

NOV/DEC 2016

# SOLIA

THE HERALD  
JACKSON, MI

VOL. LXXXI, No. 11-12



# SOLIA

## CHAIRMAN:

Most Rev. Archbishop  
Nathaniel Popp



## VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Right Rev. Bishop Irineu Duvlea

## ENGLISH EDITOR / SECRETARY:

Rev. Fr. David Oancea

## ROMANIAN EDITOR:

Rev. Fr. Dan Hoarste

## STAFF:

V. Rev. Dr. Remus Grama

Mr. Mark Chestnut

Mr. Richard C. Grabowski

**SOLIA — THE HERALD** (ISSN 0038-1039) is published bi-monthly for \$15.00 per year: United States, \$20.00 per year: Canada, and \$25.00 per year in other countries by The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, 2535 Grey Tower Road, Jackson, MI 49201-9120. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, Michigan, and additional offices. Phone: (517) 522-3656, Fax: (517) 522-5907. E-mail: [solia@roea.org](mailto:solia@roea.org). Internet: <http://www.roea.org>.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: **SOLIA — THE HERALD**, P.O. Box 185, Grass Lake, MI 49240-0185, U.S.A.

**Photo submissions:** Use high resolution/quality digital camera settings (at least 300 dpi).

Articles and news published in SOLIA do not necessarily reflect the views or the endorsement of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.

## CONTENTS

### English Section

<i>Pastoral Changes</i> .....	2
<i>Pastoral Letter 2016 – The Birth of Our Lord,</i> <i>His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel</i> .....	3-4
<i>Scholarships Available Through the ROEA</i> .....	5
<i>2015 Family Life / All-Auxiliaries Conference</i> .....	6
<i>State Funeral Held for Cairo Cathedral Attack</i> <i>Victims</i> .....	6, 15
<i>Patriarch Theodoros II: No Place for Politics</i> <i>in Church Matters</i> .....	7
<i>Vatra Generations Appeal</i> .....	7
<i>Invitation: Romanian Ethnic Art Museum &amp;</i> <i>St. Mary Cathedral</i> .....	7
<i>Help for Veterans – Preventing Suicide,</i> <i>Fr. Dn. Wayne Paul Wright</i> .....	8, 14
<i>Guiding the Ark of Salvation – the Theanthropic</i> <i>Role of the Bishop, Bishop Thomas</i> .....	9-11, 13
<i>Recipients of the Dumitru Golea Goldy-Gemu</i> <i>Scholarship 2015 &amp; 2016</i> .....	12-13
<i>Hierarchal Schedule</i> .....	15
<i>Financial Report</i> .....	16
<i>Solia Financial Report</i> .....	16

### Romanian Section

<i>Un Sfânt American Mai Puțin Cunoscut Românilor:</i> <i>Sfântul Herman (Gherman) din Alaska,</i> <i>Diacon Nicolae Marinescu</i> .....	17, 24
<i>Din Viața Parohiilor</i> .....	18-19
<i>Scrisoare Pastorală 2016 – Nașterea Domnului</i> <i>nostru Iisus Hristos,</i> <i>IPS Arhiepiscop Nathaniel</i> .....	20-21
<i>Colindăm Doamne Colind, Cristian Zamrii</i> .....	22-23
<i>Conferința “Viața în Familie” / și Intrunirea</i> <i>Organizațiilor Auxiliare ale Episcopiei 2017</i> .....	24

**COVER:** Nativity of Christ from the the Paphos region of Cyprus. The icon resides in the Monastery of Panagia Chrysorrogiatissa and was reportedly painted by Parthenios (1790-1848), a Cypriot folk painter.

## PASTORAL CHANGES

### ORDINATIONS / ASSIGNMENTS

**CIUCUREL, Marius**, was ordained into the Holy Diaconate by His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, on October 15, 2016, at St. Mary Church, Anaheim CA, and assigned there.

**SOREM, Ananias (Erik)**, was ordained into the Holy Diaconate by His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, on October 16, 2016, at St. Mary Church, Anaheim CA, and assigned there.

**UNGRIN, Deacon Clayton Michael**, was ordained into the Holy Priesthood by His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel, on November 6, 2016, at St. George, Winnipeg MB, and assigned there effective December 1, 2016.

### SUSPENSIONS

**DONKA, Rev. Fr. Mihaita**, was suspended from his duties as parish priest of St. John the Baptizer Church, Kannapolis NC, effective October 6, 2016. The suspension was lifted on December 12, 2016, and he remains unassigned.

**MUNTEAN, Protopresbyter Vasile**, who was suspended on April 14, 2016, had his suspension lifted on November 1, 2016, in retirement.

### DEPOSITIONS

**BLEAHU, Very Rev. Fr. Romulus**, was deposed from the Priesthood, and his name removed from the ranks of the clergy of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America and the Orthodox Church in America by the Holy Synod of Bishops, effective October 19, 2016.

## ADDRESS CHANGE

Send your change of addresses to:  
**SOLIA, PO BOX 185**  
**GRASS LAKE, MI 49240 USA**  
or [solia@roea.org](mailto:solia@roea.org)



# PASTORAL LETTER 2016

## THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

*“And I will make my home among them; and live with them; ‘I will be their God and they shall be my people’.”*

(2 Cor. 6:16; Lev. 26:11-19)

Beloved Spiritual Children in Christ:

Reverend Clergy, Venerable Monastics and Devout Faithful of our God-protected Episcopate:

Dearly Beloved,

Once again, after a long year, we are today celebrating the birth of the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ, the Light of the world! The burden of the weeks and months, the cares and decisions made, are laid aside on this great day of joy and feasting for the gladness in our hearts on the celebration of the birth of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ. In reflecting on his holy feast day, our spirits are renewed with the strength and courage which comes from eternal hope.

Today, if we listen with our hearts, we can hear the beat of the angels’ wings as they hover over the manger of the newborn Christ child and the mighty rush of their flight as they descend to the shepherds to announce the great tidings: The Christ is born! What joy was in the heart of the ever-virgin Mary, of Joseph the Protector, of the shepherds, magi. Even the beasts of the field and the cave and mountains rejoiced!

Since the fall of Adam and Eve, all of creation, nature and man, has striven to find its true and proper relationship with its creator. Man, in his search but in his pride fell farther and farther from heaven, growing more and more distant from the Almighty; and God saw that his image and likeness was darkened by sin and had become overwrought with despair.

*“What was God to do in the face of this dehumanized mankind, this universal hiding of the knowledge of himself by the wiles of the evil spirits?”* asks St. Athanasius the Great. *“What else could he possibly do, being God, but renew his image in mankind so that through it man might once more come to know him?”*

God had sent prophets and even angels to call man back to him, but it was necessary for the Creator himself to stoop to earth to lift man to heaven. *“What wonderful progress...”* exclaims St. John Chrysostom. *“He first sends angels to men, then leads the men to heavenly things. A heaven is made on earth, since heaven must take to itself the things of the earth.”* Jacob the Patriarch cried out: *“He is coming, and the people will gather around him.”*

The coming of the Savior was to wipe off the dust from the image of God in man and to restore him to his rightful place as heir of his Father’s kingdom. St. Athanasius also tells us that, *“The Word of God comes in his own person, because it was he alone, the image of the Father, who could recreate man after the Image,”* quoting the words of our Lord: *“I came to seek and save that which was lost.”* It was therefore necessary for God himself to come to us, announces St. Leo the Great, *“For unless he were true God, he could bring us no aid; and were he not true man, he could offer us no example.”*

The reason, therefore, for which Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, explains St. John Chrysostom is: *“...that coming among us, he may teach us; and teaching us, lead us by the hand to the things that men cannot see. For since men believe that the eyes are more trustworthy than the ears, they doubt of that which they do not see, and so he has deigned to show himself in bodily presence that he may remove all doubt.”*

In teaching us, Christ has opened our minds to the Scriptures and to the prophets, indeed, as David said: *"He shall come down welcome as a rain on thirsty soil!"* His birth is of cosmic importance. It has value not only for me personally, not merely for my family and nation but for the universe of which he is the Creator. Indeed he is welcome!

Coming to know him, we are called to worship him. *"For if Christ is God, as indeed he is, but took not human nature upon him, we are strangers to salvation. Let us then worship him as God,"* says St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *"but believe that he also was made man."*

Jesus the Savior, Christ the Anointed One, came as *"bread down from heaven that he might feed the hungry,"* invites St. Cyril; and men of every age have hungered and thirsted for the truth of his place in creation; and today's celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace reminds the world that, indeed, man is the son of the King who calls all to eternal inheritance.

Do we rejoice today in his birth? Yes! We do! *"Acknowledge, O Christian, that dignity which is yours!"* exhorts St. Leo. Dignity, yes! For we are also the *"temples of the Holy Spirit"* (1 Cor. 6:19) in whom God dwells and with Whom he walks, calling each of us by name. Thus, we are never alone, not even in the darkest hour; not when satanic hands pull down our holiest shrines and churches. *"God is with us! Understand o nation, and submit yourself, for God is with us!"* (Isaiah).

Wherever there is a true believer, there is the Church, and there is the temple of God. The steadfast worshipper holds fast to the cradle of the Christ Child and sings out with St. John Chrysostom: *"I rejoice bearing in my arms the cradle of Christ. For this is all my hope, and this is my life, this is my salvation, this is my instrument of song, the harp of my soul!"*

At the birth of Christ, the angels cried out: *"Glory to God in the highest heavens and on earth peace to men who enjoy his favor!"* (Lk. 2:14). *"This peace was made through Christ Himself for He reconciled us with the Father and to God,"* St. Cyril exclaims. *"In persecution and in sorrow, in good times and in rejoicing, the peace of God knows no bounds"* (Is. 9:7). Thus, today, our own joy knows no bounds; and we rush forward to welcome the new babe Christ into our world, for he brings reconciliation and peace to all. He is welcome! Let us welcome him, for He is our God, and we His people.

For today, *"to us a child is born, unto us a son is given..."* (Is. 9:5); the rain has come onto our thirsty land, the sweet-smelling fragrance covered the earth, the gentle and protecting cloud come into our midst, the pillar of fire to lead us out of darkness into brilliant light, and extends his infant hand to us preparing us for what is yet to come, for the promise yet to be fulfilled. *"For when Christ shall appear, who is your life, then you also shall appear with him in glory!"* (Col. 3:3-4).

