken from the Psalms in the Bible, prayers that Jesus Himself taught, prayers of the Apostles and holy fathers who knew exactly how to pray and what to pray for. That’s why when we use prayers for all the occasions of our lives, those found collected in our prayer books, we will strike just the right note for what we want God to hear from us, and the music of our message will harmonize with the heavenly melodies God hears all the time. Our needs will get through, and God will listen with fatherly care.

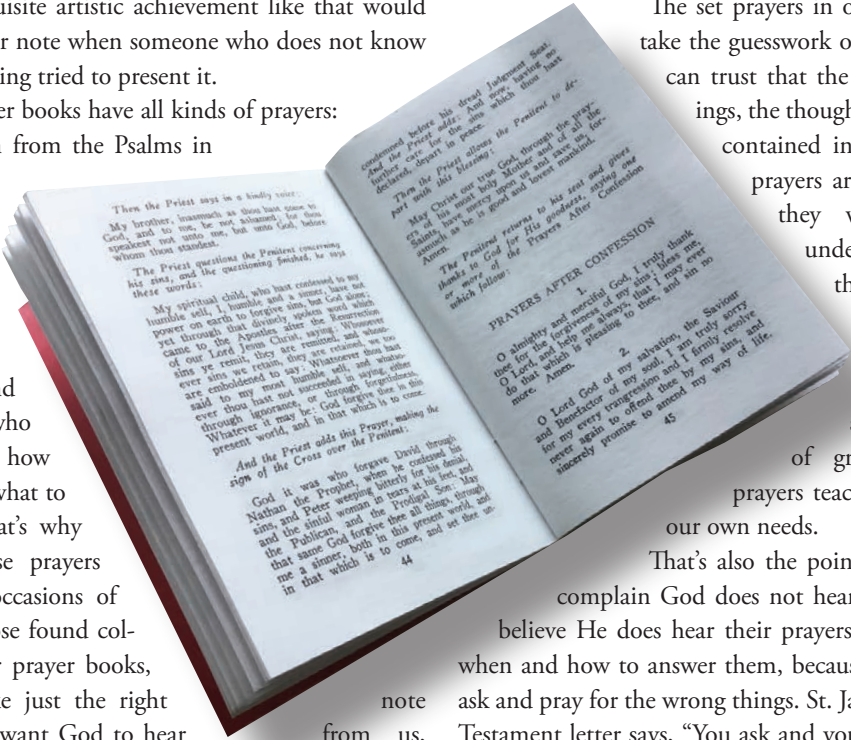
I might have been well-intentioned if I thought I could conduct the London Symphony Orchestra in the performance of the classics, but even all that expertise and talent couldn’t help me. I need training. So it is with prayer. We need to know what to pray for, how to pray, what is needed before we start to pray. The great desert fathers said prayer is the highest form of art and the hardest to master. We have to leave out all the noise and confusion, the cares and anxieties that usually preoccupy our thoughts. We have to stand quietly in God’s presence, ready to listen to Him after He hears our prayer. It would be hard to carry on more than one conversation at a time on the phone. Yet, if we reflect for a moment, we

expect God to give us all His attention, when our attention, in our thoughts, even when we are praying, is scattered all around. We have to put Him on “call-waiting”. Often we are forced to say “God, can you call later, then we can talk without all these interruptions.”

The set prayers in our prayer books take the guesswork out of prayer. We can trust that the words and feelings, the thoughts and devotion, contained in those beautiful prayers are godly, because they were composed under the grace of the Holy Spirit by holy men and women who, themselves, were full of grace. Let these prayers teach us to pray for our own needs.

That’s also the point. People always complain God does not hear their prayers. I believe He does hear their prayers, but He knows when and how to answer them, because sometimes we ask and pray for the wrong things. St. James, in his New Testament letter says, “You ask and you do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions” (4:3). Sometimes what we need for our salvation is the exact opposite of what we ask for. It’s a good thing God does not give us everything we want. Experience tells us in many ways we can be thankful, as we look back on things, that God was wise enough not to answer our prayer in all particulars as we thought we needed at that time.

Let prayer be a conversation with God. We need to get to know Him. We should spend some time with Him. Then we will know what best to say, and do, and request. That’s what that little red pocket prayer book is for. Use it with hope and reverence; it’s God’s personal and private phone number, that He gives only to those who are close to Him!



