WASHINGTON, DC—Marking its 20th anniversary in the presence of more than 350 prominent Orthodox Christian faithful and friends, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) celebrated two decades of delivering humanitarian assistance with an Anniversary Gala on May 8, 2012, in Washington D.C. The evening was an opportunity to bring together IOCC supporters and volunteers, recognize the accomplishments of IOCC and honor those who helped shape it into a global humanitarian arm of the Orthodox Christian Church.


Award-winning singer, Chris Hillman, performed the National Anthem before the crowd.

Honored guests in attendance for the IOCC 20th anniversary Gala included: Andrew Natsios, former administrator of USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and honorary gala co-chairman, Constantine M. Tsakalos, IOCC Executive Director and CDO; George M. Marcus, Compliance At Work Award recipient and IOCC honorary board member; Andrew A. Athens, Compassion At Work award recipient and IOCC co-founder, Charles R. Ajalat, Compassion At Work Award recipient and IOCC co-founder, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Paul Sarbanes, former US senator of Maryland and honorary gala co-chairman, Mike Emanuel, Congressional Correspondent for FOX News and Gala emcee, Michael S. “Mickey” Homsey, IOCC Board Chairman.

Iona. J. Farha, George M. Marcus, and John G. Rangos, Sr. Three of the five award recipients, John G. Rangos, Sr., Andrew A. Athens and Charles R. Ajalat, co-founded the organization in 1992 and all five men, including George M. Marcus and Dr. George J. Farha, have served on the IOCC Board of Directors and are honorary IOCC board members.

Gala guests were also treated to a live performance by singer Chris Hillman, a founding member of The Byrds, one of the most influential American rock bands of the 1960s. He performed the hit song, “Turn, Turn, Turn,” which carries a message of peace and tolerance inspired by Biblical verses taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes. Joining him on stage were Washington DC area Orthodox Christian children in ethnic costumes and carrying a colorful display of flags representing all of the countries in which IOCC has delivered humanitarian aid during the past 20 years.

Closing comments from His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios included a surprise announcement of the establishment of the Harry and Liberty Tsakalos Endowment for Agriculture Development and Food Security by Baltimore philanthropists, Nicholas and Jeanne Tsakalos.


Honored guests in attendance for the IOCC 20th anniversary Gala included: Andrew Natsios, former administrator of USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and honorary gala co-chairman, Constantine M. Tsakalos, IOCC Executive Director and CDO; George M. Marcus, Compliance At Work Award recipient and IOCC honorary board member; Andrew A. Athens, Compassion At Work award recipient and IOCC co-founder, Charles R. Ajalat, Compassion At Work Award recipient and IOCC co-founder, His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Paul Sarbanes, former US senator of Maryland and honorary gala co-chairman, Mike Emanuel, Congressional Correspondent for FOX News and Gala emcee, Michael S. “Mickey” Homsey, IOCC Board Chairman.

One of the evening’s highlights was honoring five visionary men for their extraordinary philanthropic contributions to IOCC’s mission and its continued success over the past 20 years. The Compassion At Work Award was presented by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios to Charles R. Ajalat, Andrew A. Athens, Dr. George J. Farha, George M. Marcus, and John G. Rangos, Sr. Three of the five award recipients, John G. Rangos, Sr., Andrew A. Athens and Charles R. Ajalat, co-founded the organization in 1992 and all five men, including George M. Marcus and Dr. George J. Farha, have served on the IOCC Board of Directors and are honorary IOCC board members.

Gala guests were also treated to a live performance by singer Chris Hillman, a founding member of The Byrds, one of the most influential American rock bands of the 1960s. He performed the hit song, “Turn, Turn, Turn,” which carries a message of peace and tolerance inspired by Biblical verses taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes. Joining him on stage were Washington DC area Orthodox Christian children in ethnic costumes and carrying a colorful display of flags representing all of the countries in which IOCC has delivered humanitarian aid during the past 20 years.

Closing comments from His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios included a surprise announcement of the establishment of the Harry and Liberty Tsakalos Endowment for Agriculture Development and Food Security by Baltimore philanthropists, Nicholas and Jeanne Tsakalos.

One of the evening’s highlights was honoring five visionary men for their extraordinary philanthropic contributions to IOCC’s mission and its continued success over the past 20 years. The Compassion At Work Award was presented by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios to Charles R. Ajalat, Andrew A. Athens, Dr. George J. Farha, George M. Marcus, and John G. Rangos, Sr. Three of the five award recipients, John G. Rangos, Sr., Andrew A. Athens and Charles R. Ajalat, co-founded the organization in 1992 and all five men, including George M. Marcus and Dr. George J. Farha, have served on the IOCC Board of Directors and are honorary IOCC board members.

Gala guests were also treated to a live performance by singer Chris Hillman, a founding member of The Byrds, one of the most influential American rock bands of the 1960s. He performed the hit song, “Turn, Turn, Turn,” which carries a message of peace and tolerance inspired by Biblical verses taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes. Joining him on stage were Washington DC area Orthodox Christian children in ethnic costumes and carrying a colorful display of flags representing all of the countries in which IOCC has delivered humanitarian aid during the past 20 years.

Closing comments from His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios included a surprise announcement of the establishment of the Harry and Liberty Tsakalos Endowment for Agriculture Development and Food Security by Baltimore philanthropists, Nicholas and Jeanne Tsakalos.

IOCC Board Chairman, Michael S. “Mickey” Homsey, introduced a special video presentation, “Respond. Rebuild. Uplift.” narrated by IOCC Executive Director, Constantine M. Triantafiliou. It highlighted IOCC’s humble beginnings, the challenges of delivering humanitarian aid under difficult and dangerous conditions, and the organization’s vision for the future.

One of the evening’s highlights was honoring five visionary men for their extraordinary philanthropic contributions to IOCC’s mission and its continued success over the past 20 years. The Compassion At Work Award was presented by His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios to Charles R. Ajalat, Andrew A. Athens, Dr. George J. Farha, George M. Marcus, and John G. Rangos, Sr. Three of the five award recipients, John G. Rangos, Sr., Andrew A. Athens and Charles R. Ajalat, co-founded the organization in 1992 and all five men, including George M. Marcus and Dr. George J. Farha, have served on the IOCC Board of Directors and are honorary IOCC board members.