*Christ is born! Glorify him!*

+Nathaniel

+NATHANIEL

By the grace of God and the will of the people, Archbishop of Detroit  
and The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America  
of the Orthodox Church in America

# SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX EPISCOPATE (ROEA)

*All information and some application forms may be accessed via the internet at:  
<http://roea.org/scholarships.htm>.*

## A.R.F.O.R.A. SCHOLARSHIPS

### A.R.F.O.R.A./MARTHA GAVRILA SCHOLARSHIP FOR WOMEN

The A.R.F.O.R.A./Martha Gavrila Scholarship for Women is offered to women in post-graduate studies. It was established in memory of Mrs. Martha Gavrila, long-time president of A.R.F.O.R.A. who worked tirelessly for the Episcopate and Vatra Românească. The first scholarship was awarded at the 1985 A.R.F.O.R.A. Congress held at St. Mary Church in Chicago, Illinois. The sum of \$1000.00 may be awarded annually to a selected student. **DEADLINE: MAY 10, 2017.** Go to <http://roea.org/arforagavrila.html> to download the Application Form & Requirements.

### A.R.F.O.R.A. UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP FOR WOMEN

The A.R.F.O.R.A. Undergraduate Scholarship for Women was offered for the first time in 1994. A scholarship of \$1000.00 may be awarded annually to selected students who have successfully completed their first year of an undergraduate program. **DEADLINE: MAY 10, 2017.** Go to <http://roea.org/arforaundergrad.html> to download the Application Form & Requirements.

### A.R.F.O.R.A. HELEN MUNTEAN EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP FOR WOMEN

The A.R.F.O.R.A. Helen Muntean Education Scholarship for Women is a scholarship of \$1000.00 that may be awarded annually to women who are working toward a career in teaching.

**DEADLINE: MAY 10, 2017.** Go to <http://roea.org/helenmuntean.html> to download the Application Form & Requirements.

### WM. R. STANITZ / AROY SCHOLARSHIP

In August of 1971, the Constantin J. Stanitz family of Chicago established a Scholarship Fund in memory of their son, William Robert Stanitz, who met a tragic death in California. Two undergraduate scholarships of \$1,000 each may be awarded annually. The applicant must be an active AROY member, a graduate of high school or a college student, or one who intends to enroll in a school or college of university level. **DEADLINE: JUNE 1, 2017.** Go to <http://roea.org/stanitzaroy.html> for application requirements.

---

### DUMITRU GOLEA GOLDY-GEMU SCHOLARSHIP

Offers two undergraduate scholarships of \$1,500 each, which may be awarded annually to undergraduate students of Romanian origin according to the established requirements and rules. The applicant must have completed high school or already be enrolled in college. **DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2017.** Go to <http://roea.org/goldygemu.html> for requirements and application forms.

---

### THE PAMFIL AND MARIA BUJEA FAMILY ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN SEMINARIAN SCHOLARSHIP

The Pamfil and Maria Bujea Seminarian Scholarship is a scholarship given once only to a male or female Canadian or American Orthodox Christian citizen studying with the intention of serving, for a given period of time, the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America in Canada. The time to be served is at the discretion of the ruling hierarchy. The number of scholarships awarded to qualified students is determined by the committee. The scholarship is given directly to the School of Theology at the beginning of the recipient's second year of continued theological studies. **To be considered for the Autumn-Winter Term, a fully completed application must be postmarked on or before May 31, 2017. Applicants may obtain requirements from <http://www.roea.org/bujea.html>.**

---

### VICTOR POP SCHOLARSHIP

The Victor Pop Scholarship was established in memory of the late Victor Pop by his family to honor his legacy of hard work and perseverance in life which resulted in great achievements. The goal of the scholarship is to assist college students who are committed in their academic pursuits to complete their studies. **It is specifically geared towards Junior and Senior standing college students or graduate students**, who show their commitment and desire to complete their studies. The Victor Pop Scholarship shall be **awarded annually to one person in the amount of US \$1,000.00.** For Scholarship Requirements and Application, visit <http://roea.org/victorpop scholarship.html>. **DEADLINE: JUNE 1, 2017.**



# 2015 FAMILY LIFE/ ALL-AUXILIARIES CONFERENCE

May 26-28, 2017

Descent of the Holy Spirit Church  
750 W 61st Ave, Merrillville, IN

*Join AROY youth, ARFORA & Orthodox Brotherhood for a weekend  
of worship, fellowship and planning.*

*Friday Vespers / presentation, Saturday Dance & Sunday Banquet / evening Picnic*

## Events:

Worship Services / Auxiliary Meetings / Thematic presentations  
Youngster activities / Displays / Holy Confession



## STATE FUNERAL HELD FOR CAIRO CATHEDRAL ATTACK VICTIMS WITH PRESIDENT SISI'S ATTENDANCE

[*Egyptian Streets* – December 12, 2016] A state funeral was organized and held in Cairo's Nasr City for the 24 people killed in the deadly Cairo Cathedral terror attack on Sunday [December 11, 2016]. The state funeral, which was preceded by a funeral service conducted by Coptic Pope Tawadros II at the Church of Virgin Mary, was attended by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, Pope Tawadros II, and a large number of top Egyptian government and religious officials.

The event, which was organized by the Egyptian Armed Forces and was held amid tight security, took place at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Nasr City. Coffins of the victims, draped with Egyptian flags, were transported to the state funeral after the church funeral service and were marched down the

Autostrad by Egyptian soldiers holding wreaths. Following the coffins and soldiers, Egyptian officials, led by the Egyptian President and the Coptic Pope, were followed by family members and other mourners. Following the march, President Sisi shook hands with some mourners and sent his condolences. At the earlier funeral service, Pope Tawadros II said that the terror attack was not against the church but against all of Egypt. "Whoever did this attack does not belong to the Egyptian people," said the Coptic Pope after the funeral service. Tensions were high outside the funeral service, with security forces preventing non-family members from entering the church, citing concerns of overcrowding. Crowds of protesters outside were heard chanting in solidarity with those killed. Some

*Cont. on page 15*



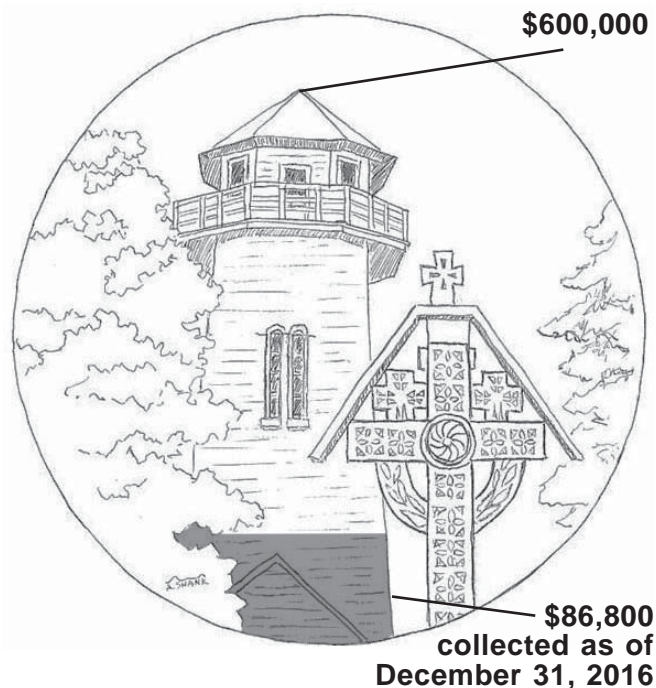
# PATRIARCH THEODOROS II: NO PLACE FOR POLITICS IN CHURCH MATTERS

[*Pravoslavie.ru* – December 2, 2016] Politicians should not interfere in Church matters, and it's necessary to observe the principle of the indivisibility of the Church, declared Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa in an interview with RIA-Novosti, commenting on the situation with the efforts to create an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Ukraine. "I know Ukraine very well—both bishops and laity—and have a very good understanding about what incentives the people are pursuing, who are trying now to sow discord in Ukraine. From the very beginning, when the problem of the Church schism had only just arisen, the Alexandrian Patriarchate and I, as its representative, have taken the position that the Ukrainian Church is an integral part of the Russian Orthodox Church. When I served the Divine Liturgy in the Kiev Caves Lavra, I stated that for the Alexandrian Church the canonical primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine. Then when the schismatics attempted to forcibly enter, without invitation, into the Holy Trinity Church which was then a property of the Alexandrian Church in Odessa, I stood in the doorway and said: 'It's not going to happen.' The ancient Alexandrian Church formulates its position thus: we stand before God together with the Russian Orthodox Church and call for the Orthodox Church to be one and undivided, as it always has been. There is no place for politics in Church matters. Politicians come and go, but the Church abides unto the ages of ages," said the primate of the Alexandrian Church. There is currently operating in Ukraine the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which is a self-governing part of the Moscow Patriarchate, and also other ecclesial structures, the "Kievan Patriarchate," and the "Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church," which are unrecognized by the Orthodox world.

*Translated by Jesse Dominick*



# VATRA GENERATIONS APPEAL



**Mail your check payable to:**  
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate  
PO Box 309, Grass Lake MI 49240-0309  
**To read about the project and donate via credit card,**  
go to: [roea.org](http://roea.org) and click on the DONATE button.  
*Donations are tax-deductible.*

## INVITATION Romanian Ethnic Art Museum & St. Mary Cathedral, Cleveland

We are happy to announce the upcoming conference "*Art Treasures from the Romanian Pavilion at the New York World's Fair 1939-1940*" to be hosted by the **Romanian Ethnic Art Museum and Saint Mary Romanian Orthodox Cathedral on Sunday, April 23, 2017 at 1:00 pm.** A Reception and the Lecture by Mr. Adrian Buga, art historian and critic from Romania, will follow the Divine Liturgy at 10 am. This conference is an act of cultural cooperation between the Romanian Cultural Institute in New York and the Romanian Ethnic Art Museum of Cleveland. Contact: V. Rev. Fr. Remus Grama, Parish Priest/ Curator - (216) 941-5882 / [rgrama@aol.com](mailto:rgrama@aol.com).

# HELP FOR VETERANS — PREVENTING SUICIDE

Imagine a pain so great that it seems inescapable, that the only way to end it would be to end everything. This is a situation that far too many people in our society face; and among our nation's Veterans, suicide occurs at a rate 21% higher compared to the civilian population. Regardless of the rate of suicide or number of cases, one life lost to suicide is too many. To begin to reduce the loss of life to this tragedy, we need to work together as a community to raise awareness and increase efforts in prevention, support, and encouragement for those experiencing suicidal ideation to seek help.

Nationally, suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death (approximately 42,773 deaths annually). More than 100 people a day die by suicide. A person dies by suicide every 12.3 minutes. 18% of these deaths are our nation's Veterans. Nationally, over 1 million suicide attempts occur annually which averages to an attempt every 30 seconds. 950 suicide attempts monthly are reported just for those Veterans who are engaged with VA healthcare. These numbers are staggering and even more of a crisis than homicide, which is the 17<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death comparatively.

