



SOLIA

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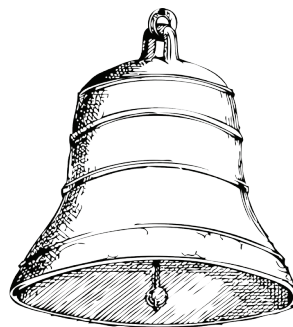
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OLD BELLS - NEW SOUND!



When St. John Chrysostom Parish, Niles, Ohio was recently closed, all liturgical items were removed. There remained, however, the bells in the tower. What to do about them? Leave them? Relocate them? Sell them? His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel decided that the bells should still ring but in a new place.

Assisted by Very Rev. Igumen Calinic of Holy Cross Parish (Hermitage, Pennsylvania) and former Episcopate Council Member, Theodore (Ted) Young, the bells were removed and put into temporary storage until the new location for them would be decided. Ted would occasionally call the Chancery to ascertain what progress was being made. Finally, he called to say the bells could no longer rest where they were (at the construction company that had lowered them from the church).

On Pascha this year, in preparing for the Holy Liturgy, listening to the recorded “bells” at the Cathedral in Southfield, His Eminence was suddenly moved to inquire of Very Rev. Dean Lazar if he were to give the bells to the cathedral, would they be accepted? The answer was in the affirmative, and now the old bells will sound anew in Southfield.

The gift of the two cast iron bells of 22 and 28 inch diameters weighs almost 800 pounds. The parish was founded in 1926/1936 and sometime soon after, the two bells were given by two different individuals. There are two name plates but which name belongs to which bell is not clear at this time.

At one time, the Cathedral possessed three bells, but over time they could not be located on the church property. Thus, the Cathedral will have two other bells which, in time, will call the faithful to the same services but in Southfield, Michigan.

THE POOL OF BETHESDA

by V. Rev. Igumen Calinic (Berger)

In the nineteenth century, scholars held the account of Jesus' healing of the paralytic at the pool of Bethesda (Jn 5:1-15) to be a pious myth. They were led to this opinion primarily because of John's description of the pool as having "five porticos." Such a pool simply did not exist. Who indeed would build a pool with five porches? Moreover, the number five had symbolic value in the Gospel of John, as signifying the Torah, the five books of Moses. Thus, the five husbands of the Samaritan woman (Jn 4:18), the five loaves that fed the multitudes (Jn 6:9), and the five porches of the Bethesda pool, all represented in some way the fact that the Law understood the human condition – that human beings need love, spiritual nourishment and healing – but had no power to respond to it. Only Christ could provide the means of addressing the human condition. Therefore, since no such pool with five porches existed, and the number five had great theological meaning, the prevailing opinion was that the entire account of the healing of the paralytic was fabricated, not having occurred in reality.

This opinion changed radically when excavations begun in the 1880's (renewed in 1957, and not entirely finished today) discovered the pool with five porticos, exactly where John's Gospel said it was: by the Sheep Gate. The pool is trapezoidal, with a dam bisecting the center (in order to maintain the water level of the southern pool, where people entered) and thus providing a fifth porch. Subsequently, scholars began scrutinizing all of the details related to John's Gospel and duly noted them as entirely correct (for example, the five loaves were barley loaves, precisely the grain used in that region for bread). The scholarly opinion of the Gospel likewise changed: the accounts in John's Gospel could only have been related by an eyewitness, someone intimately familiar with the region in the days of Christ.

This leads us to a second curious detail in John's account of this healing: the text of John 5:3b-4 ("For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had") is not found in manuscripts before the fourth century. St. John Chrysostom is the first Father of the Church that seems to have been aware of this reading. The verse is an obvious gloss – a later addition to the original text.

The discovery of the Bethesda pool and the gloss of 5:4 casts new light on the meaning of this action of Jesus. The archeological data seems to indi-

cate that Bethesda was a Roman pool dedicated to the pagan god of healing, Asclepius. The existence of this pool was an offense to pious Jews – no devout Jew would go there – but it was just outside of the city wall, such that it might be somewhat tolerated. The fact that Jesus did go there was obviously troubling to whoever added the later gloss; hence, the pagan god is now replaced with an angel. However, both facts now illumine why Jesus later told the man to "go and sin no more" (5:14): the man had not relied on the God of Israel for healing, but had turned away from him to take matters into his own hands and place his hope in a pagan god.

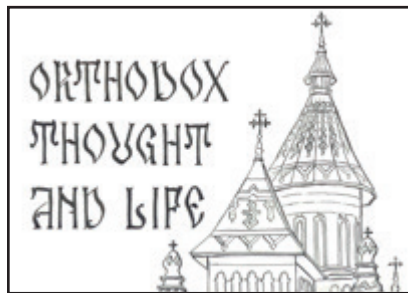
What does this say about our Lord? About His great compassion? His power? The power of Christ is greater than the Law and greater than any pagan superstition, not limited by any special time, condition, angel or false deity, such as those which bound the hopes of the paralytic. Our Lord is above all powers of heaven and earth (Eph 1:21-3, Col 1:15-18, etc.).

Moreover, the message of the Gospel of John confirms and foreshadows the Apostolic mission "not only in Jerusalem, but throughout Judea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the world" (Acts 1:8). If the blind man represents believing Jews (Jn 9), the Samaritan woman represents those considered heretical (Jn 4:20); then, in this context, the paralytic at a pagan pool – who may himself even have been a non-Jew – certainly is a foreshadowing of the mission of the Church to the entire world. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the fulfillment not only of the Old Testament but of the positive hopes and aspirations of all mankind.

There is a final curious tradition about the paralytic healed at Bethesda, recorded in the synaxarion for the feast. Namely, he had an evil role at the trial of Jesus, being one of the two false witnesses brought forward (Mt 26:60). Obviously, he did not heed the exhortation of Jesus. In this, he stands in stark contrast to the man born blind, who after being healed made a bold confession of faith and subsequently endured persecution (Jn 9:30-34).

The message of Bethesda continues for us today, being one of great hope yet also of strong exhortation. Our Savior's great compassion, patience and love led and leads him to "seek and save that which is lost" (Lk 19:10), as His trip to the Bethesda pool yet again reveals. If our Lord comes to seek and save the paralytic, even in his sin, how much moreso does he wish to save those who turn to him? However, we

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CHRISTIANS CAUGHT IN MIDDLE OF SYRIAN CONFLICT



Orthodox faithful pray during a service held at the Syrian Orthodox Church on Sunday, April 19, 2009 in Damascus, Syria to celebrate Easter according to the Orthodox calendar. Orthodox Christians celebrate Easter several weeks after observances by other Christian denominations. Christians pose around 12 percent of Syria's 20 million Sunni-majority inhabitants. (AP photo/ Bassem Tellawi).

Compiled by Matthew Brown, Deseret News

The uprising in Syria began as a peaceful protest for diversity and democracy during the Arab Spring of 2011. But it has turned into a holy war between Shiite and Sunni sects of Islam — with Christians and other minorities caught in the middle.

The highest profile Christian victims of the civil war are two Orthodox bishops kidnapped in late April, and there is still no official word as to the whereabouts or fate of the two clerics, who were abducted as they returned from a humanitarian mission in Turkey.

"We are deeply worried for the lives of **Archbishop Mor Gregorius Yohanna Ibrahim of the Syriac Orthodox Church** and **Bishop Boulos Yazigi of the Greek Orthodox Church**," said Katrina Lantos Swett, chairwoman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, in a statement on May 21, according to *The Guardian*. "The United States and the international community must leave no stone unturned to free the archbishops and halt sectarian violence."

U.S. Congressmen Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., and Frank Wolf, R-Va., recently wrote in *The Christian Science Monitor* that a bipartisan group of their colleagues is urging the State Department to make freeing

the bishops a top priority because it is key to bringing peace in the region.

"At stake are not just the lives of two religious men, or even the fate of the Syrian Christian community, but the fate of any hope of tolerance and pluralism in the Syrian endgame — and perhaps in the region as a whole," they wrote in an op-ed piece.

Christians are caught in the middle of the sectarian battle, and are not sure whom to trust — the oppressive regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, which is supported by Shiites but under which Christians have been able to thrive in Syrian society, or the Sunni rebels who want to overthrow Assad with the help of radical Islamist groups whom Christians fear as their persecutors.

"Our fear is that Christians continue to leave the country in search of a decent life," said Melkite Catholic Archbishop Jean-Clement Jeanbart of Aleppo, according to *The Vatican Today*. "One suffers for lack of goods, fuel, electricity, sometimes for food. But what makes us suffer most is to see that the future gets darker and darker. The future for us Christians and for all Syrians can only be based on full citizenship,

Cont. on page 14

ROEA CLERGY CONFERTREAT



Participating Clergy with His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace Bishop Irineu.

The 10th annual Clergy Confertreat of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America was held at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona, February 11-14, 2013. The forty-eight participants included His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace Bishop Irineu, together with priests, deacons and preotese of our Episcopate.

On Monday, an opening supper and welcome by Fr. Ian G. Pac-Urar was followed by an evening of fellowship, as clergy renewed acquaintances with their brothers and shared their experiences over the previous year.

Tuesday's sessions included seminars on Sexual Misconduct and Clergy Professional Ethics, Healthy Boundaries and Boundary Violations, Power and Vulnerability, and Mandatory Reporting. Fathers Ian G. Pac-Urar and James Barkett presented the sessions. By attending Tuesday's sessions, participants fulfilled the new 5-hour Continuing Education requirement in Professional, Legal and Ethical Issues adopted by the Holy Synod of Bishops on January 28, 2013.

On Tuesday evening, Dr. Stephen Muse presented a very interesting and informative lecture on the most recent research about the Shroud of Turin. Dr. Muse continued his presentations on Wednesday morning and afternoon, exploring clergy wellness, self-care and the relationships between Orthodox Christianity and modern psychology.

Wednesday evening's program included a video presentation about the life of the renowned Romanian confessor, Father Arsenie Boca.

Participants at the Clergy Confertreat received seven additional hours of credit toward the general, 20-hour Continuing Clergy Development requirement. For more information about this requirement, visit the Orthodox Church in America Continuing Education website at <http://oca.org/about/departments/departments-of-continuing-education> or the CCD FAQ page

at <http://oca.org/about/dept-cont-ed-faqs>.

Photos of the Confertreat may be viewed here: <http://roea.org/eventsgallery.html>.

