

Daylight

A Ministry of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the U.S.A.

“...now you are
light in the Lord.
Walk as children
of light...”
(Ephesians 5:8)

D.A.Y.
Diocesan Apostolate for Youth

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COLLEGE STAR PLACES *FAITH* ABOVE *FOOTBALL*



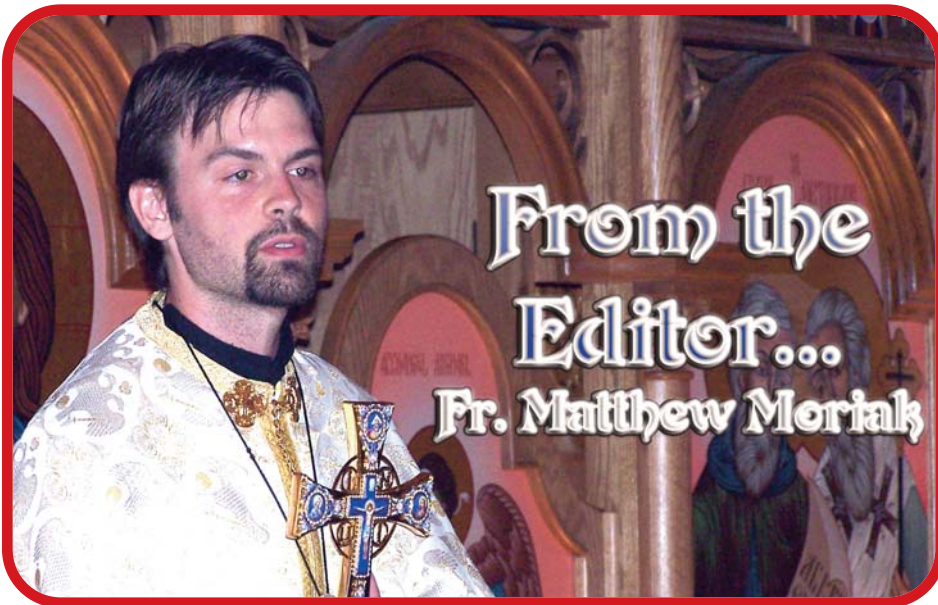
Florida Gators quarterback Tim Tebow is only 21 years old, but he has already achieved a lot in his career. Tebow led his team to a 24-14 victory over the Oklahoma Sooners in the National Championship game on January 9th. In three seasons, he now has two national championships and has already won the Heisman Trophy. The Heisman is an award given annually to the best player in college football. Tebow seemingly has it all on the field, but what about off it? Too often today, young people look up to athletes and other celebrities only to be let down by the way they live their lives. Tebow, however, is a rare exception. He is a devout Christian and spends the

majority of his time living his faith. He tries to the best of his ability to answer Christ's call in the Gospel of St. Matthew to feed the hungry, give drink to those who thirst, and to visit the sick and imprisoned.

Tebow's parents founded an orphanage in the Philippines. Tebow was actually born there while his family got it off the ground and lived there until he was three. Annual trips back to the orphanage were the norm, and Tebow's desire to do mission work only increased from there. Between school and football, his schedule is always very full. He spends most of his spare time, including his spring breaks, doing

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DAYLIGHT PULL-OUT SECTION



What's In Your Wallet?

We're all familiar with the credit card commercial that asks this question. When we are faced with temptation, one of the best ways to combat it is to draw our minds to Christ and to pray. Sometimes it helps to have a reminder. That's why the question "what's in your wallet" as well as the questions, "what's around your neck" and "what's on your wrist" can be very important to us as we struggle daily to be the best Orthodox Christians we can be.



"What's in your wallet?" We probably all have a lot of the same things in our wallets: money, a driver's license, school ID, pictures, etc.

How many of us have an *icon card*? Carrying around a small icon card, especially if it has some sort of prayer written on the back of it, should be a part of every wallet. What better way to think of God and to remind ourselves to pray than to have a holy

image and a prayer on hand all the time?