Gala guests were also treated to a live performance by singer Chris Hillman, a founding member of The Byrds, one of the most influential American rock bands of the 1960s. He performed the hit song, “Turn, Turn, Turn,” which carries a message of peace and tolerance inspired by Biblical verses taken from the Book of Ecclesiastes. Joining him on stage were Washington DC area Orthodox Christian children in ethnic costumes and carrying a colorful display of flags representing all of the countries in which IOCC has delivered humanitarian aid during the past 20 years.

Closing comments from His Eminence Archbishop Demetrios included a surprise announcement of the establishment of the Harry and Liberty Tsakalos Endowment for Agriculture Development and Food Security by Baltimore philanthropists, Nicholas and Jeanne Tsakalos.
O n May 3rd, we officially ob-
served a National Day of Prayer. There were some 35,000 observances nationwide where people came to-
gether to formally offer prayers to Almighty God. There were “prayer breakfasts” and “prayer walks” on this day, as well as various services where men and women of all faiths came to-
gether for the purpose of raising their voices in supplication for the benefit of our country and its leaders. It was in 1988 that the late President Ronald Reagan signed a bill into law that des-
ignated the 1st Thursday of May for this annual observance. Setting aside a day to pray in America dates back to a time before we were even a country. In 1775, the Continental Congress asked the citizens of the 13 colonies to come together to offer prayers for the soldiers who were preparing to do battle to free them from British tyranny. Throughout our history, vari-
ous Presidents proclaimed days of prayer for a variety of reasons at criti-
cal times. As usually happens in a land of diver-
sity, another aspect of our society—people who call themselves humanists, secularists and atheists—
have organized an alternative to a Na-
tional Day of Prayer. They refer to it as a National Day of Reason, and they celebrate it on the same day as the Na-
tional Day of Prayer. One of the lead-
ers of this movement describes this day as being “Part protest, part cele-
bration of death and rising on the national Day of Reason. The coming of the Holy Spirit gave us the tools and the energy necessary to spread the Good News of our Saviour Jesus Christ to the multi-
tude attendance and tough economic times. In other words, evangelize and teach the word of God, converting souls to Christianity and bringing them into the Orthodox Church. Evangelizing doesn’t mean to stand on the corner preaching the Gospel or quoting Scripture. Although the tools and methods used today may be a bit dif-
cerent, considering the advances in technology and the mass media that is available to us today. The message of Christ’s love for us, the message of salvation through Christ Jesus and the way to eternal salvation remain the same. As a Christian each and every one of us is committed to evangeliz-
ing and teaching God’s message. We are all aware that in today’s world some of the non-denominational churches make great use of TV and the Radio. Orthodoxy has some great programs as well such as Ancient Faith Radio and the Orthodox Christian Network. The media is a fantastic tool for spreading Christ’s message but it is only one avenue open to us. The easiest method of spreading Christ’s message is simply by living our lives in the manner that Christ commands us to, loving one another, helping another, being good to one another and just living in the manner Christ teaches us.

In a day when our parishes are suffer-
ing from declining membership rolls, poor attendance and tough economic times, it is everyone’s responsibility to try to make our parishes vibrant and full of life, and not just the “job” of the parish priest. How can we do this without exerting too much effort? It’s easy! When visitors come to your church, greet them promptly with a ‘big’ smile, introduce them to your priest after services and invite them to the coffee social after liturgy, warmly inviting them to visit again. Another area of evangelization in the Ortho-
dox Church for visitors is the beauti-
ful iconography on our walls and iconostasis’, the sweet aroma of the burning incense, the burning of can-
dles, in making the sign of the cross through our services. All these things that seem so simple to us and taken so much for granted by Ortho-
dox Christians, is what makes us so uniquely different to the rest of the non-Orthodox world.

Another way we as Orthodox Chris-
tians evangelize is working within the Community by serving in the local food pantry or the soup kitchen or by donating to and helping the needy, visiting the sick in the hospitals, hos-
pice and nursing homes and praying for them. It is as simple stopping by a neighbor or parishioner’s house who is alone or not feeling well and just chatting for a little while. If we are going to the grocery store or the shopping mall we may ask them if they need something, a loaf of bread or a carton of milk. It is important for us to remember that once the Holy Spirit makes a home in our hearts the evangelizing part becomes easy, for the Holy Spirit does all the work. All we have to do is allow Him to work within us.

If each and every one of us allowed ourselves to let the Holy Spirit be-
come active in our hearts, and why not let Him (after all each and every Christian baptized with water in the name of the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit already has Him dwelling within us), our Churches would be thriving and bursting at the seams with love and new members. As we approach Pentecost and the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the birth-
day of our Church, let us also create a re-
birth in our hearts, a new affirma-
tion of our Holy Baptism, allowing the Holy Spirit to do its work by evangelizing through us, making our hearts the true home of the Holy Spirit, bringing to Christ new Ortho-
dox Christians who are willing to open their hearts to Him as well and allowing the Holy Spirit to work
JOHNSTOWN, PA--The spring meeting of the Diocesan Board of Trustees was held on May 10 at the Chancery in Johnstown. Chancellor Protopresbyter Frank P. Miloro chaired the meeting. All trustees were present. Father Miloro welcomed Steven Marusich who was appointed to complete the term of Trustee Ted Knott who asked to be relieved of his responsibilities. Father Miloro read an appointment letter to Mr. Marusich from His Eminence, Archbishop Demetrios, Locum Tenens.

The Trustees heard financial reports and operations reports on the institutions and activities of the Diocese. An audited statement of the financial position of the Diocese was distributed, with the opinion that "the financial statements referred to in the audit report present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Diocese of the U.S.A. as of December 31, 2011 and the changes in net assets, functional revenues and expenses and cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles".

Planning for various programs were undertaken for Camp Nazareth, The Church Messenger, Mission Activities/Missions and Evangelizations, Youth Apostolate, Stewardship, Liturgical Publications, DDD, Priests’ Pension Fund, Internet Ministry/Information Technology, Christ the Saviour Seminary and Christ the Saviour Cathedral.