A.R.F.O.R.A. UNDERGRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP



Ana M. Oancea is the honored recipient of the A.R.F.O.R.A. Undergraduate Scholarship. Ana graduated Summa cum Laude (3.8 GPA) from Lumen Christi High School, Jackson, MI. She was an active member of many clubs and extracurricular activities such as: Traveling Science Club, Spanish Club, Varsity Tennis, volunteer counselor at Muscular Dystrophy camps and ROEA Vatra camps as a camper and as a counselor. Ana has completed her first year at Jackson Community College where she maintained a 3.7 GPA. At JCC she ran for the Cross Country team and received an All Academic NJCAA award. Ana also received a Recognition in Learning Award for writing and was inducted into the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Ana is a gifted artist and is currently an Iconography intern with Mother Olimpia at Holy Dormition Orthodox Monastery where she is assisting in the iconographic embellishment of the new church. Ana has been a life-long member of St. George Romanian Orthodox Cathedral, Southfield MI, where she continues to be a faithful communicant and liturgical participant. A.R.F.O.R.A. is honored to award Ana Oancea the Undergraduate Scholarship Award for her outstanding achievements.



CONVOCAATION

In conformity with Article III, Section 7, of the By-Laws of
The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, we hereby call into session

THE 81ST ANNUAL EPISCOPATE CONGRESS

Friday, September 6 through Saturday, September 7, 2013

at

Vatra Românească – Grass Lake, Michigan
Special Guest: His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon

The Congress will be in session starting

Friday, September 6, 2013 at 9:00 am Eastern Daylight Savings Time

*The Agenda, as will be presented in the **Annual Report to the Episcopate Congress 2013** will include:*

Reading/Approval of the 80th Annual Episcopate Congress Minutes; Official Reports to the Congress;
Reports from the Episcopate Auxiliaries; New Business as submitted by the Episcopate Council

As per Article III, Section 1, The Episcopate Congress shall be composed of:

- The Bishop
- The Auxiliary Bishop(s)
- The Vicar
- The Parish Priest and Assistant Priest(s)
- Two Lay Delegates elected by each Parish Assembly for Congress 2013-2014
- Two delegates from each Auxiliary organization of the Episcopate
- Priests under the jurisdiction of the Episcopate not having parishes, deacons, abbots, abbesses, if accredited by the Episcopate Council
- Members of the Episcopate Council in office, including Auxiliary Presidents ex-officio

Should the duly-elected lay delegates be unable to attend, their alternates will represent the parish. No addition, substitution or ad hoc delegation will be recognized by the credentials committee.

+ NATHANIEL

Archbishop of Detroit and The Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America

THE 81ST CONGRESS OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX EPISCOPATE OF AMERICA

HOTELS

Mention "ROEA Congress" for listed rate. Reserve early—other local events creating limited hotel availability. All hotels in Michigan are now non-smoking.

HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS— CHELSEA

1540 Commerce Park Dr, Chelsea MI 48118
(734) 433-1600

Rate: **\$139.99 + tax** (1 King / 2 Queen)

Deadline: **August 21**

Features: Indoor pool, breakfast, fitness room

HOLIDAY INN—JACKSON

2696 Bob McClain Dr, Jackson MI 49202
(517) 789-9600

Rate: **\$115.00 + tax** (1 King / 2 Queen)

Deadline: **August 4**

Features: Fitness center, indoor pool, free Wi-Fi

HAMPTON INN—JACKSON

2225 Shirley Dr, Jackson MI 49202
(517) 789-5151

Rate: **\$119.00 + tax** (1 King / 2 Queen)

Deadline: **August 4**

Features: Free breakfast, free Wi-Fi, indoor pool, fitness center

FAIRFIELD INN—JACKSON

2395 Shirley Dr, Jackson MI 49202
(517) 784-7877

Rate: **\$113.00 + tax** (1 King / 2 Queen)

Deadline: **August 4**

Features: Free breakfast, free Wi-Fi, indoor pool & spa, fitness center

COMFORT INN—JACKSON

2435 Shirley Dr, Jackson MI 49202
(517) 768-0088

Rate: **\$90.00 + tax** (2 Queen)

\$95.00 + tax (2 Queen Suite)

Deadline: **August 4**

Features: Free breakfast, pool, Jacuzzi, fitness center, free newspaper

Vatra Românească / September 5-7, 2013

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Thursday, September 5

- 8:30 am Breakfast
- 9:00 am Akathist
- 10:00 am Clergy Conference
- 1:00 pm Lunch
- 2:00 pm Clergy Conference Reconvenes
- 5:00 pm Vespers & Sermons
- 6:00 pm Supper
- 7:00 pm Episcopate Council Meeting

Friday, September 6

- 8:00 am Registration
- 9:00 am Invocation to the Holy Spirit
81st Episcopate Congress Convenes
- 1:00 pm Lunch
- 2:00 pm Congress Reconvenes — Session II
- 5:00 pm Vespers & Sermons
- 6:30 pm Supper & Program

Saturday, September 7

- 8:00 am Matins
- 9:00 am Procession of the Hierarchs & Clergy
Hierarchal Divine Liturgy
- 12:00 noon Congress Banquet & Closing Program

Hosted by: St. Elias Mission, Anjou, Quebec

HOTEL

Remember, you must mention you are with "ROEA Congress" when making your reservation in order to receive the special discounted price.

We **strongly** urge you to reserve your rooms before the deadline indicated for each hotel. Availability & rate not guaranteed after deadline.

CAR RENTAL

For more information, or to make your reservations today, call **AVIS Rent-A-Car** at 1(800)331.1600, or visit their website at www.avis.com.

You must give them the ROEA Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) Code # **J867318** to receive the discounted rates.

(Please note: We are unable to host lodging or camping on the Vatra grounds.)

BIOGRAPHY OF THE MOST BLESSED TIKHON

Archbishop of Washington, Metropolitan of All America and Canada



His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada was born Marc R. Mollard in Boston, MA on July 15, 1966, the eldest of three children born to Francois and Elizabeth Mollard.

After brief periods living in Connecticut, France, and Missouri, he and his family settled in Reading, PA, where he graduated from Wyomissing High School in 1984. In 1988 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in

French and Sociology from Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA, after which he moved to Chicago.

In 1989 he was received into the Orthodox Church from Episcopalianism and, in the fall of the same year, he began studies at Saint Tikhon's Seminary, South Canaan, PA. One year later he entered the monastic community at Saint Tikhon's Monastery as a novice. He was awarded the Master of Divinity degree from Saint Tikhon's Seminary in 1993, after which he was appointed Instructor in Old Testament and subsequently Senior Lecturer in Old Testament, teaching Master level courses in the Prophets and the Psalms and Wisdom Literature. He also served as an Instructor in the seminary's Extension Studies program, offering courses in the lives of the Old Testament saints, the liturgical use of the Old Testament, and the Old Testament in patristic literature.

He collaborated with Igumen Alexander [Golitzin]—now Bishop of Toledo and the Bulgarian Diocese of the Orthodox Church in America—in the publication of “The Living Witness of the Holy Mountain” by Saint Tikhon's Seminary Press.

In 1995, he was tonsured to the Lesser Schema with the name Tikhon, in honor of Saint Patriarch Tikhon, Enlightener of North America. Later that year, he was ordained to the Holy Diaconate and Holy Priesthood at Saint Tikhon's Monastery. In 1998 he was elevated to the rank of Igumen, and in 2000, to the rank of Archimandrite.

In December 2002, he was named Deputy Abbot of Saint Tikhon's Monastery. Two years later—on February 14, 2004—he was consecrated to the episcopacy at Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk Monastery Church. On May 9, 2012, he was elevated to the dignity of Archbishop.

On November 13, 2012, Archbishop Tikhon was elected Primate of the Orthodox Church in America at the 17th All-American Council.

Metropolitan Tikhon will be the special guest of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America at its annual Church Congress on September 6-7, 2013, in Grass Lake, MI, in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Inauguration of Vatra Romaneasca.

EASTERN CANADA DEANERY MEETING

In conjunction with the consecration of the church building for Sts. Peter and Paul Mission in Quebec City, QC, the Dean of the Eastern Canada Deanery, Very Reverend Ionel Cudrutescu called a meeting for May 17 at the Annunciation (Buna Vestire) Parish, Montreal. His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel and His Grace, Bishop Irineu were also present. There are twenty-eight active priests and two deacons in this Deanery. There are six parishes and sixteen missions. This is the largest Deanery of the ROEA.

Dean Cudrutescu read his eight page report which covered a three-year period since the last meeting with the hierarchy. He spoke about: the clergy; the structure of the Episcopate; Liturgical practices; Romanian language books available at the Chancery; church schools; financial stability of the communities; parish administration; church discipline. Father Dean emphasized that if the clergy and faithful follow the ROEA By-Laws, the communities would progress in peace and stability. Father Cudrutescu reported on the finances of the Deanery and reminded the clergy of the annual contribution (parishes- \$200 / missions - \$100) to support the work of the Deanery.

Presentors at the meeting were: Rev. Fr. Florian Ene, Holy Apostle Luke Mission, Markham, Ontario, “Practices concerned with the Holy Sacraments, especially Baptism and Marriage”; Rev. Fr. Stefan Morariu, Holy Forty Martyrs of Sebaste Mission, Aurora, Ontario, “Superstitions and Unacceptable Practices in the Services of the Orthodox Christian Church”; Very Rev. Fr. Ioan Iancu, Saint Mary Mission, Laval, Quebec, “Priestly Service According to the Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition.” The texts of two of the presentations are available at roea.org under “Parish/Clergy Resources”.

The meeting took place in the sanctuary and after the meeting, the participants were guests of the Buna Vestire Parish, Montreal for lunch in the church parlours. Nineteen clergy plus the two hierarchs were in attendance. Those who were prepared left for the vesper service in the Saints Peter and Paul Mission in Quebec City.

IOCC RECENT HUMANITARIAN AID INITIATIVES

Provides \$1 Million for Books to Chicago Area Schoolchildren

On the same day that the Chicago Public Schools announced the closure of 54 schools, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) responded with a donation of \$1 million in new books to benefit schoolchildren participating in after-school enrichment opportunities, mentoring and summer learning programs in the Chicago area. Bishop Demetrios of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of Chicago, also the past president of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago, facilitated the gift on behalf of Orthodox Christians in Chicago. More than 25,000 books will be distributed to educational programs and outreach efforts by members of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago (CRLMC), an alliance of chief religious leaders of the Greater Chicago faith communities, and coordinated by the Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center. The new books, which will also benefit Orthodox Christian day schools in the Chicago area, were blessed at two separate ceremonies on March 22 by Archbishop Nicolae of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America and Canada, Bishop Longin of the Serbian Orthodox Diocese of New Gracanica and Midwestern America, and Bishop Peter of Cleveland of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Reverend Paul Rutgers and Reverend Dr. Stanley L. Davis, Jr., Co-Executive Directors of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago, joined the Orthodox hierarchs in dedicating the new books. The books are part of a broader effort by IOCC to provide assistance in the United States where, over the past three years, the organization has distributed \$30 million in educational support and emergency assistance to more than 20 states. IOCC plans to make the book distributions in Chicago an annual event in response to the continuing educational needs of the community's children.