"What's around your neck?" Necklaces or beads are the most common things, and that goes for guys as well as girls. Here's hoping we all are wearing a

cross around our necks as well. The cross is the symbol of Christ's victory over death and a reminder to us that we have to carry our own crosses each and every day,



"What's on your wrist?" How about a bracelet, or a wrist watch? Better yet, how about a *prayer*

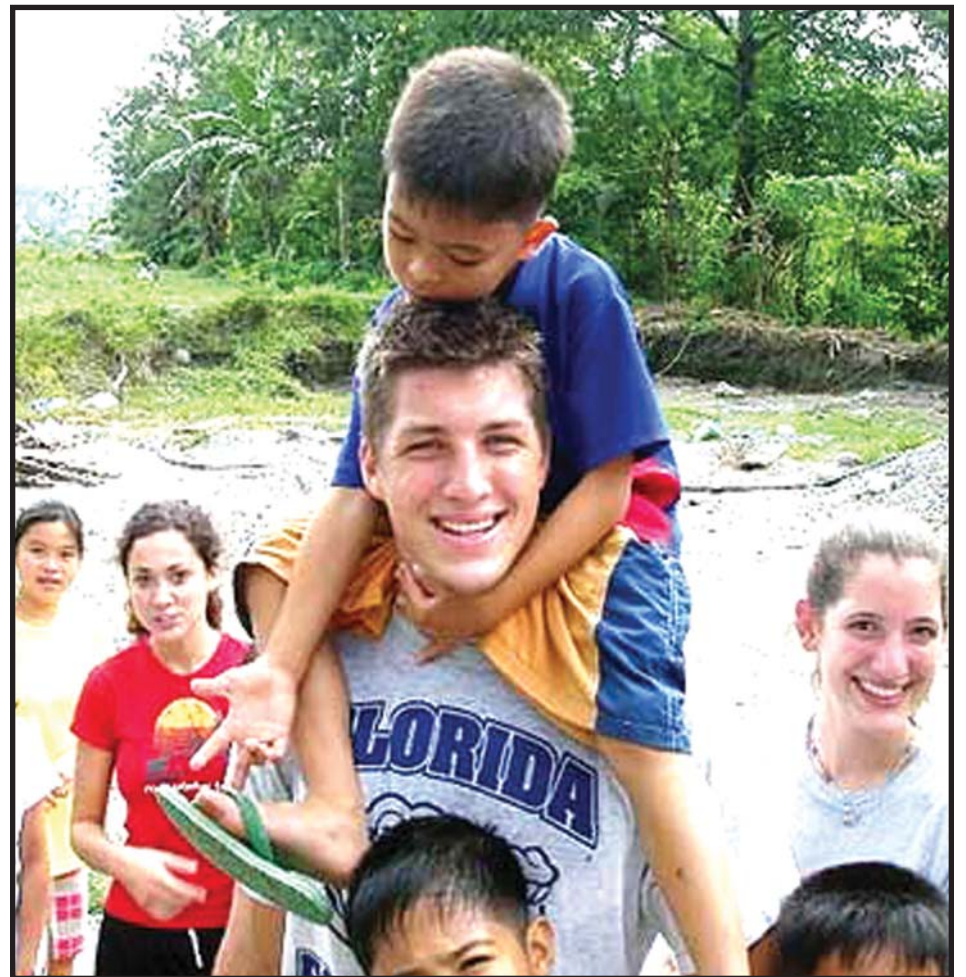
rope? When we have a prayer rope around our wrist, or even one in our pocket, it can make it easy to pray no matter where we are. We can say a short prayer like the Jesus prayer (*Lord Jesus Christ Son of God have mercy on me a sinner*) as our fingers move over each bead on the rope.