OVER A MILLION HEALTHY SNACKS SERVED IN LEBANON



Just prior to World Health Day, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), the official humanitarian agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the United States of America, celebrated the distribution of its one millionth healthy snack to Syrian refugee and Lebanese students attending Lebanese public schools. This effort is one component of IOCC's expansive work to support millions of internally displaced Syrians and those seeking refuge across the Middle East and Europe in response to the ongoing conflict.

IOCC's School Nutrition Program, which began in March 2016, is funded through the UN World Food Programme via the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation. Last year, it offered locally produced nutritious snacks, such as apples and milk, to over 10,500 Lebanese and Syrian refugee students ages 3–16, attending 22 Lebanese public schools; this year, IOCC intends to expand the program to reach 17,000 students in 40 public schools. To make the program sustainable, students, parents, and school health educators are offered complementary education sessions on healthy eating. IOCC and its partners are also working to integrate nutrition lessons into the Lebanese national curriculum.

To commemorate the distribution of one million snacks served, IOCC, the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and their partners held an appreciation event at Sin El Fil Third Public School

in Mount Lebanon on March 24. Lucky snack number 1,000,000 went to Fadel, a fifth-grader from South Lebanon. Students who participated in an art competition around the benefits of healthy eating were also recognized during the celebration.

IOCC's School Nutrition Program supports the Lebanese Government and people, who have welcomed more than one million Syrian refugees into their country since 2011, by strengthening the overtaxed education system, which now runs double shifts (morning and afternoon/early evening) to accommodate the influx of refugee children. While attending to nutritional needs, the School Nutrition Program also encourages families to keep their children in school, as this guaranteed food source is crucial to many families who survive on dollars, if not less, a day.

IOCC's other flagship program for children in Lebanon is the health and nutrition program. This trains Lebanese healthcare workers and educates Lebanese and Syrian refugee mothers alike on how to breastfeed, and the role of breastfeeding in promoting health in children. Elsewhere, IOCC provides hearing aids and corrective lenses for hearing and visually-impaired Syrian refugee children in Jordan, and offers access to remedial education to Syrian refugee minors in Greece.

The year 2017 marks IOCC's 25th anniversary of administering life-giving aid in the spirit of Christ's love. For more information, please visit www.iocc.org/25years, or follow IOCC on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.



COMMUNITIES IN ACTION

METROPOLITAN JOSEPH PRESIDES AT ST. GEORGE, BOSTON

Saint George of Boston was honored to host our beloved Metropolitan JOSEPH, as well as Bishop JOHN of Worcester and New England, for a weekend of joyous celebration. The patronal feast of the parish wonderfully coincided with the honoring of Mr. Robert Laham for his fifty years of service to the Archdiocese, and with the Name day of His Eminence.

The weekend began with a special program prepared by the young people of the parish, who enthusiastically greeted Metropolitan JOSEPH with hugs and shouts of "Christ is risen!" as he entered the parish hall. His Eminence greatly enjoyed the performance of a skit highlighting the life and martyrdom of Saint George. The performance was followed by a "pop quiz," in which the young people asked questions of the hierarchs and clergy to ensure that they were paying close attention!

Saturday afternoon marked an especially warm and touching commemoration of the dedicated service given to the Archdiocese by Mr. Robert Laham. The celebration took place at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Fawaz El Khoury, the Vice Chairmen of the Archdiocesan Board of Trustees. All of the speakers took note of "Bob's" tireless efforts stewarding the finances of the Archdiocese, and the gentle, humble ways in which he offered this vital ministry. In an especially moving moment, His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH bestowed on Mr. Laham the Order of Saint Raphael

of Brooklyn, the highest award given by the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America.

The weekend progressed with the celebration of Great Vespers at Saint George, ushering in the liturgical commemoration of the patronal feast of the parish and the Name day of our Chief Shepherd, who is

under the heavenly patronage of Saint JOSEPH of Arimathea, and celebrates on the second Sunday after Pascha. The service was beautifully chanted antiphonally by Metropolitan JOSEPH, Deacon John El Massih, and a choir of students from Hellenic College Holy Cross led by Kamal Hourani, a student





hailing from the parish and studying at the college. Vespers was followed by a creative culinary experience dubbed “International Night,” featuring New England, Middle Eastern, Asian, and Mexican cuisines.

The Hierarchical Divine Liturgy was the apex of the celebratory weekend. Metropolitan JOSEPH was joined by Bishop JOHN, Protosyngellos Timothy Ferguson, Father Gregory Harrigle, Father Nicholas Belcher, and Deacon John

which His Eminence awarded Ms. Linda Ayoub with the Archdiocesan “Meritorious Service Award” for her dedication to all of the ministries of Saint George – the Parish council, Church School, and Adult Fellowship, as well as co-chairing the weekend’s festivities.