Receives \$1.5 Million Gift to Advance Clean Water Access in Africa

International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) announced the establishment of the Katherine Valone "St. Photini" Water Program to advance projects that provide safe, healthy and reliable water resources to communities in need in Africa. The \$1.5 million gift, the largest single private donation in the history of IOCC, was a bequest from the late Katherine Valone, a retired Chicago schoolteacher with a lifelong desire to provide clean water to the people of Africa. His Eminence, Metropolitan Nikitas and Victoria Anderson, great niece of IOCC benefactor, Katherine Valone, presented the gift to IOCC Board Trustees, Michael

Tsakalos and Presvytera Maria Mossaides, and IOCC Executive Director, Constantine M. Triantafilou, at a luncheon honoring Ms. Valone's legacy. "My Aunt Kay was a self-made woman who came from nothing, and built a full life around her passions for education, travel, and improving the lives of the people of Africa," said Ms. Anderson. "I am so pleased that through IOCC, we found a way to realize her vision and honor her legacy." The water program, according to Metropolitan Nikitas, is named after St. Photini, the Samaritan woman who encountered Jesus Christ at a well and received the "living water" of baptism by Christ. "As St. Photini went to the well to quench her physical thirst and left with living water that quenched her spiritual thirst, the precious gifts of Katherine Valone entrusted to IOCC will spiritually and physically provide safe water to the people of Africa," said His Eminence. In the African country of Cameroon, less than 40 percent of its 20 million people have access to clean water in rural areas. The tiring task of collecting water for the family often falls on the women and children, who must often walk miles to collect and carry back water. The water source's questionable safety also exposes them to life-threatening diseases such as cholera, diarrhea and dysentery. Children are especially vulnerable, with waterborne disease the leading cause of childhood deaths in Cameroon. One of the first proposed IOCC projects under the Katherine Valone "St. Photini" Water Program will be to provide safe water access to schoolchildren at 15 rural primary schools in Cameroon, create jobs through construction projects such as drilling wells and installing community water pumps, and establish sustainable water access that will be easy to maintain by the local people. "We are honored by this heartfelt gift of a remarkable woman who shared a passion for the mission of IOCC," said Constantine Triantafilou. "Through Ms. Valone's faithful generosity, thousands of people will have vital, life-giving water resources in Africa." IOCC has had a humanitarian presence on the continent of Africa since 1993, supporting education, agriculture and healthcare initiatives in 12 countries.

A Haven for Romania's Poorest Children

It's a big day for the youngsters at Joy Aid Foundation daycare center in Urlati, Romania. They are filled with questions for His Eminence Archbishop Nicolae of the Romanian Orthodox Archdiocese in the Americas, the Episcopal Liaison between IOCC and the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America, who visited the center during his recent trip to Romania. Joy Aid Foundation

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**EPISCOPATE AUXILIARIES CONFERENCE
C O N V O C A T I O N S**
IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FAMILY LIFE CONFERENCE
PARTICIPANTS MUST REGISTER AT http://www.roea.org/news_130401_1.html

A.R.F.O.R.A.

*In conformity with Article II, Section 2 of the By-Laws,
we hereby convoke the*

**65TH ANNUAL A.R.F.O.R.A. CONGRESS
JULY 4-7, 2013**

**Vatra Romaneasca
2522 Grey Tower Road, Grass Lake, Michigan**

+NATHANIEL, Archbishop
Lucy Pop, President Deborah Moga, Secretary

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, JULY 4

8:00 am Participation in the 1st Annual Family
Life Conference
1:00 pm Executive Board Meeting
4:00 pm Conference Opening Prayer Service
Family Picnic / Cookout

FRIDAY, JULY 5

8:00 am Morning Prayers
8:30 am Flag raising
9:00 am Congress Session #1
10:15 am Break
10:45 am Congress Session #2
12:00 pm Luncheon with Speaker
2:00 pm Church service
2:30 pm Oratorical Festival
3:45 pm Afternoon break
4:15 pm Congress Session #3
5:30 pm Break / Free time
7:00 pm Dinner
8:00 pm Bible Challenge followed by Cultural /
Talent Show / Bonfire

SATURDAY, JULY 6

8:00 am Morning Prayers
8:30 am Flag raising
9:00 am Workshops / Presentations
10:15 am Morning break
10:45 am Congress Session #4
12:00 pm Memorial Service
12:30 pm Lunch with speaker / Free time
2:30 pm Orthodox Detroit Outreach Service Project
4:00 pm Vespers
4:45 pm Break / Free time
7:00 pm Cotillion Dance at Our Lady of Fatima
Catholic Church Hall

SUNDAY, JULY 7

9:00 am Music Rehearsal / Confession
10:00 am Hierarchal Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm Banquet & Award Presentations

**AMERICAN ROMANIAN
ORTHODOX YOUTH**

*In accordance with Article III, Section 2, of the A.R.O.Y.
Constitution & By-Laws, notice is hereby given that
the Annual Conference of **The American Romanian
Orthodox Youth** will be held at Vatra Romaneasca,
2522 Grey Tower Road, Jackson MI 49201 on the
weekend of July 4-7, 2013.*

**62ND ANNUAL A.R.O.Y. CONFERENCE
JULY 4-7, 2013**

**Vatra Romaneasca
2522 Grey Tower Road, Grass Lake, Michigan**

+NATHANIEL, Archbishop
Jessica Precop, Ellen Schmidt,
Secretary Treasurer

The Conference is open to all youth of the Episcopate.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY, JULY 4

9:00 am National Board Meeting
12:00 pm Lunch
1:00 pm Field Day (Pick up games)
4:00 pm Conference Opening Prayer Service
Family Picnic / Cookout

FRIDAY, JULY 5

8:00 am Morning Prayers
8:30 am Flag raising
9:00 am Workshop 1: History of AROY
10:15 am Morning break
10:45 am Workshop 2: Community Building
12:00 pm Lunch followed by free time
2:00 pm Church service
2:30 pm Oratorical Festival
3:45 pm Afternoon break
4:15 pm Workshop: Mother Alexandra &
Beginnings of Monasticism in America
5:30 pm Break / Free time
7:00 pm Dinner

8:00 pm Bible Challenge followed by Cultural /
Talent Show / Bonfire

SATURDAY, JULY 6

8:00 am Morning Prayers
8:30 am Flag raising
9:00 am Presentation: CEOYLA / AROY and
Orthodox Unity in America
10:15 am Morning break
10:45 am Meeting
12:00 pm Memorial Service
12:30 pm Lunch with speaker / Free time
2:30 pm Vatra Service Project
4:00 pm Vespers
4:45 pm Break / Free time
7:00 pm Cotillion Dance at Our Lady of Fatima
Catholic Church Hall

SUNDAY, JULY 7

9:00 am Music Rehearsal / Confession
10:00 am Hierarchal Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm Banquet & Award Presentations

ORTHODOX BROTHERHOOD U.S.A.

*In accordance with Article III, Sections 1 & 2 of the
By-Laws of the Orthodox Brotherhood USA, we hereby
convoke the*

**44TH ANNUAL BROTHERHOOD CONFERENCE
JULY 4-7, 2013
Vatra Romaneasca
2522 Grey Tower Road, Grass Lake, Michigan**

+NATHANIEL, Archbishop

James Michael Carabina, Pauline Trutza,
President Secretary

*Every Brotherhood member in good standing is enti-
tled to attend, participate in the Conference's work,
and vote on all motions and in election of officers
and delegates to the Congress. Any member in good
standing may send the secretary names for the nom-
inating committee to consider for next year's Board
and delegates.*

THURSDAY, JULY 4

8:00 am Participation in the 1st Annual Family
Life Conference
4:00 pm Conference Opening Prayer Service
Family Picnic / Cookout

FRIDAY, JULY 5

8 am Participation in the 1st Annual Family
Life Conference
7:00 pm Dinner
8:00 pm Bible Challenge followed by Cultural /
Talent Show / Bonfire

SATURDAY, JULY 6

8:00 am Participation in the 1st Annual Family
Life Conference
2:30 pm Business Meeting
4:00 pm Vespers
4:45 pm Break / Free time
7:00 pm Cotillion Dance at Our Lady of Fatima
Catholic Church Hall

SUNDAY, JULY 7

9:00 am Music Rehearsal / Confession
10:00 am Hierarchal Divine Liturgy
12:30 pm Banquet & Award Presentations

**There will be activities and workshops
throughout the Conference for THE ENTIRE
FAMILY including the following:**

- Keeping our Kids in the Faith - Jen Nahas, National Executive Director, Orthodox Christian Fellowship (OCF)
- Monasticism and the Parish - Mother Gabriella, Abbess, Holy Dormition Monastery (talk to be given in Romanian)
- Mother Alexandra and the Beginnings of Monasticism in America - John J. Regule, Attorney and Mother Chrisophora, Abbess, Holy Transfiguration Monastery
- CEOYLA/AROY and Orthodox Unity in America - Ron Muresan, Past President, AROY and CEOYLA
- Making God Real in the Orthodox Christian Home
- Balancing the Stresses of Parish/Family Life - Fr. Ian and Psa. Mary Lynn Pac-Urar
- Parish Outreach in the Tradition of St. Basil: The Experience of Orthodox Detroit Outreach - Matthew McCroskery, Orthodox Detroit Outreach
- Christian Leadership - Jen Nahas, National Executive Director, Orthodox Christian Fellowship
- Service Project - Helping Orthodox Detroit Outreach

***Child care available
and youth activities planned.***

HOTELS:

Discount Code for all motels is "ROEA"

Baymont Inn

2035 Bondstell Dr., Jackson, MI 49202
517-789-6000

Hampton Inn

2225 Shirley Dr., Jackson, MI 49202
517-789-5152

Fairfield Inn

2395 Shirley Dr., Jackson, MI 49202
517-784-7877

HELPING TO KEEP THE CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH

by **Psa. Nicole Mitescu**

I remember when I was newly married and had just started attending an Orthodox church. People would complain about how their children were refusing to come to church any more, and how when they left the family home, they often left the church entirely. So this is far from a new problem, and there must be hundreds if not thousands of articles written not only by Orthodox authors, but also by writers in many other religious groups, who are facing the same problem: children are not following their parents' footsteps in faith.

This is clearly a critical issue. No young people means no future for our churches. So I started doing a little thinking about it, and I hope this article will start you thinking about it, too; and perhaps it will start a discussion in your family or in your parish.

There are lots of reasons why children choose to leave the church as they grow up. Some of them are related to the church practices – perhaps the services are in a language the children don't understand; perhaps even if they understand the language they still feel bored or unconnected during the services; perhaps they never learn why coming to church and participating in the Sacraments are essential for our spiritual life; perhaps the priest and other adults don't listen to their questions, much less answer them.