-Tebow, cont'd from page 1

missionary work. In addition to his yearly trips to the Philippines, Tebow has also recently taken trips to Croatia and Thailand. On these trips, he has worked with underprivileged youths and visited hospitals and prisons.

"Doing these things," says Tebow, "taking my platform as a football player and using it for good, using it to be an influence and change people's lives, that's more important than football to me."

Not everyone can do *all* of the same things that Tim Tebow does, but everyone can do something if they want to. In past issues of *Daylight* we have spotlighted youth from our Diocese who have taken mission trips of their own. The opportunities to really put your faith into action are available. All you have to do is take them. In addition to mission trips to other countries, there are opportunities to help those less fortunate here in our own towns and communities. You can volunteer at a local soup kitchen, or organize your parish ACRY chapter or youth group to take part in community service. Even within your own parish, there may be an opportunity. Ask your priest if there are any shut-ins who can't come to Church. Perhaps they would like to have a visit from a young person in their parish. Sometimes, the ministry of time spent can be very powerful. God calls each and everyone one of us to use our talents for His glory, we just have to answer the call.



Florida quarterback Tim Tebow is shown with children from an orphanage in the Philippines that he visits every year.

ACRY Lenten Retreats Offer Much for our Youth

Each Lent, the National ACRY sponsors one-day Lenten retreats in three different locations throughout the Diocese. The purpose of these retreats is to get away from the "world" and reflect on Christ and the Lenten journey we all take as Orthodox Christians. Over the years, program aimed at our youth have been included in these retreats, and the results have been outstanding. *Daylight* spoke with Fr. Peter Paproski, National ACRY Spiritual Advisor, about this development.

Daylight: Fr. Peter, how did the youth portion of these retreats get their start?

Fr. Peter: The addition of special programming for youth was done at the direction of His Eminence, Metropolitan Nicholas. As we all know, His Eminence has a great love and concern for our Diocesan youth.

Daylight: Since they first began, how much participation and growth in



participation has their been by our youth?

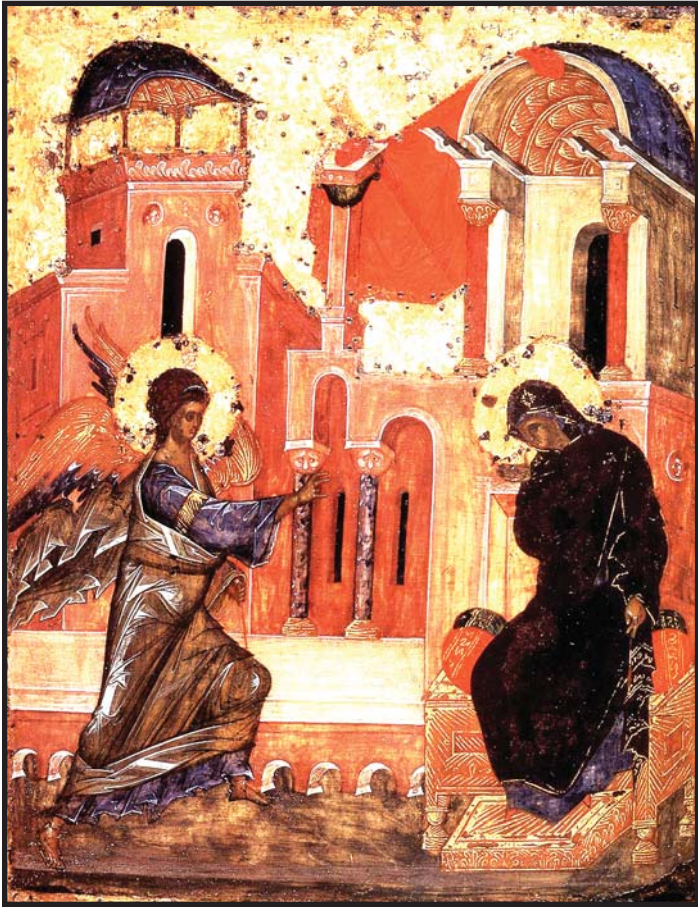
Fr. Peter: At first, the participation of our youth was limited. However over the past three years, the number of youth participants has doubled. If this trend continues, they will soon outnumber the adults in attendance. The greatest increase in attendance by the youth has been at the eastern regional retreat that is held in Valley Forge, PA.