The Department of Veterans Affairs has recently undertaken the most comprehensive analysis of Veteran suicide in our nation's history. More than 55 million Veteran records were examined from the years 1979 to 2014 from all 50 states and four territories. The analysis occurred to ensure we have an accurate understanding of the scope of the problem and to begin to inform best practices to target solutions.

There are many factors that influence someone's risk. There is no exact predictor to determine someone's risk level, but there are many warning signs and signs of risk to be mindful of. If someone is discussing suicide, engaging in risk-taking behaviors, posting concerning messages on social media, etc., these are signs that warrant immediate attention. There are many other risk factors. Mental health disorders such as major depression are associated with an increased risk for suicide. Hopelessness, lack of purpose, anxiety, mood swings, sleep disturbances, anger/irritability, increasing alcohol/drug use, and withdrawing from friends or family are some other common signs. We know that our nation's Veterans are dealing with other unique stressors such as service-related injuries, combat deployments, exposure to extreme stress in hostile environments, etc. which can influence or exacerbate some of the risk factors they exhibit.

Notably, Veterans are also at higher risk for experiencing moral injury that can magnify many other symptoms and risk factors, particularly shame and guilt.

In the context of combat, the choice may have been simple: kill or be killed. However, in the aftermath that follows, this simple choice is no longer simple. It creates an avalanche of doubt - questioning yourself and what you thought were your core values, beliefs, morals, and principles.

I think that the old adage of "it takes a village to raise a child" needs to be updated to "it takes a village to live a healthy life." The numbers may seem daunting, but we can all play a role in preventing this tragedy. It takes a village. You can start to grow your village within your own community. You can make a difference in so many ways. Even recognizing these signs and symptoms with one individual, taking the time to give them support, validating their feelings and challenges, and encouraging them into treatment is making a difference. Knowing the available resources in your community is making a difference. Supporting organizations who conduct awareness, research, advocacy, and treatment is making a difference. There are so many opportunities to make a difference.

There are many ways that someone can help mitigate their risk. Getting treatment for treatable disorders is an intervention that can help reduce risk. The VA's research has proven that those Veterans who are engaged in healthcare with the VA are at a reduced risk. In 2014, 20 Veterans died by suicide each day. Six of the 20 were users of VA healthcare. The following are some resources for mental health within the VA:

- **Mental Health**
  - VHA provides specialty inpatient and outpatient mental health services at its medical centers and community-based outpatient clinics. All mental health care provided by VHA supports recovery, striving to enable a person with mental health problems to live a meaningful life in the community and achieve his or her full potential.
  - For more information on VA Mental Health Services, visit [www.mentalhealth.va.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov).
- **Vet Centers**
  - Vet Centers are VA community-based centers that provide a range of counseling, outreach, and referral services.
  - For more information about Vet Centers and to find the Vet Center closest to you, visit [www.vetcenter.va.gov](http://www.vetcenter.va.gov).
- **Make the Connection**
  - MakeTheConnection.net is a one-stop resource where Veterans and their families and friends can privately explore information about physical

*Cont. on page 14*



# GUIDING THE ARK OF SALVATION - THE THEANTHROPIC ROLE OF THE BISHOP

by Bishop THOMAS (Joseph) and Peter Schweitzer  
*as presented at the Church of St Patrick, Warrenton, VA*

There is a common tendency in our Western culture to equate the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Orthodox Church to corporations which are institutional structures that are driven by commerce and production. In so doing, we equate bishops with CEOs and priests and deacons as mid-level managers. Accordingly, parish councils operate as ecclesiastical boards of directors, bishops operate at the pleasure of the parish councils, and priests and deacons implement the directives and goals set forth by the councils. The adoption of this corporate model for the Church can be enticing at times since it is efficient, goal-oriented, and produces tangible results. It is especially tempting when a parish is intent on building a new temple, school, or other worthy project. However, it's a model that betrays the original nature and purpose of the Church according to the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). While the corporate model is a necessary vehicle for commerce and economic vitality, it has no place in the Church founded by Christ. Since it is impossible to envisage the episcopal office as well as the clerical ranks of priest and deacon outside of the context of the Church, it is first necessary to examine the nature of the Church before we reflect upon the office of bishop and how he relates to the clerical orders and the laity.

The Sacred Scriptures and the holy fathers provide us with the true model of the Church which is the Ark of Salvation. This notion of the Church as the Ark of Salvation is prefigured in the Old Testament figures of Noah and Moses. Saint Cyprian of Carthage affirms this in stating, "the one ark of Noah was a type of the one Church." Father Patrick Henry Reardon notes that this symbolism is found in Noah's ark as well as the infant Moses floating on the Nile River. "The root of such symbolism is found in the Old Testament's own portrayal of Noah's ark. Genesis calls it a *tevah*, a word used in only one other place in the Hebrew Scriptures, namely, to designate the little box in which the infant Moses floated on the Nile. Indeed, the juxtaposition of the two stories seems clearly intentional if we examine the manifest similarities between them. First, in respect to both Noah and Moses, the *tevah* is a floating container that preserves life from the peril of drowning. That is to say, the threat comes from water. Second, in each case the container is daubed with pitch to keep out the threatening water (Genesis 6:14; Exodus 2:3). Third, both stories contribute to the ongoing biblical theme of God's deliverance of His servants in times of crisis. There is an even subtler element here, however. The word *tevah* is not Hebrew;

it is Egyptian, in which language it may designate a box, a chest, even a coffin. Its use in only these two biblical passages cries out for an explanation. I can think of a single reasonable answer: Namely, that the biblical author had in mind to tie these two accounts together in a very explicit way, so that the correspondence between them would be unmistakable."

This imagery was not lost on the holy fathers who employed it in describing the Church founded by Christ. Saint Cyprian of Carthage writes, "If anyone who was outside the ark could have escaped, so would he escape who was outside the Church." In the fourth century, Saint John Chrysostom continues the use of this imagery in his Homily on Lazarus: "The narrative of the Flood is a mystery, and its details are a type of things to come. The ark is the Church; Noah is Christ; the dove, the Holy Spirit; the olive branch, the divine goodness. As in the midst of the sea, the ark protected those who were within it, so the Church saves those who are saved." The Church is the ark, as real and concrete as an ark of wood and as essential for salvation from the floods of this world as a ship is for those drowning at sea.

As the ark of salvation, prefigured in the Old Testament and fully realized in the New Testament and the life of the Church, the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church enjoys a character which no human institution may claim. The Church is theanthropic. This is a term that is central to Orthodoxy for it undergirds the manner in which we speak about God, understand the Church, and most importantly, engage in the spiritual struggle. Unlike the West which relies on philosophical systems of thought, the East, specifically the Orthodox Church, employs theanthropicity to orient and provide the proper context for everything pertaining to the history of salvation. Simply put, the term refers to the union of God and man first and foremost, in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ and following directly from that to the Church and the mission of the Church - the salvation of mankind. Theanthropicity implies an understanding of man's existence and salvation in relation to His Creator and Savior. Just as Noah and Moses relied upon God to make manifest the divine will, so too the Church acknowledges this *synergeia* between God and man to preach the Good News of salvation. God must act first, and this must be acknowledged. We do not and cannot save ourselves. However, God's action must be reciprocated by our response. This notion has been relegated to the background in the West. God alone

can satisfy the unquenchable human desire for life without end. This is also the reason why the Church is principally the Divine Liturgy, and not a worldly or social organization.

As Saint Justin Popovic writes,

“The attributes of the Church are innumerable because her attributes are actually the attributes of the Lord Christ, the God-man, and, through Him, those of the Triune Godhead. However, the holy and divinely wise fathers of the Second Ecumenical Council, guided and instructed by the Holy Spirit, reduced them in the ninth article of the Symbol of Faith to four — I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. These attributes of the Church — unity, holiness, catholicity (sobornost), and apostolicity — are derived from the very nature of the Church and of her purpose. They clearly and accurately define the character of the Orthodox Church of Christ whereby, as a theanthropic institution and community, she is distinguishable from any institution or community of the human sort.

Just as the Person of Christ the God-man is one and unique, so is the Church founded by Him, in Him, and upon Him. The unity of the Church follows necessarily from the unity of the Person of the Lord Christ, the God-man. Being an organically integral and theanthropic organism unique in all the world, the Church, according to all the laws of Heaven and earth, is indivisible. Any division would signify her death. Immersed in the God-man, she is first and foremost a theanthropic organism, and only then a theanthropic organization. In her, everything is theanthropic: nature, faith, love, baptism, the Eucharist, all the holy mysteries and all the holy virtues, her teaching, her entire life, her immortality, her eternity, and her structure.

Yes, yes, yes; in her, everything is theanthropically integral and indivisible Christification, sanctification, deification, Trinitarianism, salvation. In her everything is fused organically and by grace into a single theanthropic body, under a single Head — the God-man, the Lord Christ. All her members, though as persons always whole and inviolate, yet united by the same grace of the Holy Spirit through the holy mysteries and the holy virtues into an organic unity, comprise one body and confess the one faith, which unites them to each other and to the Lord Christ.

The Christ-bearing apostles are divinely inspired as they announce the unity and the uniqueness of the Church, based upon the unity and uniqueness of her Founder — the God-man, the Lord Christ, and His theanthropic personality. Like the holy apostles, the holy fathers and the teachers of the Church confess the unity and uniqueness of the Orthodox Church with the

divine wisdom of the cherubim and the zeal of the seraphim. Understandable, therefore, is the fiery zeal which animated the holy fathers of the Church in all cases of division and falling away and the stern attitude toward heresies and schisms. In that regard, the holy ecumenical and holy local councils are preeminently important. According to their spirit and attitude, wise in those things pertaining to Christ, the Church is not only one but also unique. Just as the Lord Christ cannot have several bodies, so He cannot have several Churches. According to her theanthropic nature, the Church is one and unique, just as Christ the God-man is one and unique.”

This theanthropic character of the Church not only sets her apart but provides us with indications concerning how we relate to one another within the Church. Specifically, it gives us insight into how the bishop, the icon of Christ, is to relate to priests, deacons, and laity. St. Ignatius the God-Bearer, Bishop of Antioch, links the Bishop and Jesus Christ together to such a degree that everything which happens to a visible Bishop of the Church is attributed and ascribed to the invisible Bishop, Christ our Savior.

The following is precisely what the Saint says: “For the honor, therefore, of Him Who desired us, it is right that we obey (the Bishop) without any hypocrisy; for a man does not merely mislead this Bishop who is seen, but seeks to deceive Him Who is invisible.”