One of the themes shared by His Eminence throughout the festal weekend was that of the connection of the Feast of Saint George to



the joy of the Paschal season. As he noted, the feast is always celebrated during the days of Pascha regardless of whether the date falls during Great Lent. All who took part in the weekend are grateful for the radiant Paschal joy that accompanied all of the celebrations that took place. We also wish many years and sincere congratulations to the honorees of the weekend and most especially to our Father and Chief Shepherd, Metropolitan JOSEPH.

METROPOLITAN JOSEPH AND BISHOP ANTHONY VISIT ST. GEORGE, CANTON

The community of St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church of Canton, Ohio, welcomed His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH to preside over the 95th Anniversary of the parish from April 21–23, 2017. On Friday, April 21, a Benefactors Reception was held in honor of Sayidna JOSEPH at the residence of Dr. Kaleel and Rhonia Shaheen, who also faithfully and elegantly served as the 95th Anniversary Chair. The reception recognized the fundraising efforts of the bene-



factors who sponsored the weekend festivities; after Sayidna gathered and thanked them all for their ministry to the church, everyone listened to beautiful paschal hymns chanted by the Metropolitan’s newly ordained Deacon, John Al-Massih. On Saturday morning, Sayidna was greeted by over 50 beautiful children and teenagers of the church, to the sounds of church bells and the chanting of the Paschal troparion. After he delivered his message to the youth and answered their questions, all were invited to a special breakfast chaired by Nina Shaheen, Malakh Bechara,

Laura Kibler and Nahi Kaed.

Saturday evening began with Great Vespers and Artoklasia for the Feast of St. George, and we were blessed to be joined by His Grace Bishop ANTHONY and other local clergy. The Grand Banquet and Hafli followed at Brookside Country Club, with over 250 in attendance from near and far. Dr. K. J. Shaheen II served as Master of Ceremonies and Sarah Joseph delivered a heartfelt rendition of “America the Beautiful.” His Eminence and His Grace were each presented with a crystal plaque by Parish Council Chair

Andria Michael, who was also the Chair of the 95th Anniversary Souvenir Journal. Following a poem dedication from Mr. Louis Karoue, sons of the parish, Fr. Basil Shaheen and Fr. Michael Massouh, delivered speeches. Following remarks from Fr. Michael Corbin, His Grace Bishop ANTHONY introduced His Eminence Metropolitian JOSEPH, who gave the keynote address. Sayidna JOSEPH remembered all those who labored to build up our Archdiocese, including the late Archbishop MICHAEL, a cherished son of the community. At the conclusion



of the banquet, His Eminence left all in suspense by declaring that there would be a big surprise at the Divine Liturgy in the morning.

On Sunday, the Feast of St. George, following Orthros, the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy began; then came "the big surprise," with the elevation of Fr. Michael Corbin to Archpriest following the reading of the Holy Gospel. All of the parishioners were moved by this special blessing. Both Sayidna JOSEPH and Sayidna ANTHONY laid their hands on the head of their priest as he knelt before the two Hierarchs. Soon, chants of Axios!, Mustahiq!, He is worthy! filled the church, and you could feel the great love and unity of this beloved community. At the conclusion of the Liturgy, Paul and Claudia Shaheen, and Leila Andrews, were inducted into the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch. Claudia is the



Ladies Society President, and helped a great deal with the weekend, while Leila also assisted faithfully with the Grand Banquet.

Finally, the St. George Day Luncheon, chaired by Karen Davis, capped off a beautiful and historic weekend. As parishioners entered the hall, they were greeted with a special video presentation of 95 years of memories, organized by Liz Macris. Ladies were also greeted with pink carnations, donated by longtime parishioner Bea McPhearson. (Bea brags about being older than the church!) After an

introduction by Teen SOYO President Musa Michael, the teen and children's dabke troupes performed, and brought joy to all. Then we all listened to a special performance from the St. George Choir, directed by Jim Shaheen, who recognized the longtime service of Rosemary Shaheen.

Sunshine filled the skies outside, but warmth and love were felt inside as all flocked to greet His Eminence Metropolitan JOSEPH and receive his blessing, whose first visit to Canton was incredibly well-received. It was a great weekend that will not be

forgotten, and the celebration of a church community ever growing in the love of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ!