Daylight: Would you hope to see these retreats expand even more than they have?

Fr. Peter: I am confident that as more people learn about how worthwhile these retreats are they will continue to grow. We hold these retreats at three different locations to make it easier for people to attend. Our goal is to have representatives from every Diocesan parish in attendance. I especially ask the readers of *Daylight* if they have never attended before to do so this

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Windows into Heaven



When we come into Church, we venerate the holy icons. In doing so, we are giving honor to Christ, the Mother of God and the Saints. Icons can also be educational and we can learn so much about our faith and the Feasts of the Church by studying them. In a new feature in *Daylight*, we will highlight a specific icon and all the things we can learn about it. In this issue, we will look at an icon of one of the twelve major Feasts of the Church: The Annunciation of the Theotokos. This Feast is celebrated on March 25th according to the New Calendar and April 7th, according to the Old.

The story of this Feast can be found in the Gospel of St. Luke 1:26-39. The angel Gabriel appears to the Mother of God to tell her she has found favor with the Lord. She would conceive a Son by the Holy Spirit, Who would be called Christ. He would be the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Even though she is at first afraid, it is in this event where Mary shows her incredible obedience by responding: "I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word." Even though we celebrate the birth of Christ, it is at the Annunciation that the Incar-

nation actually takes place. God becomes man in the person Christ, safe within the womb of the ever blessed Virgin.

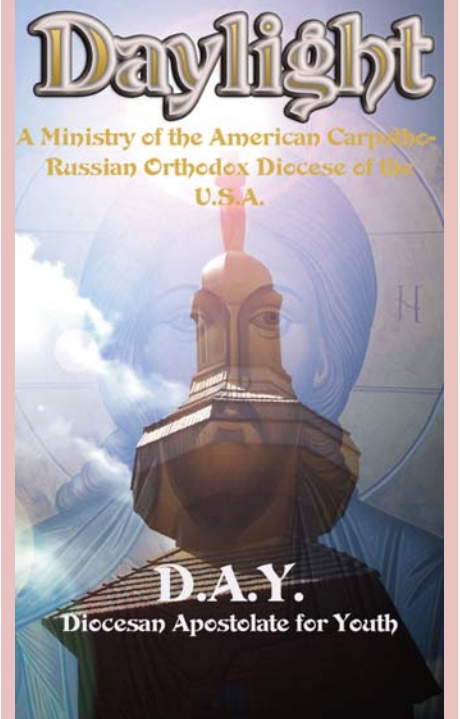
The icon is filled with bright colors, to show the joy of this Feast. In the icon we see the figures of the Archangel Gabriel and Mary. Gabriel's feet are spread apart, as if to show that he is almost running to greet Mary with the news. In his left hand, Gabriel holds a staff, which is symbolic of a messenger. He extends his right hand towards Mary as he announces the blessing to be bestowed on her.



If we look at Mary in the icon, there are many things we can learn from how she is depicted as well. We sing that she is "more honorable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim." In the icon, she is seated in an elevated seat, representing her elevated role as the Mother of God. In her left hand she is holding thread. Mary's task while she stayed in the temple was to weave the purple and red material to be used to make the veil of the Temple. In the icon, her right hand is raised. This is to show her acceptance to what Gabriel is telling her. Mary could have said no, but she accepts out of her willingness to follow the will of God. She is a great example for all of us in this regard. On her garments, you will notice three gold stars. You will see this in many icons of the Mother of God. These three stars represent that Mary was a virgin before, during and after the birth of Christ.