In a spiritual talk entitled “The Place of the Bishop in the Orthodox Church”, Archimandrite Cyprian (now Bishop) asked, “What is the Church?”

1. The Church is the Assembly of the People of God for the celebration of the Mystery of the Divine Eucharist, wherein the local Church actually becomes and is revealed as the Body of Christ, as a Theandric organism, in which the Holy Trinity dwells.
2. The visible center and head of the Eucharistic Assembly is the Bishop: It is he who leads the Assembly and preaches the word of God; it is he who offers the Eucharist, as an Icon of Christ, the Great High Priest, and as the one who presides in the place of God, according to St. Ignatius of Antioch.
3. In the early Church, only the Bishop offered the Divine Eucharist in each local Church; that is, there was only one Eucharist, and this was centered on the Bishop.
4. The Bishop, when he offers the Divine Eucharist, offers Christ in His wholeness, imparting the Holy Mysteries to the Faithful with his own hands; in ancient times, the People of God partook of Christ only from the living Icon of Christ, the Bishop.
5. Therefore, the Bishop not only embodies the local Church, but also expresses in time and space the Catholic Church, that is, the whole Church; for that which embodies Christ in His wholeness, and wherein one receives Christ in His wholeness,

is that which embodies the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Wherever Jesus Christ is, says St. Ignatius, there is the Catholic Church.

6. For precisely this reason, when one is united with the Bishop in the Mystery of the Divine Eucharist, then he is also united with the Catholic Church. St. Cyprian of Carthage emphasizes this ecclesiological truth in the following striking terms: "The Bishop is in the Church and the Church in the Bishop; and if one is not in communion with the Bishop, he is not in the Church."

The synergy between the laity, the priests and deacons, and the bishop is required if we are to imitate the theanthropic quality of the Lord Jesus. As Christ was obedient to His Father, so too we have a duty to be obedient and cooperate with the bishop in imitation of Christ. Since the relationship between the members of the Church and the bishop is a necessary one, it is an ascetic practice which will bear fruit unto eternal life.

This apostolic teaching, consistently confirmed by the holy fathers, is grounded in the theanthropic nature of the Church. Without it, the divine-human character of the episcopal office would be lost. As the icon of Christ, the bishop imitates his master as the minister of conciliation in the Church, uniting all those desirous of salvation in Christ. Drawing upon this parallel, the bishop is to be obedient unto death to the teachings of Christ and His Church in the service of love to His people. If there is one word that may encapsulate the relationship of the bishop to the priests, deacons, and laity he serves, it is love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

Perhaps this can be no better exemplified than in the life of our father among the Saints Raphael Hawaweeny of Brooklyn. Saint Raphael's entire life manifested the love of Christ for His people. As Christ's love knew no boundaries, Saint Raphael's holy zeal knew no end. Like the saintly hierarchs Saint John of San Francisco and Saint Nektarios of Aegina, Saint Raphael's love for his people was manifest in his tireless apostolic efforts, his scholarship, and his pious life. As Saint Nektarios and Saint John are venerated in their blessed repose by the faithful from various backgrounds, cultures, and languages, so too Saint Raphael is fondly recalled by Orthodox Christians of different jurisdictions and languages. The similarities concerning the three sainted bishops do not end there. All three hierarchs toiled in foreign lands, demonstrated unquestioning obedience to their superiors even in trying circumstances, and suffered for the sake of the Gospel. As Father David Bleam notes, "When Dr. Ibrahim Arbeely and the Syrian Benevolent Society asked for Fr. Raphael Hawaweeny to be sent to Brooklyn, NY to minister to them, Fr. Raphael was being asked to leave the Kazan Theological Academy in Imperial Russia. He was being asked

to leave the glorious splendor of czarist, Orthodox Russia to go to a non-Orthodox country. He had spent all his years surrounded by Orthodox culture, growing up in Damascus, Syria and being educated in Halki. Now he was being asked to go to a religiously foreign culture here in America. He had been surrounded by the glories of Orthodox architecture, art, liturgical music, and monastic piety. Now he was being asked to go where there was no monastic life and very few Orthodox Churches." And yet, he did this with apostolic zeal in obedience to His Lord Jesus Christ.

Saint Raphael "exemplified the image of a truly traditional Orthodox bishop. He received the faith from his forefathers and he sought faithfully to hand that faith over to his spiritual children. He was a great man of prayer. He loved and lived the liturgical life of the Church, and it was his spiritual support. He was not an innovationist; he did not change anything. He brought to his pastoral work no agenda other than to be faithful to the charge which he had received. It was the people he served who consumed his every thought and every scheme. How to reconcile enemies? How to restore the lapsed? How to raise the children? How to plant a mission? How to educate a priest? The legacy of his accomplishments is outstanding: he founded thirty parish churches, authored or translated fourteen books, including both the Small and the Great Euchologion, founded St. Nicholas Cathedral in Brooklyn, created and authored many articles in *The WORD*. But these accomplishments do not reveal the true sanctity of his soul nor do they give us the measure of the man. These are to be found rather in the lives of the people he led to Christ and His Church. The thousands who attended his funeral and paid their last respects all recognized in St. Raphael the image of the God he loved and served. Like his Chief Shepherd, St. Raphael laid down his life for his sheep. Like the great pastor, the Apostle Paul, he made up in his body that which was lacking in the sufferings of Christ (Colossians 1:24). He was not a hireling; having loved his own, he loved them to the end. It is this love which united him to God, and it is this love which unites him to us, his spiritual children. It is this love which sanctified him, and it is this love in which he dwells in the heavenly Kingdom. The words of our venerable and God-bearing Father John Climacus find their embodiment in St. Raphael: 'Love grants prophecy, miracles. It is an abyss of illumination, a fountain of fire, bubbling up to inflame the thirsty soul. It is the condition of angels and the progress of eternity'."

In this brief portrait of Saint Raphael of Brooklyn, we have the ideal of a bishop and how he relates to his flock. Demanding strict asceticism from himself, he was gentle and loving with his clergy and the many laity who sought his counsel and solace. As a true shepherd of Christ's flock, he was vigilant in protecting his spiritual children from false teachings and error.

*Cont. on page 13*



# RECIPIENTS OF THE DUMITRU GOLEA GOLDY-GEMU SCHOLARSHIP – 2015 & 2016 (\$1,500)

*This scholarship is awarded to undergraduate college students of Romanian origin. In addition to all the required documents, each applicant writes an essay on the topic: “How my Romanian Heritage Helps Make Me a Better American.”*



**Patricia Palade**

**Patricia Palade** is a recipient of the Goldy Scholarship for 2015. She completed her high school career at Cactus High School, Glendale AZ, with a 4.0 average and ranked #1 in a class of 284 students. In addition to her academic work, Patricia participated and held offices in Key Club, Med Start Club, National Honor Society, and Journalism Club. She also was

a member of the badminton team and the girls' soccer team. Her community activities included volunteering at the Glendale Public Library, Foothills Elementary School program, Theater Works, Arizona Humane Society and Arrowhead Hospital. She attended Ryla Leadership Camp and Midwester's Health Careers Institute Camp. Awards received include: Student of the Month, Marine Corps Scholar Award, Soccer Offense MVP, Badminton MVP. She entered Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University in 2015 to major in Microbiology. Her biology teacher's reference letter says: “Being Romanian has helped Patricia as it has prepped her academically, as school is harder in Romania than it is here. It has also helped develop her character and manners by the way her parents have raised her. Finally, being bilingual is truly an asset to Patricia in her chosen field of study...I see her reaching her goal in the future of Trauma Surgeon or anything else in the medical field.” In her essay, Patricia writes: “When it comes to heritage...I know what it is like to cherish my country and want to continue the traditions in my everyday life and pass it on to my children. I attribute my qualities of effort and strength to where and how I grew up as a Romanian native.”

**Irina Vatamanu** is a recipient of the Goldy Scholarship for 2015. In 2014, she was admitted to Harvard College, Cambridge, MA, to study Biomedical Engineering, after graduating as valedictorian from

Lakewood High School in Lakewood, OH. After describing Irina's excellent performance in a particularly demanding and rigorous course, a professor in the Molecular and Cellular Biology Department at Harvard wrote: “Irina is an ambitious and talented student, with a diverse set of interests and accomplishments, as evidenced by her involvement in both the Harvard Astronomers and the Biotechnology



**Irina Vatamanu**

association. Irina is certified to operate a telescope in the Harvard observatory, where she continues to develop her love for science by observing the night sky. She is also a talented musician, and has studied the harp for over eight years. Her numerous roles in both the Model UN Club and the Lakewood High School Interact Club, amongst others, are a testament to her strong organizational and leadership skills. Irina is extremely dedicated to her faith and continues to worship and volunteer at the St. Mary Church in Chelsea whilst at university here in Boston.” In her essay, Irina writes: “To me, being a better American means appreciating the opportunities we have and using my talents to help others. Romania has suffered under political oppression and dire economic conditions, but through it all, Romanians have remained steadfast in their commitment to their culture and country. My Romanian heritage has taught me to appreciate the value of tradition and commitment. It compels me to make sure that the relative affluence I experience in the United States benefits more than just my immediate family....”

**Alexandra Manaila** is a recipient of the Goldy Scholarship for 2016. She completed her high school career at Henry Ford II High School with a 4.05 GPA and ranked #9 in a class of 479 students. Alexandra was involved in National Honor Society, Health Occupation Students of America (HOSA), and Key Club. She also attended the Utica Community Math, Science and Technology program, a highly selective high school program that targets academically gifted students and offers an accelerated preparatory curriculum. Other of her many activities included: the National Technical Honors Society, St. John Pharmaceutical Internship,



**Alexandra Manaila**

2016 to major in Biology / Pre-Med. One of Alexandra's instructors wrote the following: "In addition to her academic endeavors, Alex is a personably intelligent young woman who is very conscientious and works extremely hard to achieve her goals. While maintaining a highly rigorous academic schedule, she is involved and successful in many extra-curricular activities. Alex uses and develops her outstanding character in everything she is involved in." In her essay, Alexandra writes: "Being Romanian...is the language, the culture, and the religion...that makes us "Romanian". The Romanian culture that I was raised in pushed me to be hard-working and goal-oriented. I never let myself quit anything that I start....Being both Romanian and American has shown me what it is like to have my own background and identity, and it has made me an accepting person who sees the value of other people's religions and cultures."