All of these are serious problems that we need to face and address honestly. Are we doing all we can to make the children's time at church (not only in the services but also in Church School, in other church groups, in their interactions with other parishioners) a positive reason for them to want to stay and keep coming back?

However, I was thinking about other more fundamental reasons that the children might choose to leave the church as they grow older, and this involves the family. From a very early age, children pick up on the parents' attitude about going to church. Is it a really meaningful and important commitment for the parents, or is it something they do from time to time as it fits into their busy schedule? Is it important to arrive on time for the services, or is it okay to come in toward the end of the services, whenever it's con-

venient for them? Are the services and Sacraments the fundamental reason to come to church or does it simply provide more of a social time with friends and acquaintances the family doesn't see during the rest of the week? Does the family pray, or read the Scriptures and Lives of Saints at home? All of these give a basis for the impressions the child might have about church.

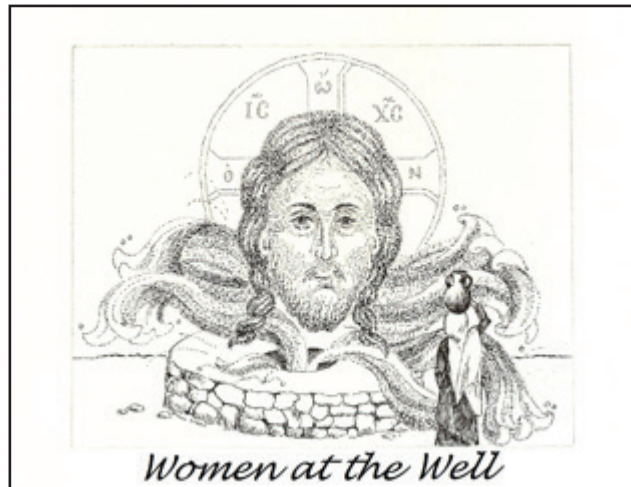
But (in my opinion at any rate), perhaps the most important element for the child is how the family "feels" about going to church. Is it an "obligation" with the children pushed and scolded to get ready for church, behave themselves in church, and not bother the adults otherwise? If this is the "feeling" the parents communicate to the children about church, surely the children will remember it in a rather sad way.

The families I've seen over the last thirty years whose children have remained in our churches and have become the next generation

in our parishes, seem to share some common traits. For one thing, their faith is an important part of their lives, not only on Sunday but also during the rest of the week. They pray together, they try hard to apply the lessons from the sermons and from their spiritual readings to their lives, and they share their faith with their children. And even more than that, they enjoy their faith and are happy and eager to come to church – for them it is a positive experience, and they look forward to it. They encourage their children and help them to find ways to learn and participate in the services.

We need to be honest about what we are asking of our children. There are enormous societal pressures on families these days not to attend church – organized sports activities, invitations from non-church-going friends, just the opportunity to stay home and relax after a busy week. And let's not sugar-coat a basic issue: many young adults just hit a time when they need to break away from the parents and "leaving the church" is a pretty easy way for them to make a statement. And as they get older, the possibility of a "mixed marriage" with the other spouse being non-Or-

Cont. on page 16



HIERARCHAL SCHEDULE

HIS EMINENCE, ARCHBISHOP NATHANIEL

April 1 – June 9, 2013

April 7. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.

April 10-12. Franklin, TN. St. Ignatius Orthodox Church (Antiochian Archdiocese). Orthodox Christian Laity Board of Directors Meeting. Wednesday: Assisted at Presanctified Liturgy. **Thursday – Friday:** OCL Board Meeting.

April 13-14. Old Hickory, TN. St. John Chrysostom Mission. Saturday: Visit. Sunday: Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Fellowship Luncheon.

April 21. Southfield, MI. St. George Cathedral. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. **Evening:** Deanery Vespers.

April 27. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Lazarus Saturday.

April 28. Warren, MI. Descent of the Holy Spirit. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Entrance of the Lord into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday). Banquet.

April 29-30. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Bridegroom Matins.

May 2. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Commemoration of the Last Supper (Holy Thursday). **Evening:** Matins of Holy Friday with 12 Passion Gospels.

May 3. Southfield, MI. St. George Cathedral. Matins of Holy Saturday, Lamentations and Entombing of Christ.

May 4. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Holy Saturday. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy combined with Hours, Typika and Vespers.

May 5. Southfield, MI. St. George Cathedral. Midnight Service. Resurrection Service with Matins. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Pascha.

May 5. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. **Afternoon:** Agape Vespers.

May 6. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Bright Monday.

May 7. Clinton, MI. Ascension Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Bright Tuesday, concelebrated with Bishop Irineu.

May 10. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Feast of Life-giving Fount of the Mother of God (monastery's 2nd patronal feast).

May 11. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for Bright Saturday.

May 12. Clinton, MI. Ascension Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy for St. Thomas Sunday.

May 16-20. Trip to Montreal & Quebec City, QC. Friday morning: Montreal, QC. Annunciation (Buna Vestire). Eastern Canada Deanery Meeting. **Friday evening: Quebec City, QC. Sts. Peter & Paul Mission.** Vespers for Consecration of the church. **Saturday: Quebec City, QC. Sts. Peter & Paul**
SOLIA MAY/JUNE 2013

PRAY AND WORK FOR ORTHODOX UNITY IN NORTH AMERICA

Mission. Consecration of church and Hierarchal Divine Liturgy concelebrated with Bishop Ireneu (OCA Archdiocese of Canada) and Bishop Irineu. Banquet. **Sunday: Montreal, QC. Annunciation (Buna Vestire).** Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.

May 21-22. Syosset, NY. OCA Chancery. Meeting of the Lesser Synod.

May 26. Naperville, IL. St. Athanasius Mission. Liturgy.

May 30. Detroit, MI. Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue.

May 31-June 3. Elkins Park, PA. Descent of Holy Spirit. Saturday: Pastoral visits. **Evening:** Great Vespers and Blessing of Troitza. Banquet. **Sunday:** Blessing of Reader and Subdeacon. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy. Banquet for 100th Anniversary.

June 9. Rives Junction, MI. Dormition Monastery. Hierarchal Divine Liturgy.

PARISH MINISTRIES CONFERENCE JULY 10-13

[SYOSETT, NY - OCA] The 2013 Parish Ministries Conference of the Orthodox Church in America, to be held at Marymount University, Arlington, VA July 10-13, 2013, will feature 30 workshops. A detailed schedule and on-line registration forms may be found at oca.org or on the Episcopate's website at: http://www.roea.org/news_130611_1.html.

The conference theme—"Faith in Action: Equipping the Saints for Worship, Learning and Service"—will be developed by speakers and personnel from the OCA's departments of Christian Education, Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid, Liturgical Music and Translations, and Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry. Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko will deliver the keynote address.

Workshop topics range from music composition and beginning and advanced choral conducting to parish-based outreach ministry, hospital and prison chaplaincy, ministry via social media, and parish educator training. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon will offer a workshop entitled "Teaching Scripture in the Parish." Participating clergy will receive Continuing Clergy Development credits [CCD].

The Pool of Bethesda

Cont. from page 3

too must do our part. It is not enough to be healed by Jesus; we must strive to follow Him. Continuing the work of Christ requires great effort and dedication. Such work begins with a firm resolve to change our life, and this, first of all, is to "go and sin no more."

Christians Caught ...

Cont. from page 4

freedom, dignity and respect for others. Otherwise what will happen to us?"

Pope Francis on Sunday urged the faithful to pray for Syria and appealed to the "humanity" of the kidnappers to release their hostages. Both sides of the Syrian civil war have accused each other of kidnapping the bishops.

The Shiite-Sunni division dates back to the death of the Prophet Muhammad in the seventh Century. "While the two groups are similar in many ways, they differ over conceptions of religious authority and interpretation as well as the role of the Prophet Muhammad's descendants, among other issues," states the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

In a global survey of Muslims, Pew found that large majorities of Muslims in South Asia and the Middle East-North Africa region identify as either Shia or Sunni, while others in the world identify as simply Muslim.

That explains why the sectarian fighting in Syria between the Sunni and Shiite factions of Islam is spilling over into other countries in the region, as *The New York Times* detailed over the weekend.

"The Syrian civil war is setting off a contagious sectarian conflict beyond the country's borders, reigniting long-simmering tensions between Sunnis and Shiites, and, experts fear, shaking the foundations of countries cobbled together after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire."

The *Times* reported, for example, that as Shiites pour into Syria to join the fight out of a sense of religious duty, attacks on Sunni mosques have resumed in Iraq.

While rooted in religious differences, the dispute also has political implications.

"A pure war over religious doctrine is rare in history, and that may hold true in this case," stated an editorial in the *Monitor*. "Much of the struggle in Syria is a geopolitical contest between Iran and Saudi Arabia for influence in the region."

The editorial calls on Muslims to recognize what they have in common instead of their differences, and for outside nations to support negotiations to end the strife.

"As more outside forces intervene in Syria, the more the war becomes a 'clash within a civilization,' or intra-Muslim struggle. But as more countries recognize this dangerous course, the more they must back talks to end it. Holy wars are never holy."

Time magazine analyzed the political maneuvering by powers Russia and the United States in attempts to bring both sides of the conflict to the negotiating table. Rebel leaders said they would not participate, following reports that Russia was to deliver weapons to the Syrian government.

Published by Deseret News, June 4, 2013. Contact mbrown@deseretnews.com.

IOCC ... *Cont. from page 9*

daycare center in Urlati, Romania, serves as a haven for 25 school children from underprivileged families in the community. The local priest, Father Manuel Radu, founded the center using the fundraising skills he learned through an IOCC training. Through support from local donations as well as produce sales from Father Manuel's 150 fruit trees, he and his volunteer team of high school teens, professors, a social worker and a doctor provide these children with everything from after school tutoring on ten donated computers to clothes, shoes and a hot meal each day. Since 2005, IOCC has worked in partnership with the Romanian Orthodox Church and trained more than 2,100 priests, religion teachers and social service providers on how to better respond to the social needs of vulnerable Romanian families and strengthen Romanian communities.

Frontliners Respond to Tornado Survivors in Central Oklahoma

Fr. Srdjan Veselinovich and Michael Claypool, members of the IOCC Emergency Response Network, or Frontline, were dispatched together with IOCC US Country Representative, Dan Christopulos, to central Oklahoma on May 22 to ascertain how IOCC might most appropriately respond on behalf of Orthodox Christians to the needs of those affected by the recent tornado. The team met with IOCC Board Chairman, Michael S. "Mickey" Homsey, who resides in Oklahoma City, as well as with Orthodox Christian clergy in the greater Oklahoma City area to assess the situation and current needs. The team also met with officials at the University of Oklahoma about helping serve the needs of 300 displaced people who are being sheltered in campus housing, as well as 500 first responders staying on the campus. IOCC is delivering emergency clean-up buckets, personal hygiene kits and blankets that will be distributed through the University of Oklahoma and Holy Ascension Antiochian Orthodox Church in Norman. Members of the IOCC Frontline together with Fr. Justin McFeeters of Ascension Antiochian Orthodox Church are also on campus to provide emotional and spiritual care for the hundreds of adults and children staying there. IOCC will continue to assist in this critical activity while displaced people remain housed at the University.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of North and Central America. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$438 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of more than 130 churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy. To learn more about IOCC, visit www.iocc.org.