At the top of the icon is a circle with what appears to be rays of light coming from it. This represents the Holy Spirit descending upon her at this miraculous Feast.



Daylight begins its third full year of publication in 2009. Over the last two years, we have had articles written by the youth of our Diocese covering all sorts of topics: from mission trips to attending pilgrimages, from Camp Nazareth to the Altar Boy retreat, from standing up for their faith to discovering it. We want to continue to offer YOU, the young people of our Diocese the chance to share the things you are experiencing as young Orthodox Christians. If you have an interest in writing something for *Daylight*, we want to hear from you. You can write about anything pertaining to your faith. Something you've done in your parish or community, attending Camp or another Diocesan event, or anything pertaining to your faith. If you do write something, please send along a photo. All articles and pictures as well as any questions you might have, can be sent to daylight@acrod.org Looking forward to hearing from you in 2009!

Daylight Interview

Last November, some of our Diocesan faithful in Western Pennsylvania made a procession carrying a 50 pound cross. Similar events have been held at Camp Nazareth in August, 2007 and in New York City last spring. These "mini pilgrimages" have introduced our young people to the idea of pilgrimage in the hope that it will spark an interest in them seeking to make pilgrimage to other holy sites. Physically carrying the cross allows them to focus on Christ and His sufferings. They can focus on prayer and the cross rather than the distractions of the world around them. *Daylight* conducted the following interview with Paul Zdinak of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Windber, PA, who participated in the event.

Daylight: What were you expecting from this event before it happened?

Paul: That it was going to be very tiring

Daylight: Did the event meet your expectations?

Paul: Not exactly, I was not sure what to expect.

It was cold and raining and many people chose to stay home.... There were just few who came because of the weather.

Daylight: Did you notice how people reacted when they saw a group of people carrying a cross



along the side of the road?

Paul: They would stop and watched us go by... one man stopped his car and asked what was going on.... After we told him what we were doing he said he was glad to have had the chance to see us... he felt blessed.

Daylight: Did carrying the cross make it easier to think about Christ and to pray?

Paul: Yes, because it felt as if you were in the presence of God. It was hard at times but not as hard as His(Our Lord) walk with the cross.

Daylight: The procession ended at the House of Miracles. What did you think of it?

Paul: It was a great experience. Everyone was glad to have been a part of the walk who came. The House of Miracles is really neat.. there is great food and Icons and stuff like that...

Daylight: Would you encourage other young people to try a pilgrimage like this if they have the chance? Why?

Paul: Yes, because It helps you get to know Christ and yourself.

Jacob Wrestles With the Lord



Note: This is the third in a series of articles dealing the presence of the Trinity in the Old Testament. The first two can be found in the June/July and November/December 2008 issues of *Daylight*. Go to www.acrod.org/Day to check them out.

In the Book of Genesis 32:22-32, we read a curious story of Jacob wrestling a man. This wasn't wrestling like you might see on TV. The two grappled "until the breaking of day." Who was this Jacob's mysterious opponent? Many say it was an angel. The Church tells us something different. The Church tells us that Jacob wrestled with the 2nd person of the Holy Trinity: Jesus Christ. This is another example in Scripture showing us that Jesus existed eternally with His Father and the Holy Spirit, long before He took on flesh and lived among us as we read in the Gospels.

If Jacob was wrestling God Himself, how was it that he was able to battle him all night? According to *The Orthodox Study Bible*, there is a reason for that. It was a foreshadowing of what Jesus would do by living as a man. The footnote pertaining to this reads:

"The man who wrestled with Jacob was the Son of God, who appeared as a weak man. When He became incarnate, He assumed the weakness of human flesh for man's salvation."

After receiving a blessing from God, Jacob calls the place where they wrestled the Form of God: "For I saw God face to face and my soul was saved."

Jacob would later be given the name Israel which means "contender with God."