Seminarian Academic Year Comes to a Close

JOHNSTOWN, PA - Christ the Saviour Seminary in Johnstown recently held their Commencement Ceremonies for the 2011-2012 academic year. The graduation exercises took place at the close of daily Vespers on May 4. Father Michael Rustick, priest in residence at the Seminary, celebrated the Vespers. At its conclusion, Protopresbyter Frank P. Miloro, Seminary Dean and Diocesan Chancellor, spoke to the seminarians. "There are two kinds of classrooms in this seminary," he noted. "One is filled with desks. The other has an altar at its center. Since 1946, the chapel and the classroom have been educating hand-in-hand our future priests. What is learned in the classroom is delivered to the people through the church and the ordained clergy. If you have regarded either the chapel or the classroom less than the other, you have done a disservice to your future ministry".

Father Miloro complimented all the students for a year of excellence. A dinner was served afterwards for students and graduates and their guests in the seminary refectory.

JOHNSTOWN, PA--On Monday May 7, 2012, the seminarians from Christ the Saviour Seminary, accompanied by the Very Rev. Protopresbyter Frank P. Miloro, Seminary Dean, attended the 12th Annual Saints Cyril and Methodius Lecture at the Kearns Spirituality Center, situated on the campus of La Roche College in Allison Park, PA.

Sponsored by Sts Cyril and Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary, the lecture was delivered by Dr. Lewis J. Patsavos, Professor Emeritus of Canon Law at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, MA. Dr. Patsavos’ address was entitled: “Challenges Facing the Orthodox Church in America."

Having received his Licentiate in Theology (1961) and Doctorate in Theology (1974) at the University of Athens, Greece, Dr. Patsavos also completed certified theological studies at the Pontifical Oriental Institute in Rome, the University of Munich, the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. Serving as Professor of Canon Law and Director of Field Education at Holy Cross Seminary since 1974, Dr. Patsavos continues to teach in a limited capacity. This dual responsibility enabled him to experience the pastoral nature of the canonical tradition of the Church contextually through theological field education, leading to an integration of theory and praxis towards a holistic approach to the study of theology and canon law.

A native of Cambridge, Massachusetts, Professor Patsavos is fluent in several languages, including Greek and German, and serves as a consultant on canonical affairs to the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, the Carpatho-Russian Diocese of America, and the Mother Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. His numerous awards and ecclesiastical distinctions include Archon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. He has also served as a former member of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Theological Consultation, as well as a member of various Archdioecesan ad hoc committees and an ex officio member of the Archdiocesan Council of the Greek Orthodox Church in America.

A world-renowned scholar and authority in the field of Canon Law, Dr. Pat-savos has lectured at universities around the world. He has authored several articles and four books, his last study entitled: A Noble Task: Entry into the Clergy in the First Five Centuries (Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Press, 2007). He is currently completing a textbook on Orthodox Canon Law based on his over 35 years of academic research and teaching.

Representing the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Pittsburgh, the Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, and the American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese of the USA pictured with Dr. Patsavos (left) are Metropolitan Savvas, Metropolitan Archbishop William Skurla, Fr. John Petro and Fr. Frank P. Miloro.

Seminarians of Christ the Saviour Seminary who accompanied Fr. Frank Miloro and Fr. Michael Rustick to the lecture.
On October 4, 2011, our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, with the Holy Synod of Bishops, officially numbered among the saints the Eldress Sophia, Ascetic of Kleisoura, Greece. St. Sophia was born as Sophia Saoudili in 1883 in the village of Trebizond in present-day Turkey. In 1907 she married Jordan Horkokori-dou but in 1914 he disappeared (likely against his will) leaving her as the single mother of a new born son. She faced another tragedy shortly after the loss of her husband when this, her only child, died. Sophia became totally dependent upon God and began to spend increasing amounts of time in prayer on a nearby mountain.

In 1919 Sophia arrived in Greece, and on her arrival the Blessed Theotokos appeared to her and said “Come to my house”. When Sophia asked where she could find her house, the Blessed Mother replied: “I am in Kleisoura”. Obedient to the command of the Blessed Mother of God, Sophia settled in the Monastery of the Nativity of the Theotokos in Kleisoura, about three hours from Thessalonica. Here she remained for the rest of her long life, never formally taking the vows and tonsure as a nun. Sophia took up residence in the monastery kitchen, sleeping two hours a night and spending the rest of the night on her knees in prayer. She dressed very poorly and had a blanket and shoes full of holes. When she was given clothing by visitors to the monastery she would give them away to the poor. She had no interest in food, eating only enough to survive. When visitors would give her money, she would hide it and retrieve it only when she found someone in need. Because of her ascetic lifestyle and shabby appearance many people without a spiritual foundation called her “Crazy Sophia” but others saw in her a lifestyle much like the saints of old. To those who came to her she taught:

Almsgiving should be in secret, for God alone to know.
The angels speak every day. God sends the angels to see if people are repenting.
The Mother of God weeps, she weeps every day. She says to her Son: “My Son and my God, grant the world wisdom, forgive the world.”
Oh, if you only knew what happened to the Lord on Wednesday and Friday, you would put nothing in your mouth. Neither bread, nor oil. Do not break the fast of Wednesday and Friday.
The fear of God makes a person wise. What is the fear of God? Not that one should be afraid of God, but to be afraid to sadden someone, to harm someone, to do them no wrong, and to not make accusations. This is wisdom. After all this, God will illumine you as to what to do in your life.

When she observed scandalous behavior of priests and lay people, she never condemned anyone but said: “Cover things, so that God will cover you.”

Through her prayer and fasting she became a vessel of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 that when a person is purified and filled with the Holy Spirit they will receive certain gifts of the Holy Spirit such as a healing, knowledge, miracles, prophecy. St. Sophia was especially endowed with the gift of prophecy. When visitors arrived she would say their names before they introduced themselves and knew their family problems. In 1967 she became seriously ill and was in great pain but was healed through a vision of the Blessed Theotokos, the Archangel Gabriel and St. George. Eldress Sophia fell asleep in the Lord on May 6, 1974 and her relics are now enshrined in the Monastery church. Her feastday is observed on May 6 (new calendar), the day of her repose in the Lord.

The Ascetics

Our new saint Sophia is listed in the category of saints called “ascetics”.