**Nicholas Prescurea** is a recipient of the Goldy Scholarship for 2016. He completed his high school career at Saint Ignatius High School, Cleveland, OH with a 4.18 GPA. Nicholas' activities in high school included: National Honors Society, Pre-Med Society, Carpatina Society, Youth Group President, CYO Basketball, Environmental Service Associate, Metro Health Hospital OB-GYN Lab Research Project, Viral Genome Annotation Research Project, Kairos Retreat Leader, Fairview Hospital volunteer, Metro Hospital volunteer, "Spring into Action" community aid leader, Altar boy, Choir member, Sunday school member, Food Drive Coordinator, Homeless Shelter volunteer, Church fundraising dinners helper. He also was the recipient of 1<sup>st</sup> place in the Religious Olympiad (2012, 2013, 2014) and the Silver award for the National Spanish Exam.



**Nicholas Prescurea**

Beaumont Health and Wellness Center Medical Clerk, Competitive Gymnastics and Henry Ford Macomb Health System Hospital Volunteer. Honors received include: AP Scholar with Honor; Honor Roll; Utica Center for Math, Science, and Technology Top Ten Academic Award; High School Valedictorian; Falcon Scholar. She entered the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts at the University of Michigan in

Nicholas enrolled in the North East Ohio Medical University – University of Akron Program in 2016, majoring in Pre-Med and Biochemistry in the BS/MD program. Nicholas' college counselor writes: "Quietly cheerful and intensely studious, Nick has worked very hard in every aspect of his life in order to succeed, in part because of his own drive, but also to repay his parents for all of their sacrifices for him. It's not something you see that often any more in the United States....Regardless of the subject, Nick approaches each with a methodical plan for success; this plan includes, of course, going beyond the required, reading beyond what is necessary, and discussing the subject matter with his teachers whenever possible. He demonstrates all the qualities of a real learner, and the proof is in his academic record....Nick has remained very active in his Romanian cultural activities, both through his Romanian Orthodox church and in local Romanian organizations." In his essay, Nicholas states: "Even though I left Romania, my heritage has been formed and influenced by summer trips back home, the relationships with family and friends, and my involvement within my church. Through my church community, I was able to grow in my faith and my understanding the importance of being a man for others....I truly embrace my Romanian culture, and I will continue to apply my values and cultural influence within my American community in order that I can be a source of inspiration for everyone."

## Guiding the Ark ...

*Cont. from page 11*

At the time of his repose, Saint Raphael had founded 30 Orthodox churches spanning the United States and including Canada and Mexico.

As Saint Raphael has taught us, the bishop is to serve the flock of Christ as its spiritual father, collaborating with the priests and deacons, by rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim 2:15)

The theanthropic nature of the Church guarantees its authenticity, indivisibility, and its mission - the eternal salvation of Christ's flock. Just as Noah's ark and the Mosaic *tevah* ensured their safety from physical peril as typological structures, the Orthodox Church guides and protects those who desire eternal salvation. The role of the bishop is to preserve the integrity of the salvific vessel and proclaim through his life and preaching the divine economy in the midst of turbulent seas. The bishop does not act alone, just as salvation is not achieved through God's intervention solely but requires the active response and participation of man; so too, the Church requires a *synergeia* between the bishop, his priests and deacons, and the laity. The Lenten Triodion perfectly summarizes this in the vesperal stichera of the Second Sunday of Great Lent celebrating the memory of Saint Gregory Palamas:

*Cont. on page 14*

# Help for Veterans ...

*Cont. from page 8*

and mental health symptoms, challenging life events, and mental health conditions. On this site, Veterans and their families and friends can learn about available resources and support. Visit [www.MakeTheConnection.net](http://www.MakeTheConnection.net) to learn more.

- **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

- Each VA medical center has PTSD specialists who provide treatment for Veterans with PTSD. For more information about PTSD and to locate the VA PTSD program nearest you, visit [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov).
- PTSD Coach App: The PTSD Coach application, allows phone users to manage their symptoms, links them with local sources of support, and provides information on PTSD. Visit [www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/PTSDCoach.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/public/pages/PTSDCoach.asp).

- **Veterans Crisis Line/Chat/Text**

- 1-800-273-8255, Press 1
- <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>
- Text to 838255

- **VA Suicide Prevention Coordinators**

- Each VA Medical Center has a Suicide Prevention Coordinator to make sure Veterans receive needed counseling and services.
- Resource locator - <http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>

- **Chaplains**

- Each VHA has access to Chaplains 24/7 and can provide spiritual counseling which is often integral in addressing moral injury.

## From an article published by *Reuters Health News* 10-27-2016:

Veterans are more likely to commit suicide in their first year following discharge from active duty than after more time passes, based on a US Study. Compared with people still on active duty in the military, veterans out of the service for up to three months were 2.5 times more likely to commit suicide, the study found. Veterans who had left the service from three to 12 months earlier had almost triple the suicide odds of current members of the military.

The study also does not account for the frequency or intensity of combat experiences, noted Dr. Charles Hoge, a senior scientist at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research who wrote an accompanying editorial. Still, the findings suggest that veterans may need mental health services long after they return home.

“Unfortunately, despite numerous efforts to reduce stigma and other barriers to care, stigma remains pervasive in society, and many veterans still do not seek help when needed,” Hoge told *Reuters Health* by email.

One immediate resource that is available 24/7 is the national suicide prevention lifeline 1-800-273-8255.

The statistics being provided, a collaborative effort,

through the gracious assistance of the Suicide Awareness Coordinator at the Veterans Administration, Ms. Amber Miracle, and a synopsis of a current Reuters article, are staggering to believe. They are, however, the facts. As Orthodox Christians and knowing we each have veterans of all ages in our communities, please reach out in our shared love for Jesus Christ our Savior and assist those you know that may be in need.

**Fr. Dn. Wayne Paul Wright**, Parish Deacon  
The Presentation of Our Lord Church, Fairlawn, Ohio  
USMC 1966-70

---

# Guiding the Ark ...

*Cont. from page 13*

*“What hymns of praise shall we sing in honor of the holy bishop? He is the trumpet of theology, the herald of the fire of grace, the honored vessel of the Spirit, the unshaken pillar of the Church, the great joy of the inhabited earth, the river of wisdom, the candle-stick of the light, the shining star that makes glorious the whole creation.*

*What words of song shall we weave as a garland, to crown the holy bishop? He is the champion of true devotion and the adversary of ungodliness, the fervent protector of the Faith, the great guide and teacher, the well-tuned harp of the Spirit, the golden tongue, the fountain that flows with waters of healing for the faithful, Gregory the great and marvelous.*

*With what words shall we who dwell on earth praise the holy bishop? He is the teacher of the Church, the herald of the light of God, the initiate of the heavenly mysteries of the Trinity, the chief adornment of the monastic life, renowned alike in action and in contemplation, the glory of Thessalonica; and now he dwells in heaven with the great and glorious martyr Demetrius, whose relics flow with holy oil.*

*Inspired by the divine Spirit, as a winged angel thou hast come to the aid of the pious Emperor, fighting against the foolish-minded Barlaam, who in his madness blasphemed against the glory of God; and thou hast justly gained the victory over him.*

*Wholly filled with heavenly wisdom, O glorious saint, thou hast shone as a light in the world, teaching the doctrines of Orthodoxy. In thy love for true wisdom thou hast conceived the fear of God within thy heart, and given birth to the words of the Spirit.”*

+Bp. THOMAS

**FOLLOW THE  
EPISCOPATE ON**

**facebook**  
**twitter**



# HIERARCHAL SCHEDULE

## HIS EMINENCE, ARCHBISHOP NATHANIEL

**September 1 – December 31, 2016**

**September 1-4. Grass Lake, MI. Vatra Romaneasca.** Annual Episcopate Congress. **Thursday:** Divine Liturgy. Clergy Conference. Vespers. Episcopate Council Meeting. **Friday:** Divine Liturgy. Congress – Session I. Vespers. **Saturday:** Congress Session II & III. Memorial Service. Great Vespers. Program. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet.

**September 11. Warren, MI. Descent of the Holy Spirit.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet for 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**September 14-16. Regina, SK. Romanian Orthodox Deanery of Canada.** Closing of Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Assiniboia, SK.

**September 17-18. Youngstown, OH. Holy Trinity.** **Saturday:** Great Vespers. Supper. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet for 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**September 23-25. Alliance, OH. St. Nicholas.** **Saturday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Consecration of Altar Table and blessing of Iconography and church renovations. Banquet. Great Vespers. Dinner. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Lunch.

**October 1-2. Canton, OH. St. George.** **Saturday:** Memorial Service. Great Vespers. Supper. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet for 105<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

**October 4-6. Detroit, MI.** Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the USA Annual Meeting.

**October 8-9. Ottawa, ON. St. Nicholas.** **Saturday:** Livia Banu wedding. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Lunch.

**October 11-14. Temecula, CA. Holy Resurrection Monastery.** Pastoral visit. **Wednesday:** Vespers. Matins. Visit to Pomona, CA to see Fr. Catalin & Ps. Nicole Mitescu. **Thursday:** Great Vespers. Matins. **Friday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for feast of St. Parascheva.

**October 15-17. Anaheim, CA. St. Mary.** **Saturday:** Great Vespers. Dinner. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet for 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Parish and 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Priesthood of Fr. Avramescu.

**October 18-21. Syosset, NY. OCA Chancery.** Holy Synod Meeting.

**October 22-23. New York, NY. St. Dumitru.** **Saturday:** Great Vespers. Dinner. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet for Parish's patronal feast.

**October 24-25. Fairlawn, OH. Presentation of Our Lord.** **Tuesday morning:** Burial of Ps. Silvia Yova.

**October 25-27. Ellwood City, PA. Transfiguration Monastery.** Monastic Synaxis.

**October 30. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.

**November 4-7. Winnipeg, MB. St. George.** **Saturday:** Meeting with Church School children. Great Vespers. Blessing of new classroom addition. Supper. **Sunday:** SOLIA NOV/DEC 2016

Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Ordination of Deacon Clayton Michael Ungrin into the Holy Priesthood and blessing as Confessor. Banquet. Pastoral visits.

**November 11-13. Ontario, Canada. Saturday: Stoney Creek, ON. St. Nectarios.** Holy Unction service. **Sunday: Niagara Falls, ON. Sts. Michael & Gabriel.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet.

**November 17-21. Salt Lake City, UT. Orthodox Christian Laity (OCL) Annual Meeting.** **Friday:** Board Meeting. **Saturday:** Annual Meeting. **Sunday:** St. Anna Greek Orthodox Church. Attended Divine Liturgy in presence of Metropolitan Isaiah.

**November 24. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Thanksgiving Day (U.S.). Lunch.

**November 26-27. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** **Saturday:** Great Vespers. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Lunch.