BISHOP THOMAS JOINS FOCUS BOARD MEETING

His Grace Bishop THOMAS had a full weekend, May 6–7, visiting the National FOCUS Directors and Board Meeting, held at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church in Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania. Nicholas Chakos, Director of FOCUS North America, welcomed His Grace, and the Bishop was able to meet Directors and Board members from cities around the country. Following Vespers at the church, he spoke to the group of his interest in the FOCUS ministry and support for it.

On Sunday morning, Sayidna led a Hierarchical Divine Liturgy at St. John the Evangelist Antiochian Parish in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, and joined the parish members for a meal following. He was able to visit the FOCUS Center that operates out of the parish building and spoke to the parish of the significance of this ministry.



AN ORTHODOX HOUSE OF REJUVENATION

“THERE SIMPLY AREN’T ENOUGH PLACES FOR SOBER LIVING IN OUR COMMUNITY,” SAID NATHAN SMITH, THE CO-FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR OF FOCUS COLUMBUS’S JONAH HOUSE. COLUMBUS, OHIO, IS AN EPICENTER OF HEROIN ABUSE AND ADDICTION IN THE MIDWEST. THIS HEROIN EPIDEMIC HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY VISIBLE AS COMMUNITY AFTER COMMUNITY HAS SEEN SHARP INCREASES IN DEATHS CAUSED BY ABUSE OF THIS DANGEROUS DRUG.

“I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction, And He answered me.”
Jonah 2:2

Many people are battling every day to free themselves from their addictions, which addictions often lead to homelessness, poor health, and financial instability. Nathan recognized that Columbus has one of the best shelter systems in the country. Shelters, however, can be horrible places for anyone recovering from addiction. FOCUS Columbus’ Jonah House will fill the gap that currently exists in the service system for homeless addicts.

Opportunity Meets Desire

The Jonah House, which is slated to open in the fall of 2017, will provide a critical, transitional step for former heroin addicts to move from dependency to self-sufficiency. The house will be a safe, caring living space, and whose running it will also arrange meaningful, daily work for residents. In-house professional partners will help residents with their mental and physical health, and provide guidance for everyday tasks.

Nicholas Chakos, Executive Director of FOCUS North America, said, “The Jonah House will be bringing a credible solution to a dire need in Columbus. While FOCUS provides infrastructure and organization to centers around the country, the folks in Columbus have done all of the groundwork and are stepping up to impact their community meaningfully.”

The goal is for Jonah House residents to be able to focus entirely on themselves and their recovery for six months or a year. “There will be professional, volunteer, and spiritual help,” said Peter Gardikes, who is a Jonah House ministry team mem-

ber and Parish Council Member at Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Columbus. “Ultimately, we’d like to see people who have gone through Jonah House mentor those who come after them. We’re creating a community of people supporting one another.” Jonah House is successfully engaging churches in central Ohio to create a network of support and opportunity for those who successfully complete the transition and leave the Jonah House.

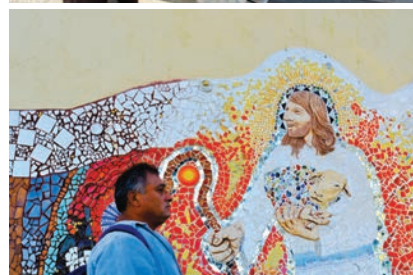
Jonah As a Metaphor and Method

In the Old Testament story, Jonah experiences incredible turbulence on a boat as he attempts to flee God’s command. Jonah’s knows it is his fault that the other passengers are in danger – and he also knows that a change has to take place. Jonah admits to those onboard that he has disobeyed God. Like Jonah, those who are addicted thoughtlessly cause pain to those they love. Similarly, these individuals must come to realize this, and take steps to come back into harmony with those around them.

After being cast into the sea, Jonah enters the belly of the whale. In our case, this time is likened to a period of rehabilitation. When an addict, man or woman, is taken away from his storm and puts some distance between himself and the cause of his pain, he avoids harming himself and others. Just as Jonah emerged to deliver a saving message to the people of Nineveh, when the addict emerges, he is resurrected with the desire to contribute to a community and purpose greater than himself. The parallels are unmistakable.

Just as Jonah’s three days in the belly of the sea monster transformed the way Jonah acted as a messenger of God, FOCUS Columbus’s Jonah House will become a vehicle through which recovering addicts in the Columbus community discover their importance as individuals – and their ability transform others around them.

Please say a prayer for the Jonah House. If you wish to learn more and support this ministry, please contact FOCUS North America.