The word ascetic comes from the Greek word askesis meaning practice or exercise, especially as it is related to athletics. It also comes from the Greek word asken which means to work. Ascetics are saints who especially underwent rigorous efforts of prayer, fasting and self-denial in order to attain theosis, or union with God. Just as an athlete will train and follow a special diet in order to win an athletic event, the ascetic saints underwent the same in order to achieve salvation and theosis. The Holy Bible describes the practice of asceticism in the writings of St. Paul:

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Are we to live like St. Sophia, dressed in rags, sleeping little and spending nights in prayer? Some of us may be called to this but for those of us with a family and a home to maintain such a lifestyle is impossible. But, as St. Paul teaches, all Christians are called to some forms of asceticism. We must keep in mind, first of all, that we will be saved not by our own efforts or by doing “religious things” like fasting or dressing in rags. Salvation will be granted to us as a gift as long as our lives are joined to Jesus: He is the Savior. But there are desires in me, sinful passions in me, and forces and temptations in the world around me that want to separate me from Jesus. If I can practice a small form of asceticism like saying No! to a hamburger on a fast day, I can then more easily say No! whenever sinful temptations come my way. If I can practice self control with what goes into my mouth I can more easily control what comes out in my words. If I can discipline myself to pay attention as I stand in prayer, I can more easily control what I focus my eyes on each day. How can we expect our children to avoid the temptations of drugs and alcohol if we have never taught them how to learn self control by fasting? May the example of St. Sophia and all the ascetic saints strengthen us as we run our own race and seek an imperishable crown of glory from the Lord!

Tropar (Tone 3)
O Blessed Mother Sophia, you became wise and the adornment of the Mother of God, you lived an ascetic life in the monastery, from which has spread the praise of your struggles, striking the ranks of demons. As you now stand as in intercessor before Christ, do not neglect those who fervently honor you.

Kondak (Tone 4)
You became a treasury of divine wisdom and all-consuming fear of God, O Mother Sophia. Through your motherly intercessions, O Blessed One, you offer to all the richness of grace.
Senses of Orthodox Christian Worship

The Faithful of Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church in Homestead, PA. The day began with the Divine Liturgy, as well as focusing on the offerings of prayer by discussing how the Church for Divine Liturgy that morning. The answers varied and led into an engaging dialogue. The youth discussed the things that are seen during the Divine Services of the Church by building his or her very own iconostasis and placing the icons in the proper places. The youth then offered incense outside, while discussing the story of the Three Holy Youths from the book of Daniel. It was awesome to see the prayers literally rising to heaven in the offered incense. The youths followed this with then prompted to describe which senses they first used upon entering the Church by building his or her own iconostasis and placing the icons in the proper places. The youth then offered incense outside, while discussing the story of the Three Holy Youths from the book of Daniel. It was awesome to see the prayers literally rising to heaven in the offered incense. The youths followed this with prayer life advancing in one’s spiritual growth. Also Fr. Jonathan urged if one had any questions concerning the psalms one should ask one’s priest or spiritual Father about what the particular words may mean as to increase our understanding of the Word of God.

JOHNSTOWN, PA--The Annual Regional Diocesan Lenten Retreats were well received by our Diocesan faithful. Held in the eastern, midwestern and central sectors of the Diocese, the members of our Diocesan family were given the opportunity to retreat from the world for a day and reflect more deeply on their common Christian vocation.

The first retreat took place on March 24, 2012 for the central region at St. Nicholas Orthodox Church in Homestead, PA. The day began with the Divine Liturgy of All Souls. A light meal following the Liturgy was offered in the parish hall. Around Noon the presentations began. Fr. Jonathan Tobias, pastor of Saint John the Baptist Church in East Pittsburgh, gave the adult presentation focusing on the daily use of the Book of Psalms for every Christian believer. Fr. Jonathan's presentation was multifaceted with an historic, theological, practical, and personal spiritual look at reading the Psalms. The main focus however was on the person's spiritual benefit from spending time in the Book of Psalms, the main book of prayer for the Hebrew nation and the Christian Church.

Fr. Jonathan spoke on how the individual is to read and interpret the Psalms: With an emphasis on reading the psalms aloud so that both the reader's senses of sight and hearing participate in the prayerful perception of this profoundly spiritual book. Fr. Jonathan urged everyone present to begin reading the Psalms. By starting gradually reading small portions and continue to grow into reading each day so that the Book of Psalms becomes a regular part of one's daily prayer life advancing in one's spiritual growth. Also Fr. Jonathan urged if one had any questions concerning the psalms one should ask one's priest or spiritual Father about what the particular words may mean as to increase our understanding of the Word of God.

Fr. Matthew Stagon, pastor of Nativ-ity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, Morgantown, and his wife Pañí Eleni, offered the youth presentation. The youth participated in an interactive discussion on the Five Senses of Orthodox Christian Worship. The presentation started with a reading through the sixth chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, which describes Isaiyah's vision of heavenly worship in which he saw, heard, touched, smelled and tasted. The youth were then prompted to describe which senses they first used upon entering the Church and Blood of Christ, which each had received that morning.

The children learned that by using the five senses God has shared with us we are able to come to know Him in an even better way. He does this for us because He loves us. The youth then closed their afternoon with designing a small box with an icon of the Three Holy Youths inside of which each was able to take home a bit of Gloria Incense. It was truly a blessed day as they learned to serve God with all the senses.

The Faithful of Saint Nicholas Church served a Lenten meal in the parish hall following the presentations. Great Vespers were held following the meal. All came away enriched and fortified for the remain-

The Midwest Lenten Retreat, hosted by Holy Transfiguration Mission Church, began with the presentation, entitled Orthodoxy and Healing, given by Father Alexis Miller, host pastor. Father Alexis said that a guiding theme throughout the Great Lent should be the Prayer of Saint Ephraim the Syrian. We should think of the Church as a hospital for our souls - helping to heal the spiritual maladies (or passions - the seven deadly sins) that afflict us. He noted that our bodily afflictions are only temporary and will cease when we die. But, afflictions of the soul will not cease with our physical death. Father Alexis spoke of the interesting life of Saint Ephraim, ranging from the saint’s encounters with a harlot, to his baptism and being made a Deacon by Saint Basil the Great, to gluing together the pages of a book which belonged to the heretic Apollinaris.