WHERE IS GOD?

By Chaplain (CPT) George Oanca

"Come near to God and he will come near to you."

– James 4:8



V Rev Fr George Oanca

This week, it was my duty to be an "On Call Duty Chaplain". When I answered the on call duty chaplain phone, I was told that I have to write a few words for the *Mountaineer* newspaper on post. I was thinking: What should I say that will captivate the attention of the readers?

Well, as a chaplain, I thought it would be good to talk about God, because a philosopher talks about philosophy, a teacher in chemistry talks about chemistry, so a chaplain/priest/pastor or minister should talk about God.

I joined the Army in 2008, at that time in the reserve component. I didn't interact too much with the soldiers because during the one weekend per month drill, you barely have time to do inventory of the equipment. We were deployed in 2010 to Iraq, and I've had a lot of time to spend with my soldiers. After a while, I began to have the feeling that they are my parishioners from back home. I love them all! Besides the many things we've discussed, I've often been asked the question: "WHERE IS GOD?"

At the time, I didn't try to explain too much to those who were asking this question, because I didn't want to interfere with their beliefs and be accused of proselytism in the Army. After I finished with the deployment, I came home and decided to go active duty. In 2011, I was accepted into the Regular Army and joined the ranks of active duty people. I started to hear the same question, especially when I deployed again in 2012. I came to the conclusion that deployment is a great opportunity to gain faith or to lose your faith; and this is because, being in combat, you face death no matter where you are. For those who have faith, they gain more; for those who do not have faith, they gain little or nothing. But the question is still there: WHERE IS GOD? Where was God when hurricane Katrina came, hurricane Sandy, now the tornado in Oklahoma...and so on? Where is God when someone commits suicide?

We don't allow God in schools anymore. We don't allow God in public. We don't allow God in our families; we don't allow God to be part of our daily life and to be part of our decision-making, but we ask, "Where is God?", when something

bad strikes us or if the plan doesn't go in the direction that we wanted.

After having experienced so many things in my life and having heard so many times the question "WHERE IS GOD?", now I can answer the question. My beloved God is where we put him! If we put God in our schools, God will be there; if we put God in public, God will be there; if we put God in our families and our daily decision-making, God will be there...and surely, many tragedies and disasters will be avoided or not have such catastrophic results. Even when God is not invited into all these places, He inspires his servants to respond with compassion and help for the victims.

When George Washington brought the chaplains into the Army, he did it because he wanted first of all to have a moral Army. You cannot have a strong Army if you don't have a moral family, because a moral family makes a moral and strong Army. The chaplains preach about righteousness to keep us away from wickedness.

It is a great honor for me to express my views, and I hope they will create a positive resonance in the hearts of those who read them.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." – Hebrews 11:1

CLERGY CHANGES

ORDINATIONS

DONKA, Rev. Deacon Mihaita Vladut, was ordained into the Holy Priesthood by His Eminence, Archbishop NATHANIEL on March 17, 2013, at St. George Cathedral, Southfield, MI, and attached to Sts. Michael & Gabriel Church, Sacramento, CA.

SOARE, Rev. Deacon Florin I., was ordained into the Holy Priesthood by His Eminence, Archbishop NATHANIEL on February 17, 2013, at Exaltation of the Holy Cross Mission, Phoenix, AZ and attached there.

RELEASES / ASSIGNMENTS

ACSENTE, Rev. Fr. Gheorghe, was released from his duties as Parish Priest of Three Hierarchs Church and assigned Parish Priest of Sts. Constantine & Helen Church, Lilburn, GA effective April 29, 2013.

PETRESCU, V. Rev. Fr. Aurel, was released from his duties as Parish Priest of St. John of Suceava Mission, Manchester, NH effective May 19, 2013 and is awaiting assignment.



FINANCIAL REPORT

EPISCOPATE SUPPORTERS

Aurel & Marita Tofan , Fraser, MI.....	\$200.00
M/M Constantin Ardeleanu , Valparaiso, IN.....	\$100.00
M/M Alexa Mindea , Morton Grove, IL.....	\$100.00
Lucretia Stoica , Lakewood, OH.....	\$100.00
M/M Gregory Thetford , Ellwood City, PA.....	\$100.00
Gheorghe & Val Dumitrescu , Tallahassee, FL.....	\$80.00
George Galat , Burlington, ON	\$65.00
Paul & Silvia Costea , Dearborn Hts, MI	\$50.00
George & Ana Mohan , Brunswick, OH.....	\$50.00
Eugenia Poroch , St Clair Shores, MI	\$50.00

GENERAL DONATIONS

National ARFORA (Front Parlor Project).....	\$5,015.81
National ARFORA (Vatra Housekeeping).....	\$1,200.00
National ARFORA (Hierarch Travel Expenses).....	\$1,200.00
Holy Resurrection , Hayward, CA (Hierarch Travel Expenses).....	\$1,000.00
Joseph & Madelena Ilcus , Jupiter, FL (Pascha Donation)	100.00
Florence Westerfield , Warren, MI	\$30.00
Helen & Nick Burz , Royal Oak, MI	\$50.00
Julian & Rodica Iordache , Commerce, MI	\$25.00
Mariana Tipa , White Lake, MI	\$25.00
Pearl Jonascu , Westland, MI.....	\$20.00
Costel & Silvia Roman , Westland, MI (IMO John & Ana Roman).....	\$20.00
Dan & Florica Giurgiu , Commerce Twp, MI	\$5.00

MEMORIAM

Doina & Alexis Vircol , Wilmette, IL (IMO Vasile & Zamfira Posteuca).....	\$200.00
Roxana Florescu , Farmington Hills, MI (IMO Liviu Florescu).....	\$100.00
Doru Posteuca , St Paul, MN (IMO Parents: Vasile & Zamfira Posteuca)	\$100.00
Precop Family , St Clair Shores, MI (IMO Sam & Dolly Gallu)	\$100.00
Eugenia Baran , Lincoln Park, MI	\$50.00
Daniel & Maria Plantus , Clarkston, MI	\$50.00
(IMO Constantin Nicula, Parents, Brothers & Nephews)	
Veturia Nicula , Livonia, MI (IMO Constantin Nicula)	\$30.00
M/M James Coleman (IMO Constantin Nicula) ...	\$20.00
Gabriela & Antonia Nicula , Livonia, MI (IMO Constantin Nicula)	\$20.00

EPISCOPATE ASSESSMENT

Annunciation , Montreal, QC	\$6,300.00
Holy Protection Mission , Pierrefonds, QC.....	\$1,440.00
St John of Suceava Mission , Manchester, NH (2012).....	\$1,200.00
St John , Shell Valley, MB.....	\$1,040.00
Holy Ascension Mission , Montreal, QC	\$920.00
St Polycarp Mission , Naples, FL	\$690.00

DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS

National ARFORA (St Paraschiva Mission Appeal)	\$3,215.00
St Athanasius Mission , Naperville, IL	\$861.00

George & Audrey Fatsy , Trumbull, CT	\$75.00
Alexa Ungurian , Oakbank, MB	\$50.00

CAMP VATRA

National ARFORA	\$1,200.00
Kathy & Steve Miroy , Stafford, VA.....	\$200.00
John Toana , Indianapolis, IN	\$50.00

SEMINARIAN FUND

National ARFORA	\$1,500.00
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Helping to Keep ... *Cont. from page 12*

thodox is quite high, leading to a pull in other directions.

There are also sad situations in church where members find themselves in bitter disputes with other parishioners. Even if they don't know the causes, the children pick up on the tension and unhappiness in what should be a loving environment; and if there is a disconnect between what the adults say and how they actually behave, the children are quick to label the adults as "hypocrites" and the faith therefore false.

So we need to recognize that what we are asking of our children is not easy, and if we can't provide them with adequate support and try our best to "live what we preach," we are letting them down in a big way.

On the other hand, there are families who come faithfully in spite of problems in their church and find a way to overcome any negativity, and indeed bring light and love to the rest of the parish. And there are children whose parents are not really connected to their church by their faith, but who find a mentor or friend in an adult, perhaps the priest or a Church School teacher or a grandparent, and find a deep faith of their own in that way. God works in mysterious ways indeed.

So what are some ways we can help our children grow in our faith and remain in our churches? We can give them the best instruction possible; we can bring them to all the services; we can teach them to cook, sing and dance according to our own traditions. And all that will (or at least might) help. But just like raising children in general, there is no simple "one way". And I am no expert – in our own family, of our three grown children, only one attends an Orthodox church regularly at this point.

But my thought is that the bottom line for children has to be in the positive experience they find at church, and perhaps most important of all, how the family as a whole makes their church experience a happy, meaningful and spiritually enriching part of their lives. Then we beg God's forgiveness for our mistakes and failings, and add a lot of prayers for the spiritual safety of our children as they grow up!

Moving?

Send your old and new addresses to:
SOLIA, PO BOX 185, GRASS LAKE, MI 49240 USA
or e-mail to: addresses@roea.org

CONFERINȚA PREOȚILOR DIN PROTOIERIA CANADEI DE EST MONTREAL, 17 MAI 2013



HRISTOS A ÎNVIAT!

În prezența Înalt Prea Sfințitului Arhiepiscop NATHANIEL și a Prea Sfințitului Episcop Vicar IRINEU, și a Prea Cucernicului Părinte Protoiereu Ionel Cudrițescu, a avut loc Conferința Preoțească a Protopopiatului Canadei de Est, cu participarea preoților din provinciile Quebec și Ontario, la data de 17 mai 2013, în Parohia “Buna Vestire” din Montreal.

În deschiderea Conferinței, Părintele Cudrițescu Ionel a prezentat Raportul de activitate al Prea Cucerniciei sale în calitate de Protopop al Protoieriei Canadei de Est, acoperind o perioadă de trei ani care au trecut de la precedenta Conferință. Atât Înălții Ierarhi, cât și preoții prezenți, au adresat mulțumiri și felicitări Părintelui Protoiereu pentru efortul depus în slujba Bisericii și în ajutorul confracțiilor slujitori la Sfântul Altar.