Chicago Deanery to Host Pilgrimage



The Chicago Deanery will be hosting a pilgrimage for youth and adults on Saturday, May 9th beginning at 11 AM. The retreat will take place on the grounds of St. John Chrysostomos Monastery for women in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

The day will begin with a prayer service and a talk by Mother Melanie of the monastery. After lunch, there will be a tour of the Monastery's Byzantine-style Church. Following the tour, the pilgrimage will conclude with a "clergy rap" conducted by Chicago Deanery clergy.

For those in the Chicago Deanery, this pilgrimage will offer a wonderful opportunity to lay aside the cares of the world, and spend a day in a place of peace and prayer. For more information, please contact Fr. Sam Sherry at 847-647-8398.

Resolve to Write a Letter

A large portion of the New Testament consists of the Epistles of St. Paul. St. Paul wrote these letters to various Churches to encourage them and to instruct them and they are still a source of instruction for us some 2000 years after they were written. They are that important to the life of the Church.

Imagine what it must have been like to be a part of one of those Churches when they received that letter from St. Paul. We take for granted how easily we can communicate with each other today, but it would have taken a very long time for St. Paul's letters to arrive at their destination.

When I was younger and attended Camp Nazareth as a camper, one of the things we all looked forward to was receiving our address lists at the end of the camping session. We would waste little time sitting down and hand writing letters to our friends. Now, compared to when St. Paul was writing, it didn't take very long to send a letter and receive a response—anywhere from one to two weeks—but compared to the instantaneous world of text messages and e-mails, two weeks probably sounds like an eternity.

And yet, there was something very special about the mail arriving with a hand written letter from a friend; just as it must have been very special for the Churches in Corinth or Thessa-

lonica or Ephesus to receive those letters from St. Paul. St. Paul loved and cared for the faithful in these cities, many of whom he instructed and baptized himself. That he took the time to write to them after he moved on to another city, or even while he was languishing in prison had to have been very re-assuring to them.

Technology is a wonderful thing, and the ability to communicate instantly is very convenient. However, it also allows us to communicate without much actual interaction. People have whole conversations without hearing the other person's voice. It really can depersonalize the relationships we have with our friends and loved ones. A whole generation of young people, as well as future generations, may never know the feeling of receiving a hand written letter in the mail; of knowing that someone took the time and effort to think about what they wanted to say, and to write it down and place it in the mail. People make all sorts of resolutions in the New Year. Why not resolve to doing something the old fashioned way. If you're exchanging text after text with a friend, call them up and actually converse with them. If you have something really important to say to a dear friend, send them a hand written letter. It might take a little longer to get your response, but making the effort might be well worth the wait.

-Lenten Retreats, cont'd from page 2
year.

Daylight: What would you say to our Diocesan youth and families who have never attended one of these retreats?

Fr. Peter: I am reminded of the exchange between the Apostle Philip and Nathaniel, when Philip invited Nathaniel to come and meet Christ. Nathaniel was interested but was a bit skeptical and asked, "what Good can come out of Nazareth?" Philip simply replied, "Come and See" Nathaniel listened to Philip and did just that. By doing this he had an amazing experience. So to those who have never attended, "come and see" and I promise that you will have an amazing experience.

2009 ACRY LENTEN RETREAT SCHEDULE

Central Region: Saturday, March 14th at Camp Nazareth. Fr. Miles Zdinak will offer a presentation entitled *Living Waters* for children ages 6-12 and teens.

Western Region: Saturday, April 4th at Christ the Savior Church in Rockford, Illinois.

Eastern Region: Saturday, April 4th at the National Christian Conference Center in Valley Forge, Pa. Fr. Peter will lead the teens in an interactive presentation entitled *Commending ourselves and our whole lives to Christ*. Proto-Deacon Gregory Benc will offer a presentation to children 11 and under entitled *The Cross, the Tomb and the Resurrection*.

For detailed information on all three retreats, go to our Diocesan website: www.acrod.org