Delving into the Prayer of Saint Ephraim, Father Alexis noted that in praying it we engage in “spiritual calisthenics”, because with prostrations, our whole body is involved in the prayer. Father Alexis then discussed the Prayer itself, stating that it starts with our submission to Christ (O Lord and Master of my life). We submit ourselves as slaves to Christ - we offer up our freedom to Him. Then, we ask God to deliver us from ... Laziness, which pushes us down - we think that we are not able to change - is the root of all sin. Despair or de-spondency - when we can’t see anything positive - the Devil lies to us about God and the world - this is suicide of the soul. Lust for power - when we seek compensation for a life that is self-centered and selfish - when we become our own lord and master! Idle talk - which causes the passions within us to harm others. Then, we ask God to give to us ... Purity or chastity, which is whole-mindedness - not being divided or disloyal - but, rather, complete. Humility - the elimination of lies - seeing and accepting things as they really are. Patience - the ability to wait on the Lord. And, love, which is a gift from God which we are free to receive, once we get rid of our passions. Finally, when we see our own sins,
DANBURY, CT—Youth from Holy Trinity in Danbury came together to participate in the sacraments of confession and communion and attend liturgy together on Lazarus Saturday. Following the service there was a breakfast and activities to prepare for Holy Week and Pascha. The children and teens made Palm Crosses, dyed eggs and decorated luminaries to be used in the church. Fr. Luke Mihaly is pastor of Holy Trinity in Danbury.

PHOENIXVILLE, PA—On Sunday, April 22, the children from the Holy Ghost Sunday School completed an Easter Service Project. The children made 24 tie blankets for an organization called “Warm the Children.” The children had a wonderful time working together and the project was sponsored by the Senior ACRY. Pastor of Holy Ghost Church is Protopresbyter John Fedornock.

POTOMAC, MD—Pictured are the scouts from Holy Resurrection Church in Potomac, MD, who participated in Scout Sunday 2012. Pastor of Holy Resurrection is Fr. Peter Zarynow.

HOMESTEAD, PA—Pictured are Steve and Carol Fucsko of St. Nicholas Church in Homestead on the occasion of their 40th Wedding Anniversary. They are shown with their pastor, Protopresbyter Robert Buczak.

MORGANTOWN, WVA—The Youth of St. Mary’s in Morgantown assisted their pastor, Fr. Matthew Stagon, with the blessing of the Artos Bread on Pascha Sunday.

PERTH AMBOY, NJ - On Sunday, May 6th, St. John the Baptist Church honored its oldest parishioner—Helen Murafski—on the occasion of her 100th birthday. Born on May 2, 1912, Helen is a life-long resident of Perth Amboy as well as a lifetime member of St. John’s! Following Divine Liturgy that day, the parish sponsored a brunch in her honor in the Church Hall, where fellow parishioners and relatives shared the joy of the special occasion with her.
HOMESTEAD, PA--Pictured are the members of the 2012 First Confession Class of St. Nicholas Church in Homestead, PA: Elizabeth Kinbancik, Jillian Piscitelli, Carly Daw, and Rachael Fedornock. They are shown with their teacher, Andrea Urban, pastor, Protopresbyter Robert Buczak, and altar boys.

BRIDGEPORT, CT--Pictured with their pastor, Protopresbyter David Cochran, are the members of the 2012 First Confession Class of St. John the Baptist Church in Bridgeport, CT. They are: Justin Forizs, Daniel Maxwell, Jr., William Lesko and Nicholas DeManche.

CHEEKTOWAGA, NY--Members of the First Confession Class at St. Mary’s Church in Cheektowaga, NY included Clayton Wehr and Jack Dziabo. They are shown with their pastor, Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Kadlec, and altar boys, Brady Ward, Trey Dziabo, Connor Nowak and Jacob Wehr.

BINGHAMTON, NY--Members of the First Holy Confession Class at St. Michael’s in Binghamton, NY included from left to right: Aryanah Warner, Adriele Martinez, Shawn Lynch, Kaitlyn Eckert, Lillianna Korba and Mariella Eno. They were joined by Christopher Puzakulic, Reader George Ellis, Protopresbyter Jim Dutko, Joseph Korba and Sandra Koytek.

MORGANTOWN, WVA--On Sunday May 20, 2012 St. Mary’s in Morgantown honored their First-Confession Class. Pictured are teacher, Michelle Berry, Jacob Rohozen, Frank McCutchan, Seth Rohozen, Altar Server Spencer Sabak and Fr. Matthew Stagon, pastor.

POTOMAC, MD--Pictured with their pastor, Fr. Peter Zarynow, are the members of the 2012 First Confession Class of Holy Resurrection Church in Potomac, MD. They are: Constantin Acsente, Allen Dzubak, Grace Antonishek, Joseph Weir and Michael Sofelkanik.

CHEEKTOWAGA, NY--Members of the First Confession Class at St. Mary’s Church in Cheektowaga, NY included Clayton Wehr and Jack Dziabo. They are shown with their pastor, Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Kadlec, and altar boys, Brady Ward, Trey Dziabo, Connor Nowak and Jacob Wehr.

BINGHAMTON, NY--Members of the First Holy Confession Class at St. Michael’s in Binghamton, NY included from left to right: Aryanah Warner, Adriele Martinez, Shawn Lynch, Kaitlyn Eckert, Lillianna Korba and Mariella Eno. They were joined by Christopher Puzakulic, Reader George Ellis, Protopresbyter Jim Dutko, Joseph Korba and Sandra Koytek.

BRIDGEPORT, CT--Pictured with their pastor, Protopresbyter David Cochran, are the members of the 2012 First Confession Class of St. John the Baptist Church in Bridgeport, CT. They are: Justin Forizs, Daniel Maxwell, Jr., William Lesko and Nicholas DeManche.

MORGANTOWN, WVA--On Sunday May 20, 2012 St. Mary’s in Morgantown honored their First-Confession Class. Pictured are teacher, Michelle Berry, Jacob Rohozen, Frank McCutchan, Seth Rohozen, Altar Server Spencer Sabak and Fr. Matthew Stagon, pastor.

POTOMAC, MD--Pictured with their pastor, Fr. Peter Zarynow, are the members of the 2012 First Confession Class of Holy Resurrection Church in Potomac, MD. They are: Constantin Acsente, Allen Dzubak, Grace Antonishek, Joseph Weir and Michael Sofelkanik.
The faithful of the Eastern region of the Diocese gathered on the same day at the National Christian Conference Center in Phoenicia, PA. More than 40 adults, teens and children enjoyed a day of spiritual reflection and discussion on various aspects of the Christian Life. Very Rev. Fr. John Branche led the adults in an engaging discussion of the topic: Overcoming Anger. Drawing from his years of pastoral ministry and his academic background in counseling, Fr. John spoke about the causes of anger, and the means of controlling it. In his presentation he drew from the writings of the Church Father regarding controlling the passions, and various psychological and behavioral models of recognizing and dissipating anger. He concluded his talk by engaging the participants in role-playing of various scenarios that causes one to become angry, and offered practical suggestions how to avoid anger.