S-a trecut apoi la expunerea unor aspecte liturgice legate de anumite practici necanonice privind săvârșirea Sfintelor Taine și a Ierurgiilor, mai vechi sau mai noi, care au fost menționate în unele din parohiile și misiunile Episcopiei. Au conferențiat Prea Cucernicii Părinți: Florian Ene – Biserica “SFÂNTUL APOSTOL ȘI EVANGHELIST LUCA” din Markham, Ontario (filie a Parohiei “SFÂNTUL APOSTOL ȘI EVANGHELIST IOAN” din Toronto, Ontario); Ștefan Dan Morariu – Biserica “SFINȚII PATRUZECI DE MUCENICI DIN SEVASTIA” din Aurora, Ontario și Ioan Iancu de la Parohia “NAȘTEREA MAICII DOMNULUI” din Laval, Quebec.

În data de 18 mai, am trăit cu toții un moment cu adevărat înălțător la sfințirea Bisericii “SFINȚII APOSTOLI PETRU ȘI PAVEL” din Quebec City, ofi-

ciată de Înalt Prea Sfințitul Arhiepiscop NATHANIEL dimpreună cu Prea Sfințitul Episcop Vicar IRINEU și Prea Sfințitul Episcop IRINEE locțiitorul Arhiepiscopului de Canada al Bisericii Ortodoxe în America (O.C.A.), înconjurați fiind de majoritatea preoților prezenți la Conferința din ziua precedentă și de numeroși credincioși, enoriași și invitați, deopotrivă bucurători să participe la un eveniment de o importanță duhovnicească și spirituală covârșitoare.

Mulțumind Bunului Dumnezeu pentru darurile Sale cele bogate pe care, cu împlinșugare, le-a revărsat asupra noastră, a preoților și a întregului său popor binecredincios, încheiem acest cuvânt adresându-vă tuturor urări de sănătate și spor duhovnicesc!

Preot Florian Ene



CONVOCARE la CONFERINȚA ORGANIZAȚIILOR AUXILIARE ALE EPISCOPIEI

cu ocazia Conferinței "Viața de Familie"
participanții trebuie să se înregistreze pe Internet, la adresa
http://roea.org/news_130401_1.html

A.R.F.O.R.A.

În conformitate cu Articolul II, Secțiunea a
2-a a Regulamentelor, Convocăm al

65-LEA CONGRES ANUAL AL A.R.F.O.R.A.

ÎNȚRE 4-7 IULIE, 2013

la Vatra Românească

2522 Grey Tower Road, Jackson, MI 49201

+ NATHANIEL, Arhiepiscop

Președintă, **Lucy Pop** Secretară, **Deborah Moga**

PROGRAM

Joi, 4 iulie

8:00 am Participare la Prima Conferință "Viața de Familie"
1:00 pm Ședința Comitetului Executiv
4:00 pm Slujba de deschidere a Conferinței
Picnic

Vineri, 5 iulie

8:00 am Rugăciunea de dimineață
8:30 am Înălțarea steagurilor
9:00 am Sesiunea 1-a a Congresului
10:15 am Pauza
10:45 am Sesiunea a 2-a a Congresului
12:00 pm Masa de prânz
2:00 pm Slujbă la biserică
2:30 pm Festival de muzică religioasă
3:45 pm Pauza de după-amiază
4:15 pm Sesiunea a 3-a a Congresului
5:30 pm Pauza/ Timp liber
7:00 pm Cina
8:00 pm Concurs pe teme biblice urmat de
spectacol cultural/ Foc de tabără

Sâmbătă, 6 iulie

8:00 am Rugăciunea de dimineață
8:30 am Înălțarea steagurilor
9:00 am Prezentări
10:15 am Pauza
10:45 am Sesiunea a 4-a a Congresului
12:00 pm Slujba Parastasului
12:30 pm Masa de Prânz
2:30 pm Proiectul Ortodox de slujire în zona
Detroitului
4:00 pm Slujba Vecerniei
4:45 pm Pauza/ Timp liber
7:00 pm Bal în sala socială a Bisericii Catolice
Our Lady of Fatima

Duminică, 7 iulie

9:00 am Repetiție muzicală/ Spovedanii
10:00 am Sfânta Liturghie Arhierească
12:30 pm Banchet și prezentarea premiilor

ORGANIZAȚIA TINERETULUI ORTODOX RÔMÂNÔ-AMERICAN

În conformitate cu Articolul III, Secțiunea a
2-a a Constituției și Regulamentelor A.R.O.Y.,

Convocăm **CONFERINȚA ANUALĂ A**

TINERETULUI ORTODOX

ROMÂNÔ-AMERICAN (A.R.O.Y.)

ÎNȚRE 4-7 IULIE, 2013

la Vatra Românească

2522 Grey Tower Road, Jackson, MI 49201

+ NATHANIEL, Arhiepiscop

Secretară, **Jessica Precop** Casieră, **Ellen Schmidt**

Conferința este deschisă tuturor tinerilor din Episcopie

PROGRAM

Joi, 4 iulie

9:00 am Ședința Comitetului Național
12:00 pm Masa de prânz
1:00 pm Jocuri
4:00 pm Slujba de deschidere a Conferinței
Picnic

Vineri, 5 iulie

8:00 am Rugăciunea de dimineață
8:30 am Înălțarea steagurilor
9:00 am Sesiunea 1-a: Istoria A.R.O.Y.
10:15 am Pauza
10:45 am Sesiunea a 2-a: înființarea și dezvoltarea
comunităților
12:00 pm Masa de prânz
2:00 pm Slujbă la biserică
2:30 pm Festival de muzică religioasă
3:45 pm Pauza de după-amiază
4:15 pm Sesiunea a 3-a: Maica Alexandra și
Începuturile monasticismului în America
5:30 pm Pauza/ Timp liber
7:00 pm Cina
8:00 pm Concurs pe teme biblice urmat de
spectacol cultural/ Foc de tabără

Sâmbătă, 6 iulie

- 8:00 am Rugăciunea de dimineață
8:30 am Înălțarea steagurilor
9:00 am Prezentare: CEOYLA (Consiliul Liderilor Tineretului Ortodox din America) / AROY și Unitatea Ortodoxă în America
10:15 am Pauza
10:45 am Ședință
12:00 pm Slujba Parastasului
12:30 pm Masa de Prânz
2:30 pm Proiect la Vatra
4:00 pm Slujba Vecerniei
4:45 pm Pauza/ Timp liber
7:00 pm Bal în sala socială a Bisericii Catolice Our Lady of Fatima

Duminică, 7 iulie

- 9:00 am Repetiție muzicală/ Spovedanii
10:00 am Sfânta Liturghie Arhierască
12:30 pm Banchet și prezentarea premiilor

FRĂȚIA ORTODOXĂ U.S.A.

În conformitate cu Articolul III, Secțiunile 1 și 2 ale Regulamentelor Frăției Ortodoxe din America,
Convocăm **A 44-A CONFERINȚĂ ANUALĂ A FRĂȚIEI ORTODOXE ÎNTRE 4-7 IULIE, 2013**
la Vatra Românească
2522 Grey Tower Road, Jackson, MI 49201

+ NATHANIEL, Arhiepiscop

Președinte,
Jim Carabină

Secretară,
Paulina Trutza

Fiecare membru în bună rânduială poate participa la lucrările Conferinței, la vot și la alegerea pentru funcțiile de conducere a Frăției și a delegaților la Congres. Orice membru în bună rânduială poate submitte Secretariatului o listă de nume pentru comisia de nominare spre a fi luate în considerare pentru Comitetul de conducere și delegați.

PROGRAM

Joi, 4 iulie

- 8:00 am Participare la Prima Conferință "Viața de Familie"
4:00 pm Slujba de deschidere a Conferinței Picnic

Vineri, 5 iulie

- 8:00 am Rugăciunea de dimineață
8:30 am Înălțarea steagurilor
9:00 am Participare la Prima Conferință "Viața de Familie"
7:00 pm Cina
8:00 pm Concurs pe teme biblice urmat de spectacol cultural/ Foc de tabără

Sâmbătă, 6 iulie

- 8:00 am Rugăciunea de dimineață
8:30 am Înălțarea steagurilor
9:00 am Participare la Prima Conferință "Viața de Familie"
2:30 pm Ședință
4:00 pm Slujba Vecerniei
4:45 pm Pauza/ Timp liber
7:00 pm Bal în sala socială a Bisericii Catolice Our Lady of Fatima

Duminică, 7 iulie

- 9:00 am Repetiție muzicală/ Spovedanii
10:00 am Sfânta Liturghie Arhierască
12:30 pm Banchet și prezentarea premiilor

De-a lungul Conferinței vor fi activități, prezentări și ședințe de lucru pentru ÎNTREAGĂ FAMILIE, incluzând următoarele:

- Cum să păstrăm credința copiilor noștri – Jen Nahas, Directorul Executiv Național al Frăției Ortodoxe Creștine (OCF)
- Monasticismul și Parohia – Maica Stareță Gabriela, Mănăstirea Adormirea Maicii Domnului (în Românește)
- Maica Alexandra și începuturile monahale în America – John J. Regule, Judecător și Maica Stareță Christophora, Mănăstirea Schimbarea la Față
- CEOYLA/AROY și Unitatea Ortodoxă în America – Ron Mureșan, fost Președinte al CEOYLA și AROY
- Cum să Îl aducem real pe Dumnezeu în casele noastre
- Cum să balansăm stresul dintre viața de familie și parohie – Pr. Ian Pac-Urar și Preoteasa Mary-Lynn Pac-Urar
- Activitatea socială și caritabila a parohiei în tradiția Sf. Vasile cel Mare: experiența Proiectului de slujire Ortodoxă din zona Detroitului – Matthew McCroskery, Orthodox Detroit Outreach
- Lideri Creștini – Jen Nahas, Directorul Executiv Național al Frăției Ortodoxe Creștine (OCF)
- Proiect de slujire – Ajutând Proiectul de slujire Ortodoxă din zona Detroitului.

programe pentru copii și activități pentru tineret vor fi oferite

HOTELURI:

Codul pentru prețul special este "ROEA"

Baymont Inn

2035 Bondstell Dr., Jackson, MI 49202
517-789-6000

Hampton Inn

2225 Shirley Dr., Jackson, MI 49202
517-789-5152

Fairfield Inn

2395 Shirley Dr., Jackson, MI 49202
517-784-7877

CERȘETORUL CARE CTITOREȘTE BISERICI

“Nu judecați ceva înainte de vreme, până ce nu va veni Domnul, Care va lumina cele ascunse... și va vădi sfaturile inimilor” (I Corinteni 4, 5).