**December 1-4. Naperville, IL. St. Athanasius Mission.** **Saturday:** Visit to property in process of being purchased in Aurora, IL. Banquet. **Sunday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Lunch.

**December 5-6. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** **Monday:** Vigil for feast of St. Nicholas. **Tuesday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Brunch.

**December 11. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.

**December 18. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.

**December 24. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Vespers. **Evening:** Matins and Compline for feast of Nativity of the Lord.

**December 25. Southfield, MI. St. George Cathedral.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for feast of Nativity of the Lord.

**December 26. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Synaxis of Birthgiver of God. Lunch. Caroling.

**December 27. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery.** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Protomartyr Stephen the Archdeacon. Lunch.

**December 29-31. Ellwood City, PA. Transfiguration Monastery.** **Saturday:** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy and Tonsuring of Mother Seraphima.

---

## State Funeral ... *Cont. from page 6*

chants were also heard urging justice and calling for government officials to be held accountable. Similar scenes were witnessed following the bombing on Sunday, with hundreds of protesters converging outside the Cathedral to demonstrate and to remember those killed. Sunday's attack, which took place on an Islamic holiday, was one of the deadliest against civilians in recent years. Egyptian President Sisi declared three days of mourning following the attack and promised the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## EPISCOPATE SUPPORTER

Peter Petkas, Houston, TX.....	\$1,000.00
Drs Jeffrey & Felicia O'Connor, Birmingham, MI.....	\$500.00
Cornel & Sharon Ivascu, Franklin, MI .....	\$500.00
Psa Martha MacLellan, Winnipeg, MB .....	\$247.00
Dumitru & Valentina Bodiu, West Bloomfield, MI .....	\$100.00
M/M Victor Dinu, Skokie, IL .....	\$100.00
George & Evie Dobrin, Blacklick, OH.....	\$100.00
Magdalena & Joseph Ilcus, Jupiter, FL .....	\$100.00
Rev Fr & Psa Andrew Lesko, Redlands, CA.....	\$100.00
Theodore Sockaci, Fombell, PA.....	\$100.00
Octavian Berteau, Warren, OH .....	\$50.00
Andre & Donna Gib, Mesa, AZ.....	\$50.00
Louise Gibb, Brookfield, OH.....	\$50.00

## GENERAL DONATIONS

St George, Winnipeg, MB (Hierarchy Travel Expenses).....	\$991.52
National ARFORA (Hierarchy Travel Expenses)....	\$600.00
John J Dogariu, Bakersville, NC (Camp Vatra)....	\$500.00
Rev Fr & Psa Dan Chirtu, Aurora, ON .....	\$200.00
V Rev Fr Catalin & Psa Nicole Mitescu, Pomona, CA .....	\$100.00
Preston King, Winnipeg, MB.....	\$50.00
Mihai & Corina Pop, Alexandria, VA (Camp Vatra) .....	\$50.00
Travelers Cyber Grants, Andover, OH.....	\$50.00

## MEMORIAM

Michael J Lungociu, Rockville, MD .....	\$500.00
(IMO Nicholas G Lungociu)	

## VATRA GENERATIONS

National ARFORA.....	\$2,100.00
Dr Gheorghe Marinescu, Rochester Hills, MI ...	\$1,000.00
Atty Dan Miclau, Strongsville, OH .....	\$1,000.00
John N Santeiu Jr, Garden City, MI .....	\$1,000.00
St Andrew, McKees Rocks, PA.....	\$1,000.00
George Regep, Bloomfield Hills, MI.....	\$500.00
Doru Posteuca, St Paul, MN.....	\$200.00
Network for Good, Washington, DC .....	\$190.99
(Elaine Rogozan, Westland MI - \$94.08 / Iustinian Deac, Udine Italy - \$26.34 / Pileus Media, Kitchener ON - \$70.57)	
William & Evelyn Balamaci, Milford, CT.....	\$100.00
Paul & Silvia Costea, Dearborn Hts, MI .....	\$100.00
Andre & Donna Gib, Mesa, AZ.....	\$100.00
Louise Gibb, Brookfield, OH.....	\$100.00
M/M Robert Omilian, Sterling Hts, MI .....	\$100.00
M/M Ovidiu Grama, Berea, OH .....	\$50.00
Constantine Nan, Carrollton, TX .....	\$50.00

## EPISCOPATE ASSESSMENT

Descent of the Holy Spirit, Warren, MI (2016) ..	\$9,000.00
St Anne, Jacksonville, FL.....	\$3,825.00
St Andrew, Potomac, MD (2016).....	\$3,500.00
St Elias, Elwood City, PA (2017) .....	\$3,450.00

## DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS

National ARFORA (St Paraschiva Mission Project) .....	\$2,650.00
--	------------

Psa Martha MacLellan, Winnipeg, MB .....\$20.88

## A.C.E. FUND

Lenny & Cathy Jones, Philadelphia, PA.....	\$100.00
Psa Martha MacLellan, Winnipeg, MB .....	\$20.00

## SEMINARIAN FUND

National ARFORA.....	\$750.00
----------------------	----------

## HOLY ASCENSION MONASTERY FIRE APPEAL

Sts Peter & Paul, Dearborn Hts, MI .....	\$1,673.00
St George, Winnipeg, MB .....	\$1,206.00
Holy Transfiguration, Manchester, CT.....	\$500.00

# SOLIA

**December 12, 2015 to December 31, 2016**

*We gratefully acknowledge the following donations and subscriptions to SOLIA – The Herald.*

## FRIENDS

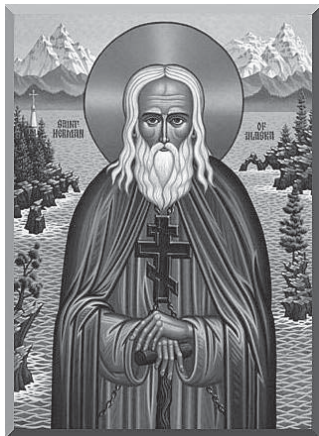
Tonna Charitable Trust, Worchester MA .....	\$1,000.00
Anonymous, USA .....	\$250.00
Mildred & Miron Bonca, Costa Mesa, CA .....	\$200.00
Serban Constantinescu, Philadelphia, PA.....	\$100.00
Mihail Teodorescu, King of Prussia, PA.....	\$100.00
Anna Jonascu-Divine, Plymouth, MI .....	\$60.00
Marian Veteanu, Cooper City, FL.....	\$50.00
Constantin Chelmu, Wallingford, CT.....	\$50.00
Silviu Petrini, Bellflower, CA.....	\$43.00
Gheorghe/Valeria Dumitrescu, Tallahassee, FL .....	\$42.00
Liviu Constantinescu, Simi Valley, CA.....	\$30.00
Cristina Schrader, Peoria, AZ .....	\$30.00
Holy Archangels Michael & Gabriel Mission, Haledon, NJ.....	\$28.23
Dumitru Bodiu, West Bloomfield, MI.....	\$25.00
Robert Mitchell, Kincheloe, MI.....	\$25.00
Alina Kleinhenz, Santee, CA .....	\$25.00
Dr. Cynthia Barb, Uniontown, OH .....	\$25.00
Calin Lupu, Kitchener, ON.....	\$23.05
Nikola Mezin, Shelby Twp, MI .....	\$20.00
Andre Gib, Mesa, AZ .....	\$20.00
Cristofor/Stela Focsan, Pinellas Park, FL .....	\$15.00
John Radu, Myrtle Beach, FL.....	\$15.00
Dorothy Rotelick, Regina, SK .....	\$14.24
Tina Yanessa, Doylestown, PA.....	\$10.00
Matthew Potter, Oak Brook, IL .....	\$10.00
Anonymous, USA .....	\$10.00

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Joe Albritten, Carson City, NV
Maura Andronic, Clairsville, OH
Maria Beu, Lutz, FL
Miron/Mildred Bonca, Costa Mesa, CA
Michael D. Buzash, Terre Haute, IN
Cheryl Ciulei, Warren, OH
Elena Crocker, Fair Lawn, NJ
Robert Donus, Valley Stream, NY
Doina Dumitrescu, Princeton, NJ
Gheorghe/Valeria Dumitrescu, Tallahassee, FL
Niculae Ghetu, Mesa, AZ
Arne/Mariana Greaves, Jackson, MS
Alexandria Lupu, Lake Havasu City, AZ

# UN SFÂNT AMERICAN MAI PUȚIN CUNOSCUȚ ROMÂNILOR: SFÂNTUL HERMAN (GHERMAN) DIN ALASKA

## Viața



Pe 13 decembrie, ortodocșii de pe continentul american îl sărbătoresc pe Sfântul Herman din Alaska, creștinătorul nativilor inuiți și aleuți din Alaska. Este socotit de mulți drept sfântul protector al Americii de Nord și este primul sfânt canonizat de biserica ortodoxă pe pământ american.

Herman (1750 – 1836) a fost un călugăr ortodox rus, misionar în Alaska, pe atunci provincie rusească. S-a format ca monah în mănăstirea sfântului Serafim de Sarov, iar mai apoi a fost tuns în monahism în mănăstirea Valaam, în 1782. Înainte de a intra în viața monahală, a slujit în armată, cu numele laic de Igor Ivanovici Popov.

S-a nevoit în tradiția isihastă a marelui Paisie Velicicovschi. Deși era iubit de frații lui din obște, Herman a fost atras de viața pustnicească. L-a refuzat în două rânduri pe mitropolitul lui, când acesta i-a propus să îl hirotonească preot și să îl trimită într-o misiune ortodoxă în China.

În 1741, rușii au descoperit Alaska și au început astfel o colonizare rusească a teritoriului. La început, rușii organizau expediții pentru vânătoria de nutrie, ale căror blănuri le vindeau chinezilor, pe malul lacului Baikal. A luat naștere o adevărată *goană după blănuri*. Exploratorii-vânători au călătorit prin Alaska și insulele Aleutine, uneori luptându-se, alteori căsătorindu-se cu popoarele autohtone. Mulți dintre ei s-au stabilit aici.

Prima așezare stabilă a fost în insula Kodiak, unde au fondat o companie ruso-americană de schimb de blănuri și o școală pentru autohtoni, pe care i-au convertit la ortodoxie.

Reprezentanții companiei au cerut sinodului Bisericii Rusiei să îi trimită preoți pentru o misiune ortodoxă în Kodiak. Așa au ajuns, zece părinți de la mănăstirea Valaam, între care și monahul Herman, să înceapă activitatea misionară ortodoxă aici.