Deacon Jim spoke to the teens about recognizing and accepting the miracles wrought by God in everyday life. Drawing from personal experience, especially in regards to various myrrhstreaming and wonderworking icons that he and many of the youth had recently venerated, he pointed out that miracles, small and great are occurring to occur today. He challenged the youth to deepen their knowledge of the faith and to continue to trust in God to lead them to their true calling in life.

The younger children, ages 8-12, were led in an interactive workshop by Fr. Peter Zarynow. The topic of the day was “Friends in Christ.” In the morning session a discussion took place on how one makes friends in school, at activities and at church and church functions, especially Camp Nazareth. The children were then reminded that although they came from various parishes and perhaps had never met before, they had something very important in common—their Orthodox Faith. They were reminded that it is important to have friends that are Orthodox Christians, for this common bond will make these friendships stronger and deeper. In the afternoon the children viewed the popular movie “Cars.” The film was paused at certain times to discuss positive and negative examples of friendship. It was also discussed how the main character grew to be a good friend. The day finished with the children decorating Prayer Boxes to hold the names of their friends and those they have been asked to pray for.

The faithful of the Diocese, once again, thanks to the benevolence of the National Diocesan ACRY. If you do not have an ACRY chapter in your parish, why not please visit the ACRY website www.acry.org to learn more about the National ACRY. -Guest Sermon, cont’d from page 2

SOUTH BOUND BROOK, NJ -- His Eminence, Metropolitan Constantine, the Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A. and the Ruling Hierarch of the Central Eparchy reposed in the Lord on May 21, 2012. The following statement was issued by His Eminence, Archbishop Antony and His Grace, Bishop Daniel of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A.: Dearly Beloved Brother Hierarchs, Clergy and All Orthodox Faithful:

It is with a profound depth of sadness that we hereby inform you of the repose, in the morning of 21 May, 2012 in the 76 year of his earthly pilgrimage, of His Beatitude Metropolitan Constantine, the Ruling Hierarch of the Central Eparchy and the Primate of our Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA.

His Beatitude was stricken with a serious illness just a few weeks ago and was released only three days ago from a local Pittsburgh hospital, which enabled him to participate in the celebration of his 40th anniversary of Archpastoral ministry among the faithful of our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA. This celebration took place at the Dormition of the Mother of God Ukrainian Orthodox Church in McKees Rocks, PA with the presence of his brother Ukrainian Orthodox hierarchs and visiting bishops of other Orthodox jurisdictions, his family from the United States and his beloved spiritual children, the clergy and faithful of the UOC of the USA, South America and Europe.

O God of spirits and of all flesh, Who has trampled down death; You have overthrown the devil and have given Life to Your children: now give rest, Lord, to the soul of Your departed servant Metropolitan Constantine, in a place of light, a place of refreshment and a place of repose, where there is no sickness, sighing nor sorrow. As You are a Good God, Who loves mankind, pardon every sin, which he has committed, whether by word or by deed or by thought, for there is no man who lives and has not sinned. You alone are infinite, Your Righteousness is Eternal and Your Word is Truth. For You are the Resurrection, the Life and the Repose of your newly presented servant, Metropolitan Constantine, Christ our God and we give glory, together with Your Father, Who is Eternal and Your All-Holy, Good and Life-Creating Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen!

In our Lord’s abundant Love,
† Antony, Archbishop
† Daniel, Bishop

Within them to help spread the Good News, the Gospel of love, the Gospel of hope and the Gospel of eternal salvation to as many people as possible. All good things happen when the Orthodox Christian allows himself/herself to be used by the Holy Spirit to spread Christ’s message. There is so much turmoil in the world today, the Evil One is working overtime in trying to defeat Christ and His message. If one listens to all the news reports the Evil One is gaining momentum, but I don’t believe that. I do know one thing: He gets better coverage by the news media. I guess the media doesn’t feel Christ’s message is a headline story; after all it is only over 2,000 years old. Imagine that, a message that hasn’t changed in 2,000 years. Having said that, I do feel as Christians, as Orthodox Christians, we must do a better job re-enforcing our troops who are spreading Christ’s message and recruiting new Christians to help stop the Evil One’s advancement. If we did that, perhaps then once again, it would be a headline as it was over 2,000 years ago.

Just imagine! If we all did our part what a magnificent world we would be living in but better yet, Christianity and our churches would be packed.

Rev. Daniel Mahler
“All for One”
Orthodox Senior High Youth Mission Trip to Tennessee

DANBURY, CT--The Orthodox Youth Mission team is coming into the home stretch of its training for this summer's mission trip. Father Luke Mihaly of Holy Trinity in Danbury, CT along with 4 other adult leaders and 11 teens from the parishes of Holy Trinity Danbury, CT, St. John's Mill Hill Avenue, Bridgeport, CT, Holy Trinity Yonkers, NY, St. Barbara's Orange, CT and St. Alexis in Clinton, CT will be traveling to Johnson City, TN July 7-15, 2012 to participate in the Appalachian Service Project. The Appalachian Service Project (ASP) had been in existence for over 40 years. Each summer, teen volunteers travel to West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee to help some of the poorest people in our country repair their homes. They will spend the week working to fulfill ASP’s mission of making homes “warmer, safer, and drier.”

In the last few weeks, the team has undergone construction training on the safe use of power tools and ladders, how to cut, tape and mud sheet rock, hammer, paint, drill and other basic construction skills. They also spent a work day completing projects such as installing new windows, putting in a laminate floor, repairing sheet rock and digging a drainage ditch. But repairing homes is only part of the mission work these teens and adults will be doing. ASP is “a relational ministry with carpentry on the side.” Each crew on the team will work on the home of one family for the whole week and building relationships with them is as important as rebuilding the homes they live in. During their week in Tennessee, the Orthodox Youth Mission Team will stay in a center with groups from at least 2 other churches, living in community where, in addition to the construction work for our families, everyone must pitch in to keep the center clean and running smoothly. ASP staff oversees the center and will supervise all construction work and fill the evenings with cultural and devotional programs.