În vălmășagul pestriț al unei capitale contemporane, cu ușurința ar putea trece nevădat în seamă un chip precum cel al bătrânului Dobri Dobrev, pe care oamenii l-ar încadra grabnic în rândul numeroșilor cerșetori și săraci din Sofia. Nu mulți sunt însă aceia care îl cunosc cu adevărat pe acest bătrân de 96 de ani și știu lucrarea sa. Poate părea greu de crezut că cea mai mare biserică din Balcani, catedrala patriarhală și simbolul orașului, în care se adună să slujească în sobor lună de lună mitropoliții Bulgariei, a primit de curând un uriaș ajutor financiar din partea lui bătrânului Dobri, urmaș al cuvintelor Apostolului „ca gunoiul lumii ne-am făcut, lepădătura tuturor până acum” (I Corinteni 4:13).

Această faptă ar fi rămas ascunsă cunoștinței omenești dacă, anul trecut, Preasfințitul Tihon al Tiveriopolei n-ar fi vestit-o presei: „Nu mi-a venit să cred când am văzut chitanța, și e incredibil, dar cel mai mare donator al Catedralei Patriarhale este Moș Dobri, cerșetorul îmbrăcat în costum popular pe care toată lumea-l știe, cel ce se închină înaintea tuturor. Bătrânul acesta a dăruit Catedralei suma de 35.700 de leva (aproape 20.000 de euro). Acest om atât de sărac și de modest a făcut cea mai mare donație din ultimul deceniu pentru biserica Sfântului Alexandru Nevski!”.

În 1988, dedo-Dobri, cum îi zic bulgarii, a renunțat

la vechea sa viață, începând să cerșească pe străzi și în biserici. Acest bătrân, cu un venit lunar de 80 de euro, călătorește aproape în fiecare zi din satul său, Bailovo, până la Sofia, pentru a aduna bănuț cu bănuț – însă niciodată pentru sine! Mulți dintre locuitorii Sofiei l-au văzut pe Dobri stând, an de an, cu un pahar în mână, pentru a aduna bani — pe care îi dădea apoi unui cunoscut, ca să-i depună într-un cont bancar. A strâns mai întâi bani pentru reconstruirea Mănăstirii Eleșnița, aflată la câțiva kilometri depărtare de capitala Bulgariei. Cu ajutorul lui Dumnezeu, în 2006 biserica mănăstirii a fost renovată și sfințită. În mai 2009 s-a dus la episcopul Catedralei Sfântului Alexandru Nevski, căruia i-a zis doar atât: „Vino cu mine, să-ți dau niște bani pentru biserică!” Ce l-a determinat pe acest bătrân, cu un chip ce pare să iasă din cărțile sfinte, să se îndeletnicească cu așa ceva? Doar Dumnezeu știe! Întrebat de ce a făcut-o, Moș Dobri a răspuns simplu: „Adunăm bani pentru mănăstiri. Refacem bisericile aflate în nevoie. Le reconstruim, le renovăm — nu facem prea mult, dar... atâta putem“.

Numele bătrânului Dobri din Bailovo și suma donată au răsunat ca o mare palmă pe obrazul tuturor politicianilor și oamenilor de afaceri locali, care, deși au vorbit și au promis multe, până la urmă n-au ajutat cu nimic Biserica, făcându-l pe un cunoscut jurnalist bulgar să exclame: „În ce hal a ajuns societatea noastră, dacă cel mai mare donator dintre noi este un bătrân sărac! Și când Biserica ne cere ajutorul pentru a reda măreția Catedralei Patriarhale, să nu ne îndreptățim că nu putem, fiindcă Moș Dobri ne arată zi de zi că se poate — chiar și păstrând tăcerea“.

Bătrânul Dobri, acest tăcut luptător creștin, vine zi de zi să se închine liniștit în Catedrala Sfântului Alexandru Nevski, așezându-se apoi la ieșire, unde

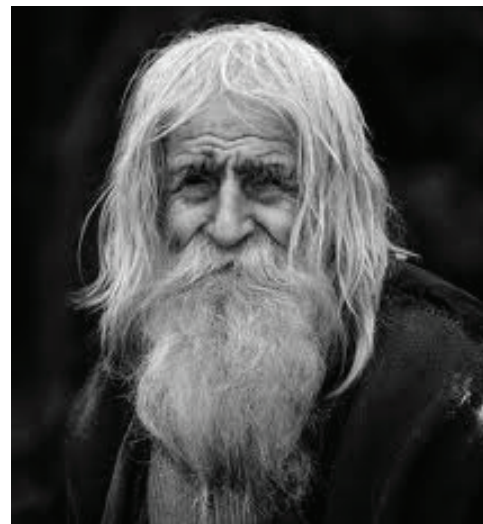


Îi salută pe toți și se închină înaintea tuturor, luându-și rămas bun de la oameni cu cuvintele: „Bucurați-vă întru Domnul!” Ne simțim datori să încheiem cu câteva cuvinte adunate din înțelepciunea simplă, dar vie a lui Moș-Dobri, acest om ce „nu este din lumea aceasta” (Ioan 18:36): „Sunt două voințe, una a lui Dumnezeu, alta a diavolului. Și purtăm un război în mintea noastră. Cred că trebuie să urmăm și să ne supunem voii lui Dumnezeu — așa să ne ajute Domnul! Voința cea bună este dreaptă și adevărată. Toate ale acesteia sunt bune. Trebuie să nu mințim, să nu furăm, să nu săvârșim curvie. Trebuie să ne iubim unul pe altul, așa cum ne iubește Dumnezeu — învrednicește-ne, Doamne!”.

Traducere și adaptare de Radu Hagiu

Articol preluat din revista Familia Ortodoxă, luna Aprilie, nr. 4 (27) / 2011, pp. 27-28

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=b7dE3x-ozfRc



BIOGRAFIA PREA FERICITULUI TIKHON, ARHIEPISCOP AL WASHINGTON-ULUI ȘI MITROPOLITUL PRIMAT AL BISERICII ORTODOXE ÎN AMERICA



Prea Fericirea Sa, Prea Fericitul Mitropolit Primat Tikhon, s-a născut la 15 iulie 1966 cu numele de Marc R. Mollard, în Boston, MA, fiind cel mai în vârstă dintre cei trei copii ai familiei Francois și Elizabeth Mollard.

După scurte perioade petrecute în Connecticut, Franța și Missouri, s-a stabilit împreună cu familia în Reading, PA, unde a terminat liceul Wyomissing în 1984. În 1988 a terminat Facultatea de limbă Franceză și Sociologie la Colegiul Franklin și Marshall din Lancaster, PA, apoi s-a mutat la Chicago.

SOLIA MAY/JUNE 2013

În anul 1989 a fost primit în sânul Bisericii Ortodoxe convertindu-se de la Episcopalianism. În toamna aceluiași an a început studiile la Seminarul Teologic Universitar Sfântul Tikhon din South Canaan, PA. După un an, a intrat în mănăstire ca novice. A obținut titlul de Master în Teologie la Seminarul Tikhon în 1993, după care a fost numit asistent și apoi profesor de Vechiul Testament cu specializarea în Profeți, Psalmi și Literatura apocrifă. A servit și ca instructor pentru programul de studii, oferind cursuri despre viețile sfinților Vechiului Testament, uzul liturgic al Vechiului Testament și Vechiul Testament în literatura patristică.

A colaborat cu Starețul Alexander (Golitzin), actualul Episcop de Toledo și al Episcopiei Bulgare din cadrul OCA, în publicarea volumului "Mărturia vie de la Sfântul Munte Athos" sub egida editurii Saint Tikhon's Seminary Press.

În 1995 a fost tuns în monahism cu numele de Tikhon, în amintirea Sfântului Patriarh Tihon, Iluminătorul Americii de Nord. Apoi, în același an a fost hirotonit diacon și preot. În anul 1998 a fost ridicat la rangul de Egumen, iar în 2000 a fost înălțat la rangul de Arhimandrit.

În decembrie 2002 a fost numit Stareț al Mănăstirii Sfântul Tikhon. Doi ani mai târziu, la 14 februarie 2004 a fost hirotonit episcop. În 9 mai 2012 a fost ridicat la treapta de arhiepiscop.

În 13 noiembrie 2012, Arhiepiscopul Tikhon a fost ales Mitropolit Primat al Bisericii Ortodoxe în America în cadrul celui de-al 17-lea Consiliu al Întregii Americi.

RUGAȚI-VĂ ȘI LUCRAȚI PENTRU UNITATE ORTODOXĂ ÎN AMERICA DE NORD

21



CONVOCARE

în conformitate cu Articolul III, Secțiunea 7, a Regulamentelor Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America, chemăm în sesiune

AL 81-LEA CONGRES ANUAL AL EPISCOPIEI JOI, 5 SEPTEMBRIE –SÂMBĂTĂ, 7 SEPTEMBRIE, 2013

la

VATRA ROMÂNEASCĂ, GRASS LAKE, MICHIGAN

Invitat special – **PREA FERICIREA SA, PREA FERICITUL MITROPOLIT PRIMAT TIKHON AL BISERICII ORTODOXE ÎN AMERICA**

Toți preoții parohi și asistenți numiți în Parohii de către Episcop, precum și toți delegații mireni aleși legal de către Adunările Generale Parohiale în 2013 și ale căror acreditări au fost verificate de către Comitetul de acreditare al Episcopiei, sunt chemați în sesiune de lucru.

*Congresul va fi în sesiune de lucru începând cu ziua de
VINERI, 6 SEPTEMBRIE orele 9:00 a.m., ora Coastei de Est.*

Ordinea de zi, după cum este publicată în Raportul Anual către Congresul Episcopiei 2013, va include:

- Citirea / Aprobarea Procesului Verbal al celui de-al 80-lea Congres al Episcopiei
- Raporturile Oficiale către Congres
- Raporturi din partea Organizațiilor Auxiliare ale Episcopiei
- Propuneri noi din partea Consiliului Episcopesc.

Conform Articolului III, Secțiunea 1, Congresul Episcopiei va fi compus din:

- Episcop
- Episcopul-Vicar
- Vicarul
- Preotul Paroh și Preotul sau Preoții asistenți
- Doi (2) delegați mireni aleși de Adunarea Generală a fiecărei Parohii pentru Congresul Episcopiei pentru anii 2013-2014
- Doi (2) delegate din partea fiecărei organizații auxiliare a Episcopiei
- Preoți de sub jurisdicția Episcopiei care nu au parohie, diaconi, stareți, dacă sunt acreditați de Consiliul Episcopesc
- Membrii Consiliului Episcopesc în funcțiune, ca și președinții organizațiilor auxiliare ex officio.

Dacă delegații mireni aleși legal nu pot participa la Congresul Episcopiei, locuitorii lor aleși legal de către Adunarea Generală Parohială a fiecărei Parohii, vor reprezenta Parohia. Nici o adăugare, substituție or delegație ad-hoc nu vor fi recunoscute de către Comitetul de acreditare.