Nathan Smith is of the director of the program

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–Mark 11:17

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2017 ORATORICAL FESTIVAL

"MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL NATIONS."

MARK 11:17

comments on this topic

The topic is from the Gospel of Mark, in which Jesus quotes both from Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:8-11 speaking in terms of what is and is not to happen in God's House – the temple – The Church. It begins with the statement that first and foremost it is a place of prayer – a place to worship the Living God and secondly it is for all nations – all people who choose to serve the Living God. Once one chooses to serve God and to follow His way – all who do so are welcomed. As the Scripture says, "For as Many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:27-29). Paul further writes, "but Christ is all and in all" (Colossians 3:9-1). Saint John Chrysostom in his homily on Galatians 3:27-29 clearly shares that no matter where we came from, anyone who has been baptized in Christ is no longer what he was by birth. He that was Greek, or Jew, or bond man yesterday, carries about with him the form, not of angel or archangel, but of the Lord of all, yes he displays in his own person the Christ" (*Saint John Chrysostom Commentary on Galatians*).

For more information and rules on the Oratorical and Bible Bowl Festival, visit www.antiochian.org/festivals

The Oratorical Festival is run by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese Department of Youth and Parish Ministries

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The Bible Bowl is run by the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese Department of Youth and Parish Ministries

www.OrthodoxYouth.org

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For an electronic application, please e-mail anthony_bashir@emerson.edu.

The completed application is due by June 15, 2017. Awards will be made at the 53rd Antiochian Archdiocesan Convention in Miami, Florida, July 23-30, 2017.

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THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN NETWORK DEBUTS FIRST ANNUAL 30 UNDER 30 INITIATIVE

The Orthodox Christian Network is excited to announce its first annual 30 under 30 campaign

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—WASHINGTON D.C.— The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) is excited to welcome it's First Annual 30 under 30 Initiative; where members are asked to nominate emerging Orthodox leaders, from within their own communities in North America. The event recognizes 30 emerging leaders under the age of 30 who demonstrate impacting personality and/or professionally through their exceptional leadership in North America.

The initiative—spearheaded by Managing Director Eleni Alexiou, under the direction of OCN's Board of Directors—aligns the mission of OCN, outreach and operations in an effort to develop, demonstrate and encourage Orthodox young adults throughout North America and the international community to build on their existing efforts.

"30 under 30 is an opportunity to show support for and invest in this next generation of trailblazers," says Eleni. "We want to hear from young entrepreneurs and leaders that exemplify Christian Values in their lives and the lives that they touch. This group of adults are changing the way of our Orthodox Christian future."

The initiative draws on Orthodox leadership in the fields of medicine, nutrition, science, public policy, social science, humanities, arts and law, among other.

The initiative aims to

- Identify best practices and share widely young adults in the nation and the world
- Use the power of community to help individuals and communities access Orthodox media in a modern world, develop resources for youth to aspire towards
- Increase young adult engagement in Orthodoxy and Programming

The Orthodox Christian Network (OCN) is an official agency of the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of the United States of America, originally commissioned by SCOBA to create a national, sustainable, and effective media witness for Orthodox Christianity throughout North America.

For more information on The Orthodox Christian Network 30 under 30 Initiative, please visit: <http://myocn.net/30-under-30-initiative/>

For commentary, interview requests, or further details pertaining to OCN, please contact: Presvytera Mallory Kasapakis, Media Relations
954-522-5667 | Mallory.kasapakis@myocn.net

ABOUT THE ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN NETWORK:

Orthodox Christian Network is a non-profit Orthodox organization that was commissioned to comfort, inspire, and inform Orthodox Christians and seekers around the world using media ministry. For many years OCN followed the growth in the media and technology world offering the latest in communicating the gospel through radio programs both land based and on line, podcasts, blogs, video and social media. The numbers of individuals interacting with the OCN now are amongst the highest in the area of faith based media ministry outreaches. They are also the only Orthodox non-profit telecommunicating work force, with satellite offices in DC, Boston and Florida. Their mission is to strengthen Orthodox Christian communities and to share the timeless faith of Orthodoxy with the contemporary world through modern media: radio, the Internet, podcasts, DVDs, television and more. They wish to inspire the Orthodox everywhere, nurture children in the faith, welcome back those who have lapsed and with the joyful, Christ-centered message of the Church, reach out to invite and lovingly welcome all those outside of the Orthodox Christian family.

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MARK 11:17



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