Preparing for this important work began back in October. In addition to the obvious construction skill training, teens and adults have spent time learning about the area we’ll be traveling to, what the lives of the people we’ll be helping are like and developing sensitivity to differences in our lives while strengthening our unity in Christ. Each year ASP chooses a theme based in scripture and this year it’s “all for One,” taken from 1 Corinthians 12: 4-6: “There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.” The group has spent time prayerfully studying and discussing this verse and contemplating what gifts and talents we each possess and how to best use them according to God’s will.

The youth have also spent time fundraising to pay for the trip which will cost a little over $10,000 in travel and accommodation expenses and supplies for the work we will be doing.

We are excited to bring this opportunity to put faith in action to the teens in our parishes and ask that you remember us in your prayers as we go on our mission trip. If you would like to learn more about this program, visit the ASP website at asphome.org. If you have questions or have youth that might be interested in participating in next year’s mission trip, contact team leader, Susan Sulich at ssulich@yahoo.com/203-746-6008 or Father Luke at padre-luke@aol.com.
Johnstown, PA—Plans are being finalized for this year's Altar Boy Retreat - “Encounter 2012”. This Diocesanwide event will take place from Sunday evening, July 1st (Registration is from 6 till 8 p.m.) until Wednesday, July 4th. The Retreat will once again take place at our Christ the Savior Seminary, Cathedral and Education Center in Johnstown and SS. Peter & Paul Church facilities in Windber. This is the time and place for your faithful Altar Servers to join other Altar Boys from all over our Diocese. The young men will have the opportunity to enjoy each other's company, study their faith, learn how to be better Altar Boys, pray a little more, spend some quality time with some of our dedicated Priests and Deacons; and enjoy the activities planned for them. Registration will begin at 6:00 p.m. Sunday evening. Departure will be at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday morning.

Last year 80 young men gathered at “Encounter 2011” in Johnstown and Windber and from all the comments we heard, they had a great time.

The cost of this year’s retreat is $85.00, which includes everything for the three days and also includes a commemorative “Encounter 2012” T-Shirt. All parishes of the Diocese are urged to underwrite the $85.00 participation fee for their altar servers, recognizing that the altar boy of today may very well be our dedicated Priests and Deacons; and enjoy the activities planned for them.

The Retreat will once again take place at our Christ the Savior Seminary, Cathedral and Education Center in Johnstown and SS. Peter & Paul Church facilities in Windber. This is the time and place for your faithful Altar Servers to join other Altar Boys from all over our Diocese. The young men will have the opportunity to enjoy each other's company, study their faith, learn how to be better Altar Boys, pray a little more, spend some quality time with some of our dedicated Priests and Deacons; and enjoy the activities planned for them. Registration will begin at 6:00 p.m. Sunday evening. Departure will be at 11:00 a.m. Wednesday morning.

Last year 80 young men gathered at “Encounter 2011” in Johnstown and Windber and from all the comments we heard, they had a great time.

The cost of this year’s retreat is $85.00, which includes everything for the three days and also includes a commemorative “Encounter 2012” T-Shirt. All parishes of the Diocese are urged to underwrite the $85.00 participation fee for their altar servers, recognizing that the altar boy of today may very well be the priest of tomorrow! All checks should be made payable to “ALTAR BOY CATHEDRAL AND EDUCATION CENTER”.

This year we are offering electronic registration. You can use the following link:

http://www.acrod.org/ministries/vocation/abretraitesprogram/tabforms/registration/aabr-2012-registration

to access a form to register your son.

ALL completed forms (along with the checks) must be returned to Proto-presbyter David Cochran, Retreat Director, 40 Beaver Dam Rd. Stratford, CT 06614, no later than Monday, June 18th.

---cont'd on page 12---
He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others: “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, did not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted. (Luke 18:9-14)

This most familiar parable of Jesus has much to do with stewardship, believe it or not. In fact, is has much to do with the motive behind whatever we do as Orthodox Christian people. For there are false motives and there are true motives. We can be moved to do what we do as Orthodox Christians falsely. Or we can be moved to do what we do as Orthodox Christians in a true and faithful manner.

The temptation to false motives is illustrated so well by the contrast of the publican and Pharisee. If we had both of them in front of us, and listened to their words, what might happen? We might just be inclined to revise our opinion of the Pharisee. After all, the Pharisee was not a public scoundrel. But the tax collector – he might well be investigated by the IRS. The Pharisee was an earnest man about religious practice. He could not help but speak of that which was deeply embedded in his sense of being “religious.” He set aside two days a week for fasting! We Orthodox do that as a matter of course anyway – don’t we? For the Pharisee that was more than the law required. And – listen closely – he gave one-tenth of all he earned. And that before taxes!

Let’s suppose this Pharisee is one of our parish members. Let’s say he makes $50,000 a year. One-tenth of that given to the parish would be $3000 per year. What parish would not want a member like this? And not even like this tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “Lord, save me.”

While we are in search for a new bishop. Our motive is a question of how to act the love and mercy of God. Here is an example:

I attended a meeting of interested persons who gathered in a downtown hotel ballroom for attention to a certain secular issue of our time. Speakers of varying persuasiveness told their stories about the topic of the evening. All of this was fascinating. Then came time for fundraising. After all, every cause has to reach this moment sooner or later. Everyone present was asked to contribute. Envelopes were provided for everyone. Each person was asked to put the contribution or pledge into that envelope with his or her name on it. Ushers went through the audience. They collected the pledges and brought them to the head table. Then each name was read and the amount given or pledged was announced publicly. The larger amounts, as you might guess, were greeted with enthusiastic applause, while the more modest gifts earned little more than awkward silence. Everyone leaned forward to get the names and amounts that boosted the total substantially. That is one way to do it. It does give people recognition. It earns them applause and the admiration of others. The only thing is that is has nothing to do with Christianity. I have heard of parishes that publish the amounts that people give. Some have even announced publicly names and amounts. My preference is to stick to the parable that Christ told. “I thank you, Lord, that I gave more than so-and-so.” I suppose budgets have been met with such tactics. But all it does is produce Pharisees as well as balanced budgets. It shames people into giving. That is dangerous in the Church of Christ!