Condițiile erau grele. Autohtonii erau de multe ori pouși la munci grele, pe condiții de vreme rea, femeile erau de multe ori abuzate, iar coloniștii abuzau de alcool. Nici monahilor nu li s-au dat proviziile promise de companie. Dar s-au descurcat cum au

putut, reușind să boteze mai mult de șapte mii de localnici, să construiască o biserică și o mănăstire. Herman era iconomul (administratorul) și bucătarul comunității monahale.

Încet-încet, monahii devin apărătorii drepturilor autohtonilor din Kodiak. Ajuns conducător al obștii în 1807, Herman era iubit de localnici, menținând totuși o balanță echilibrată și în relațiile cu compania de blănuri. Era învățător la școala misiunii, unde îi învăța pe localnici scrisul și cititul, precum și catehismul ortodox.

## Insula pinului (Spruce Island)



Tânjind după viața pustnicească, Herman se retrage, câțiva ani mai târziu în insula Pinului (*Spruce Island*), aflată aproape de Kodiak. Aici întemeiază o sihăstrie numită *Noul Valaam*, în amintirea mănăstirii lui de metanie. În ciuda sălbăticiei locurilor și a iernilor grele, cuviosul și-a găsit pe această insulă un loc propice rugăciunii. Purta haine simple și dormea pe o bancă acoperită cu blană de ren. Era vizitat uneori de localnicii aleuți, care veneau la el să le dea sfat părintesc. Unii s-au mutat pe insulă ca să fie mai aproape de părintele lor și i-au devenit acestuia ucenici. Herman avea grijă de ei, le împăca disputele și le lua apărarea în fața tratamentelor uneori inumane la care îi supunea compania ruso-americană de blănuri.

Și-a încheiat viața pământească în aceeași *Spruce Island*, la 15 noiembrie 1836. Dintr-o eroare, s-a crezut inițial că data morții ar fi fost 13 decembrie, astfel că, în calendarul ortodox american, ambele zile sunt închinat Sfântului Herman din Alaska. Sfântul mai este sărbătorit și în Duminica Sfinților Români și Americani, a doua după Rusalii.

*Cont. la pag 24*



# DIN VIATA PAROHIILOR...



Sfânta Liturghie Arhierescă cu ocazia aniversării a 100 de ani a Parohiei Pogorârea Duhului Sfânt din Warren, Michigan - 11 septembrie 2016 — Preot Paroh Ioan Mihuț.



Hramul Parohiei Sfinții Arhangheli Mihail și Gavriil, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada - 13 noiembrie 2016 - slujba arhierescă în biserica cumpărată recent de credincioșii parohiei — Preot Paroh Cornel Sirjiță.



**Sfânta Liturghie Arhieriască cu ocazia aniversării a 30 de ani de la înființarea Parohiei Adormirea Maicii Domnului din Anaheim, California și a 45 de ani de preoție a Părintelui Paroh Cornel Avramescu.**



**Biserica Parohiei Pogorârea Duhului Sfânt din Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Canada - parohia a fost oficial închisă la data de 14 septembrie 2016.**



**Biserica Parohiei Sfântul Gheorghe din Dysart, Saskatchewan, Canada (1906) - a trebuit să fie demolată în luna octombrie 2016 din cauza stării de deteriorare avansate.**



**Înaltpreasfințitul Părinte Arhiepiscop Nathaniel intra în altarul bisericii Sfinții Apostoli Petru și Pavel din Flinftoft, Saskatchewan, Canada - 14 septembrie 2016 - pentru a sluji un parastas pentru ctitorii și membrii acestei parohii ce odihnesc în cimitirul din jurul bisericii.**

# SCRISOARE PASTORALA 2016

## Nașterea Domnului și Dumnezeuului și Mântuitorului nostru Iisus Hristos

*“Voi locui în ei și voi umbla și voi fi Dumnezeuul lor și ei vor fi poporul Meu”*

*(2 Cor. 6:16; Lev. 26:11-19)*

Iubiții mei fii duhovnicești, Preacucernic Cler, Preacuvioși Monahi,  
Dreptmăritori Creștini ai de Dumnezeu păzitei noastre Episcopii,

*Har și Pace de la Dumnezeu Tatăl și Domnul nostru Iisus Hristos,  
iar de la noi, arhierești binecuvântări!*

**Hristos se Naște! Măriți-L!**

După încă un an care a trecut, am ajuns la prăznuirea nașterii Soarelui Dreptății, Iisus Hristos, Lumina Lumii. În aceasta zi de mare prăznuire și bucurie, să lăsăm povara cea de zi cu zi și grijiile vieții la o parte pentru a face loc bucuriei sărbătorii Nașterii Domnului și Dumnezeuului și Mântuitorului nostru Iisus Hristos. În trăirea acestei sărbători, sufletele noastre se reînoiesc de fiecare dată cu tărie și curaj care vin din nădejdea cea veșnică.

Astăzi, ascultând launtrul inimii noastre, putem auzi cântarea îngerilor care au cântat deasupra staulului unde s-a născut Pruncul Hristos și care s-au coborât apoi degrabă să vestească păstorilor vestea cea mare că “Hristos s-a născut!” Ce bucurie mare a fost această veste! Ce bucurie oare a trăit atunci Sfânta Fecioară Maria, dreptul Iosif, păstorii, magii și desigur întreaga creație!

De la izgonirea din Rai a protopărinților Adam și Eva, toată creația, omul și natura, au căutat restabilirea adevăratei și drepte comuniuni cu însăși Creatorul său. Dar omul în această căutare, mai ales din cauza mândriei sale, s-a îndepărtat și mai mult de Ceruri și s-a adâncit tot mai mult distanța între el și Creator. Dumnezeu a văzut chipul și asemănarea sa din om înnegrită de păcat și omul dezumanizându-se și cuprins de disperare.

*“Ce putea face Dumnezeu în fața acestui proces de dezumanizare a omului, în fața tăinuirii adevărului despre Sine de către uneltirile duhurilor celor rele?” se întreba Sf. Atanasie cel Mare. “Ce altceva putea oare să facă, fiind Dumnezeu, decât să reînnoiască chipul Său în om, astfel încât omul să-L poată cunoaște din nou.”*

Dumnezeu a trimis prooroci și chiar îngeri să readucă pe om la Sine, dar a fost necesar ca însuși El, Dumnezeu, să se aplece spre pământ pentru a înălța pe om la ceruri. *“Ce minunată lucrare!”* exclama Sf. Ioan Gură de Aur, *“El a trimis întâi pe îngeri la om, iar apoi a înălțat pe om la cele cerești. Raiul s-a făcut pe pământ fiindcă raiul trebuia să ridice la sine lucrurile pământeste.”* Precum patriarhul Iacov din Vechiul Testament striga, *“El va veni și lumea se va aduna în jurul Său.”*

Întruparea Mântuitorului a sters negura păcatului de pe chipul dumnezeiesc din om și a răspuns pe om în adevăratul său drept, de moșternitor al Împărăției Tatălui Ceresc. Sf. Atanasie cel Mare spune *“Cuvântul lui Dumnezeu se întrupează, pentru ca doar El, chipul Tatălui, putea reface pe om după chipul dumnezeiesc,”* luând aminte la însuși cuvintele Mântuitorului: *“Eu am venit să caut și să mântuiesc pe cel pierdut.”* Era, deci, necesar ca Dumnezeu însăși să se întrupeze și să vină la noi, spune Sf. Leon cel Mare, *“căci dacă El nu era Dumnezeu adevărat, El nu ne putea aduce nici un ajutor, iar dacă nu era om adevărat, El nu putea fi pentru noi un exemplu.”*

Motivul pentru care Mântuitorul s-a întrupat de la Duhul Sfânt și din Sfânta Fecioară Maria, ne spune Sf. Ioan Gură de Aur, este *“ca venind între noi, El ne va învăța, și învățându-ne, ne va și arăta lucruri pe care omul nu le poate vedea. Fiindcă omul crede că ochii sunt mai demni de crezare decât urechile, îndoindu-se de ceea ce nu vede, astfel, El s-a smerit și ni s-a arătat nouă în trup pentru a șterge orice urmă de îndoială.”*



Mântuitorul Hristos, învățându-ne, ne-a deschis mintea către Scripturi și profeții, cum zice proorocul David: *“El va veni așteptat așa cum așteaptă un câmp însetat ploaia.”* Naștera sa este de importanță cosmică. Este de o infinită importanță nu numai pentru noi personal, pentru familiile noastre, pentru neamul nostru ci pentru întreaga creație al cărui Creator El este. Într-adevăr întruparea Sa în lume este binevenită!

Dorind să-L cunoaștem, suntem chemați să I ne închinăm, *“căci dacă Hristos este Dumnezeu, așa cum și este, dar n-ar fi asumat și firea omenească, noi am fi fost încă străini mântuirii. Să I ne închinăm deci ca unui Dumnezeu, știind că s-a făcut și om pentru noi,”* ne îndeamnă Sf. Chiril al Ierusalimului. Mântuitorul Iisus Hristos, *“a venit ca mana cerească să sature pe cei flămânzi”* spune Sf. Chiril al Ierusalimului, pe cei care au fost însetați de adevăr și cautători de fi repuși în dreptul lor în creația lui Dumnezeu. Ca urmare, praznicul de astăzi, al întrupării Împăratului Păcii, reamintește lumii întregi, ca omul este moștenitorul Împăratului Ceresc chemat la moșternirea cea veșnică.

Ne bucurăm oare astăzi de nașterea Sa? Cu siguranță că da. Să ne bucurăm cu adevărat! *“Recunoaște creștine demnitatea aceea care ți se cuvine”* îndeamnă Sf. Leon cel Mare. Demnitate? Da, *“pentru că noi suntem temple ale Duhului Sfânt”* (1 Cor. 6:19) în care locuiește Dumnezeu, în care Dumnezeu umblă și care ne cheamă pe fiecare după al său nume. Ca urmare, noi nu suntem niciodată singuri, nici în clipa cea mai întunecată a vieții, și nici atunci când uneltirile satanice vin să ne destrame, *“Dumnezeu este cu noi! Înțelegeți neamuri și vă plecați, căci cu noi este Dumnezeu!”*

Acolo unde sunt dreptmăritori creștini, acolo este și Biserica, acolo este locașul lui Dumnezeu. Închinătorii adevărați și râvnitori vin la leagănul Pruncului Hristos cântând de bucurie, precum Sf. Ioan Gură de Aur spunea: *“mă minunez purtând în brațele mele leagănul lui Hristos. Căci acesta este toată nădejdea mea, acesta este viața mea, acesta este mântuirea mea, acesta este instrumentul cântării mele, harpă a sufletului meu!”*

La nașterea lui Hristos îngerii au cântat: *“Mărire lui Dumnezeu întru cele de sus și pe pământ pace și între oameni bunăvoie”* (Luca 2:14) Această pace s-a împlinit prin Hristos însuși care ne-a împăcat pe noi cu Dumnezeu Tatăl, spune Sf. Chiril. *In timp de persecuție sau liniște, în vremuri bune și în bucurie, pacea lui Dumnezeu nu are limite* (Isaia 9,7). La fel și pentru noi astăzi, bucuria noastră nu cunoaște limite, să ne grăbim să întâmpinăm pe pruncul Hristos în lume, Cel care aduce împăcare și pace tuturor. Este binevenit! Să-L primim pentru că este Dumnezeul nostru și noi suntem poporul Său.