What happens is that the Pharisaic spirit of giving will not last long. As soon as people do not get the adulation they seek – they will stop giving. They will go elsewhere, where they can find anyone who will fawn over them and encourage their ego trip. Many think that since money means power in the secular realm, it must be that way in the church, too.

O.K., you might say. Does that mean that we give less? Does it mean that we become careless and half-hearted about how we use our time, talent and money? Hardly! For the love of Christ compels us, says St. Paul (2 Corinthians 5:14). In Christ and His love, we find the power to understand that all that we have is a gift – not a public scoundrel. But the tax collector – he might well be investigated by the IRS. The Pharisee was an earnest man about religious practice. He could not help but speak of that which was deeply embedded in his sense of being “religious.” He set aside two days a week for fasting! We Orthodox do that as a matter of course anyway – don’t we? For the Pharisee that was more than the law required. And – listen closely – he gave one-tenth of all he earned. And that before taxes!

Let’s suppose this Pharisee is one of our parish members. Let’s say he makes $50,000 a year. One-tenth of that given to the parish would be $3000 per year. What parish would not want a member like this? And not even like this tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, “Lord, save me.”

While we are in search for a new bishop. Our motive is a question of how to...
Family Camp at Camp Nazareth

“Living Like the Holy Family”

MERCER, PA—Camp Nazareth is pleased to offer a new event this year in conjunction with Family Day. The event is called Family Camp and is exactly what it sounds like. Families “camping” together in the Camp cabins and participating in a weekend of services, games, discussions, activities and challenges that are all designed to help families deepen their relationship with God and with one another.

The theme for the weekend is “Living Like the Holy Family” with presentations and discussions led by Very Rev. Jonathan Tobias for the parents, and Rev. Matthew and Pani Eleni Stagon for the children.

Family Camp is scheduled for Friday, June 8 – Sunday, June 10, 2012. A variety of activities and events has been planned to allow families the opportunity to learn together, have fun together, pray together and simply be together in the peaceful environment of the Camp.

Families will be staying together, and have to themselves, a Camp cabin; plenty of space to rest and relax and simply be together during and after the weekend’s festivities.

Don’t miss out on this opportunity for you and your family. Come and help make this an ongoing and rewarding event for our diocesan families.

Don’t miss out on this opportunity for you and your family. Come and help make this an ongoing and rewarding event for our diocesan families.

Space is limited, so it is strongly advised that registration forms be returned ASAP. They are due by Monday, June 4, 2012

SCHEDULE

**Friday**
- 5:30 pm – Registration & Snacks
- 7 pm – Welcome, Intros and Ice-breakers
- 9 pm – Campfire & Snacks

**Saturday**
- 8 am – Wake-up
- 8:30 am – Morning Prayers
- 9 am – Reflection & Journaling
- 9:30 am – Breakfast
- 10:30 am – Morning Workshop
  - Parents with Very Rev. Jonathan Tobias
  - Children with Rev. Matthew Stagon & Pani Eleni Stagon
- 11:45 am – Family Discussion/Games
- 12:30 pm – Rest & Ready
- 1:00 pm – Lunch
- 1:45 pm – Family Challenge
- 3:00 pm – Afternoon Workshop
- 4 pm – Family Discussion
- 4:30 – Free-time (Snacks Available)
- 5:45 – Rest & Ready
- 6 pm – Great Vespers
- 6:45 – Dinner
- 7:45 – Rest & Ready
- 9 pm – Campfire, Snacks and Sing-Along
- 10 pm – Lights-out

**Sunday**
- 9 am – Wake-up
- 10 am – Divine Liturgy for Family Day
- 12 pm – Lunch
- Followed by Swimming, Games, Music, Crafts, Raffle

---

Prayers and best wishes are extended to

**Protopresbyter Michael and Pani Susan Rosco**

on the occasion of their

40th Anniversary of Marriage and Ordination.

May God bless them with many more years of peace, health and happiness.

CONGRATULATIONS!

---

-Grandparents, cont’d from page 10

we can teach them church hymns and scripture verses without fear of being punished. Yet although we don’t live under communism, we do live in a society that doesn’t support our Christian faith and in fact is actively hostile to it at times. Some of us might experience this hostility right in our own families from our own grown children, and at those times we learn to treasure our faith in our hearts rather than speaking of it openly. Perhaps in such a situation our spiritual role as grandparents is to pray over the sleeping child we have just had the privilege of tucking into bed. And we must never underestimate the power of our humble and heartfelt prayers for our grandchildren when we live far away from them.

It is pure joy for me to take a toddler or older grandchild to church for a service their parents aren’t able to attend. As we walk up the steps I might put a dollar in their hand, then once inside help them put it in the tray and take a candle that we light together. I show them the icons, explaining as much as I think they will understand, and when they are restless we walk to the back of the church, looking at the icons along the way. And before or after services Father Ted takes the young ones in his arms or by the hand to point out the many things in God’s house that can strengthen them in their faith. On the days their moms have gone into labor with a sibling, we’ve gone to church to light a candle, then to kneel or sit quietly to pray for a good delivery. And of course it is fun to mark our grandchildren’s feast days with little gifts and treats and to teach them about the life of their patron saint, as well as the tropation of the feast.

So let’s have fun with our grandchildren and share our faith with them in many ways. But most importantly, our spiritual role as grandparents is to become more spiritual ourselves, to allow Christ to live in us, to follow His commandments and to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If we seek God in our lives, if we abide in Christ, if we turn to the Holy Spirit, we are bound to feel closer to the living God, to act and speak to our grand-children with God-confidence, with authority, and in a way that will benefit them spiritually.

Pres. Fotini (Faye) grew up in Seattle and is married to Fr. Theodore Stylianopoulos who was Professor of New Testament at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology for many years. They live in Boston and are the parents of four adult children. They are also the proud grandparents of two granddaughters and three grandsons, all under the age of six. Pres. Faye holds degrees in French Language and Literature and in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. She has facilitated women’s Bible studies and written articles for Handmaiden Magazine.

---

**DEEPEST SYMPATHIES ARE EXPRESSED TO:**

the family and friends of the newly-departed servant of God:

**John Martich**

parishioner at Christ the Saviour Cathedral and father of Pani Patty

Patrick, who fell asleep in the Lord on May 17, 2012.

**Eternal Memory!**