Fiindcă azi *“nouă prunc ni s-a născut, nouă astăzi un fiu ni s-a dat”* (Isaia 9:5) ploaia a căzut peste pământul însetat, mireasma a acoperit pământul, norul cel blând și ocrotitor a venit în mijlocul nostru, stâlpul de foc ne-a condus din întuneric la lumina strălucitoare, iar pruncul nou născut își întinde mâna arătându-ne ce va să fie, împlinirea făgăduinței, *“când Hristos, Care este viața voastră, Se va arăta, atunci și voi, împreună cu El, vă veți arăta întru slavă”* (Col. 3:4).

Hristos se naște! Măriți-L!

Cu doriri de sănătate, pace și întru toate bună sporire,

† NATHANIEL

Din Mila lui Dumnezeu și Voia Poporului,  
Arhiepiscop de Detroit și al Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America si Canada  
Biserica Ortodoxă în America

# COLINDAM DOAMNE COLIND

La vremea Craciunului, prin venirea in lumea aceasta a Mantuitorului nostru, Iisus Hristos, parca si noi, crestinii toti, redevenim inca o data copii. Gandul si inima noastra se intorc la vremea copilariei, si incercam sa retrimem ceea ce ne-a fost lasat din strabuni. Sfanta Scriptura si traditia crestin ortodoxa ne-au mentinut vie credinta noastra dreapta de-a lungul veacurilor, facand parte integranta din viata noastra de zi cu zi. Au trecut secole pentru istoria omenirii; multe lucruri s-au schimbat, dar Biserica lui Hristos a ramas aceeaasi, caci a fost intemeiata de Insusi Fiul lui Dumnezeu, Domnul nostru Iisus Hristos.

La vremea Craciunului, prin traditia crestin ortodoxa ne-au fost lasate colindele. Cu totii, cei care ne-am marturisit credinta in Hristos prin taina Sfantului Botez si ne-am impartasit cu Trupul si Sangele Domnului prin taina Sfintei Impartasanii, suntem adevarati discipoli ai Lui in aceasta lume. Prin vestirea Nasterii Sale, crestinii ortodocsi implinesc si porunca primita de a anunta toate neamurile despre Mantuitorul omenirii asa precum ingerii au spus pastorilor despre Nasterea Pruncului Iisus in ieslea din Bethleem. Ieslea este inima smerita a crestinului, in care se naste Hristos.

La vremea Craciunului am invatat si noi de la parintii si bunicii nostri colindele stramosesti. In vremea copilariei noastre, in seara si noaptea de Craciun, mergeam anevoios, afundandu-ne prin omatul mare de pe ulitele satului, si vesteam Nasterea Domnului la casele oamenilor. Erau multe cete de colindatori care duceau mai departe Cuvantul Scripturii caci colindele sunt esenta de teologie transmisa prin modul simplu si frumos, poetic si armonios, al glasului omenesc. Si



mi-aduc aminte cum ne intalneam cu Preotul satului care mergea impreuna cu dascalii si baietii de altar cu Icoana Nasterii Domnului, binecuvantand casele enoriasilor.

La vremea Craciunului din zilele noastre suntem si noi la randul nostru datori sa mentinem traditia colindatului pentru a o transmite mai departe generatiilor urmatoare. In parohia "Sfantul Gheorghe" din Toronto, al carui enorias sunt de mai bine de 20 de ani, colindele sunt cantate zile intregi in preajma Sfintelor Sarbatori de Craciun. Inca de la intemeierea acestei parohii, enoriasii, unii chiar cantereti la strana sau membrii ai corului, au mers in Ajunul Craciunului la colindat. In plus, corul Bisericii ofera an de an un frumos concert de colinde in ziua de Craciun enoriasilor veniti in numar mare la Sarbatoarea Nasterii Domnului. Este de asemenea o traditie in parohia





noastra ca Parintele Ioan Bunea, alaturi de cantaretii de la strana, sa colinde in Biserica si in zilele urmatoare Craciunului, dupa savarsirea Sfintei Liturghii.

La vremea Craciunului, pentru copiii din parohie, Scoala Duminicala, infiintata acum 27 de ani de preoteasa Mihaela Bunea, a avut mereu un rol important in invatarea colindelor traditionale romanesti. An de an acesti minunati copii sunt primii care colinda la Biserica noastra in cadrul Serbarii de Craciun organizata de obicei cu aproximativ o saptamana inaintea Sarbatorii Nasterii Domnului. Cu voia lui Dumnezeu, acum 6 ani, prin infiintarea unei clase noi, am extins cursurile scolii duminicale si copiilor mai mari, de la 12 la 18 ani. Ii multumesc Bunului Dumnezeu ca mi-a oferit mie aceasta datorie sfanta de a-i indruma pe acesti tineri pe calea credintei ortodoxe stramosesti pe parcursul acestor ani.

La vremea Craciunului este bine si frumos sa avem serbari si concerte cu colinde la Biserica, sa fim prezenti in salile de spectacol pentru a vedea si a asculta traditiile noastre stramosesti, sa ascultam colinde la radio sau pe CD, sa vizionam colindele traditionale pe internet sau la televiziune. Dar traditia noastra crestin ortodoxa nu se rezuma la acestea; noi suntem chemati sa mergem sa colindam in seara de Ajun, sa anuntam pe la casele oamenilor de Nasterea Mantuitorului nostru Iisus Hristos in Bethleem. De aceea, fiind sustinut de Parintele Ioan Bunea dar si de inimosii parinti ai acestor tineri adolescenti de la Scoala Duminicala, am inceput acum 6 ani sa mergem la colindat in Ajunul Craciunului. Este o experienta unica si de neuitat pentru acesti tineri (insotiti de cei cativa adulti care ii coordonam si transportam de la o

casa la alta) sa fie mesageri ai lui Dumnezeu, aducand cu ei colindele (marea majoritate cantate in limba romana) dar si Icoana Sfanta a Nasterii Domnului precum si Steaua stralucitoare de la Rasarit. Inaltator este si momentul cand ceata de colindatori, ajungand seara la Biserica, obositi dupa periplul de o zi, canta toate colindele pe care le stiuti tuturor celor prezenti la Biserica, dupa Slujba Vecerniei.

La vremea Craciunului, as dori sa multumesc Celui de Sus pentru ca ne-a ajutat de-a lungul anilor sa includem in viata acestor tineri (unii sunt deja studenti dar inca ne insotesc in seara Ajunului Craciunului) si traditia stramosasca a colindatului pe la casele oamenilor. Dumnezeu sa ii binecuvanteze pe acesti tineri, dar si pe parintii lor, sa duca mai departe aceasta traditie frumoasa.

La Multi Ani!

**Cristian Zamrii,**

coordonator al Scolii Duminicale din parohia "Sfantul Gheorghe" din Toronto

*PS: In pozele alaturate va prezentam trei instantanee din 2016: ceata de colindatori in costume nationale la Serbarea de Craciun; ceata de colindatori la una din casele vizitate in seara de Ajun; si colindatorii alaturi de Parintele Paroh Ioan si Preoteasa Mihaela Bunea la incheierea colindatului in Ajunul Craciunului.*





# Un Sfânt American ...

Cont. de la pag 17

## Canonizarea

Sfântul Herman a fost canonizat la 9 august 1970, concomitent în Biserica Ortodoxă Rusă din Afara Rusiei și în Biserica Ortodoxă Americană (OCA). Episcopia noastră de la Vatra este parte a acesteia din urmă, astfel că Sfântul Herman este și un sfânt al românilor de pe continentul american.

Moăștele sfântului Herman se află în Catedrala Învierii din Kodiak. Spruce Island este și el un loc de pelerinaj pentru credincioși. Aici se află schitul Sfântul Mihail, care are nu mai puțin de ... 3 călugări.

Monahii trăiesc din pescuit, ciuperci sau diverse alimente de la pelerini, au o barcă din aluminiu (aici automobilul este prea puțin utilizabil, din moment ce nu sunt străzi), folosesc curent electric doar uneori (când panourile solare au ... soare) și, cel mai important, se roagă într-un autentic duh ortodox. Mica biserică de lemn este încălzită de o sobă.

În ciuda condițiilor naturale vitrege, sau poate tocmai datorită lor, părinții duc o muncă de pionierat, la fel ca însuși Sfântul Herman, încreștinătorul acestor locuri.

**Diacon Nicolae Marinescu**

## Invățăm de la Sfinții Părinți... despre Nașterea Domnului Hristos

„Soarele dreptății astăzi a răsărit și a acoperit vechiul soare. Am fost slobozit din întuneric și strălucirea acestor raze mă orbește; ziua a fost pentru mine din nou născută și sunt cuprins de spaimă. Nașterea mă încântă și cele ale sale mă tulbură. Văd răsărind un nou izvor și trecând vechea grijă, am văzut că Sa născut Prunc nou și cerul că se pogoară să-L slăvească.”

**Sfântul Proclu,  
Patriarh al Constantinopolului  
(434 – 446)**



## CONFERINȚA “VIAȚA ÎN FAMILIE” / ȘI INTRUNIREA ORGANIZAȚIILOR AUXILIARE ALE EPISCOPIEI 2017

**26-28 mai 2017**

**Parohia Pogorârea Duhului Sfânt**  
750 W 61st Ave, Merrillville, IN

*Alăturați-vă tineretului din organizația AROY, doamnelor din organizația ARFORA și membrilor Frăției Ortodoxe pentru un weekend frumos în duh de rugăciune, cu oportunități de socializare și conlucrare spre viitorul organizațiilor Episcopiei.*

*Din program...Vineri seara - slujba vecerniei cu omilia,  
Sâmbătă seara - Vecernie Mare urmată de un picnic.  
Duminică – Sfânta Lirtughie și Banchetul Festiv.*

### Evenimente:

Slujbe religioase cu taina Spovedaniei /

Adunările organizațiilor auxiliare /

Presentări tematice ortodoxe / Activități pentru copii / Expoziții