+NATHANIEL

Arhiepiscop al Detroitului și al Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America

PROGRAMUL

JOI, 5 Septembrie

8:30 am	Micul dejun
9:00 am	Acatist
10:00 am	Conferința clerului
1:00 pm	Prânzul
2:00 pm	Conferința clerului sesiunea a 2-a
5:00 pm	Vecernia
6:00 pm	Cina
7:00 pm	Ședința Consiliului Episcopesc

VINERI, 6 Septembrie

8:00 am	Înregistrarea delegaților
---------	---------------------------

9:00 am	Rugăciunea de invocare a Duhului Sfânt Deschiderea celui de-al 81-lea Congres al Episcopiei
1:00 pm	Prânzul
2:00 pm	Congresul continuă- Sesiunea a II-a
5:00 pm	Vecernia și Meditații
6:30 pm	Cina și Programul

SÂMBĂȚĂ, 7 Septembrie

9:00 am	Procesiunea Clerului și Sfânta Liturghie Arhierească
12:00 pm	Banchetul și Programul de Încheiere

DUMITRU ICHIM, SAU DESPRE REAMINTIREA GRAIULUI UITAT

„Lumina nu-i lumină,
ci doar un grai uitat,
încetul cu încetul
chemând întru a fi.”

Aceste versuri străvezii se găsesc la finalul poemului *Timp alb* al lui Dumitru Ichim din cartea **Nelogoditele tăceri/ Heshtjet e pafejura** (Editura Amanda, Buc., 2013), carte ce adună poezii din cele anterioare și prin intermediul lui Baki Ymeri trece și în albaneză, crescând ca două flăcări din jarul de pe aceeași vatră. Fie și doar șoptite de preot în sfântul lăcaș, ridicat de el în Kitchen-ner, din Canada, aceste vorbe ar trece prin enoriași și i-ar aduna ca o singură ființă sub cupola înaltă; fie și doar trecute pe filele unei cărți, ele rămân pentru poet și cititor ca o inscripție înflorită în piatră, cu scilipiri de frumusețe și nume.

...Și omul urmează aceeași desfacere pentru refacere, precum lumina, spre Logos. Cuvântul, „*rațiunile divine*” sunt dintr-un început și într-o mișcare de ființare în toate cele trei ipostase: Tatăl, Fiul și Sfântul Duh. Logosul divin își pune în sine **diferența**: lumea și omul. Prin **numire** și **facere**. Fiindu-i asemenea, omul poartă în sine și diferența. Este făcut și din lut și din aburul ce s-a suflat peste el. Metafora Olarului și a vasului de strâns lacrimi trec din **Biblie** prin multe poeme ale lui Dumitru Ichim. De cele mai multe ori, implicit. Ceea ce este **plasticizarea** pentru lucruri este și pentru trupul omenesc, dar, prin aburul ce i s-a suflat „în nări”, omul și diferă, este subiect uman „*creat ca chip al Persoanei Logosului*”. El cuprinde în sine și identitatea și diferența, de unde **chemarea** de a o supune pe ultima negării. În cuvintele părintelui Dumitru Stăniloae, omul, persoana umană „*e chemată la existență ca partener creat al Cuvântului lui Dumnezeu cel personal, ca un chip al lui însuși, pentru a gândi și ea, în calitate de subiect, rațiunile obiective ale lucrurile împreună cu Cuvântul dumnezeiesc, subiectul gânditor originar al lor.*” (op. cit., p. 8). Pentru a se deschide vieții, omul mai este trecut și printr-un „*somn adânc*”, ca dintr-o coastă să i se facă femeia. Astfel, se intră în devenire

și se deschide **morții**, se aluneacă în diferență și negare urmând să se recupereze ceea ce este de recuperat. Mai trebuie spus că somnul acesta de la început are o funcție genetică. Nu este aici locul să-i o descifrăm, ci doar de amintit că Dumitru Ichim îl așază la rădăcina vieții și a morții, a timpului: „Înainte de apă mi-e sete de somn/ înainte de foc mi-e sete de somn/ înaintea aerului am răsuflat din somn/ până când somnul s-a făcut pământ// în palmele Plăsmuitorului./ Mi-e sete de somn/ și aş sări peste gardul somnului mare/ dar mi-e frică:/ ce se va întâmpla dacă nici moartea/ nu are somn *deajuns/ și n-o să mai pot adormi?*” (**Cerșetorii somnului**). În fine, aici se desface și se strânge un nod dialectic, de identități și diferențe, de repetare a celor din planul divinității în planul omenesc. De naștere a dramei și de manifestare a iubirii divine. Datorită alunecării omului tot mai mult în lumea manifestată, a **uitării** identității sale cu Cuvântul (acesta rămânând un „grai uitat”), se caută **recuperarea** omului. Din prea multă **iubire** a Divinității. Și se „institue” termenul mijlocitor, adică **Iisus**. Tatăl își dă pe unicul Fiul pentru a fi om, cu tot ce presupune aceasta, de trecere cu **moarte pre moarte călcând**, spre a-i arăta omului Calea, Adevărul și Viața. Calea mântuitoare a Învierii. Un model pentru recuperare, **un model al Jertfei!** Cele două „*tăceri*”, a Divinității și a omului, „*nelogodite*”, cum zice și titlul cărții, sunt aduse în **logodnă** și, prin înscrierea omului pe calea jertfei, în **nuntire**. De aceea Iisus este numit și Mire. Astfel se luminează **traseul liturgic al devenirii Divinității și mântuirii omului**.

Cine se supune acestui traseu vede identități și diferențe pe orice treaptă de pășire, în sine și în lume, la orice nivel ontic al ființei, și caută să le împlinească, să le depășească. Dumitru Ichim o știe și încearcă să le cunoască, să le institue **poematic**. În sprijin aduce harul și pământul roditor pentru unele „semințe” din textele sacre, dar și fapta. Îl ajută **Biblia** de pe masa din altarul bisericii. Cu învățăturile ei, cu pildele lui Iisus și descifrările lui Pavel. Mai întâi, lumea manifestată se vede

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în transparență: cu spațiul, timpul și cauzalitatea având o „față” immanentă și alta transcendentă.

De aceea, nici o suferință nu e prea mare sub lumina crucii! Durerea pricinuită de moartea soției îi naște seria de „*poeme pentru Flory*” (*Nu știu dacă mai era cer, Floare morții, Aniversarea punții albe, Am uitat să te întreb, Epicleză* ș. a.), însă această durere „se stinge” ușor și lacrimarea se șterge ortodox în lumina credinței. Dumitru Ichim nu se „ceartă” cu moartea precum catolicul Johannes Tepl la pierderea prea frumoasei soții Margareta, în celebrul text cu numele „dat”, **Plugarul și Moartea**, și nici nu și-o închipuie tânjind după vreo amintere pământească, precum Lisie din poeziile „dezgropate” ale lui Dante Gabriel Rossetti. El doar îi „aude” spovedania, prea grea de sensuri mântuitoare („*Am săvârșit păcatul cel de moarte,/ dar nu îndeajuns ca să fiu moartă;/ să facem pace și mă iartă,/ iar jurământul meu de adevăr/ fie-mi făclia;/ n-am rezistat ispitei/ de a mușca din măr/ să văd măcar o dată-n viață/ cum ar putea să gust/ veșnicia.*”, **Spovedania lui Flory**) și se „proiectează” într-o viziune la Cina cea de Taină, între „*pescarii aleși*”, îndrăznind să cerșească lui Iisus „*o fărâmatură*” din pâinea frântă și pentru „*flămânda și sărăcuța de afară*” (**Epicleză**).

Și încă mai dinapoi, din miezul genetic al omului, acesta este înscris pe trasul liturgic – oricât s-ar rătăci în uitare – și este chemat să repete Marea Dramă și Jertfă a Fiului. În pofida celor ale himei, el poate să strige din tot sufletul: „*Cred, Doamne, ajută necredinței mele!*”. Și preotul-poet o transmite enoriașilor-cititori: „- *Crezi tu?/ Cred, Doamne, ajută necredinței mele/ și dacă poți,/ să nu mă mai pândească/ nici iarba și nici steaua, / chiar peste florile de gheață/ ce vor să Te cunoască,/ trage la noapte, când mă rog,/ ca pe-un amin – perdeaua.*” (**Ajută necredinței mele**, s. n.). Este piatra de temelie a poeziei lui Dumitru Ichim.

Pe această „piatră” lucrează poematicele și imaginația poetului. Sensuri biblice și pilde ale lui Iisus se văd prin materia poetică precum pietrele albe prin apele prea repezi ale unui râu de munte. Ele îi răsar în față „întâmplător” grație uimirii, și neîntâmplător datorită credinței. Creația își lasă mai peste tot să se vadă „clipiri” din „rațiunile divine”, noi le zicem epifanii ale Creatorului. Dumitru Ichim „se trezește” cu unele în față, prin cultura religioasă și prin deschiderea poematice. El se folosește de „plasa” lor, ca pescar în slujba Cuvântului. Nu se sprijină pe virtuțile **metaforei**, pentru o trecere dincolo, cum s-a zis – , ci pe cele ale **simbolului**, care înseamnă o trecere dincoace. Pe ambele trasee, firește, se atinge manifestarea de cele ce sunt, dar pe această din urmă cale strălucirea poate să fie mai puternică. Și nu de puține ori, uluitor de periculoasă. Cumplită, pentru cel ce se apropie „încălțat”. Dar fără să le urmărim, să spunem repede că Dumitru Ichim îmbunează din aceste simboluri, „pilde”, și le trece în poezie, metaforic zis, doar atingându-le cu o aripă. Execută o „breșă”, spre lumina nefirească, nu în ele, ci cu ele, cu lumina lor, în lumea manifestată. De pildă, constituția teandrică a bisericii se alege sub un văl al manifestării:

„*Doar privirea de copil dă/ păpădiei semuire/ împărăției Tale./ Desculță și săracă/ e poate singura ta pildă/ despre/ a doua înflorire./ Cum trupul Tău/ ne va cuprinde pe toți/ în aceeași biserică?/ Doar privirea de copil dă/ păpădiei semuire/ prin neînțeleasa pildă/ despre a doua înflorire - / îmbrățișarea sferică.*” (**Apocatastază**, s. n.). În ochii copiilor se oglindește Dumnezeu, s-a spus, dar, iată, și **lumina teandrică a bisericii**. Sau invers, face cu ele o „breșă” în lumea nemanifestată, a „graiului uitat”, a Logosului divin. **Pilda celor zece fecioare**, în care cele cinci nechibzuite, fără undelemn pentru candelă, rămân în afara ușii când vine Mirele, se deschide printr-un adaos mijlocitor și **sofianic**: „*Cinci erau nebune./ Cinci înțelepte./ Dar cea de-a unsprezecea -/ Fecioara -/ se ruga Mirelui pentru toate zicând:/ Și ierbii/ și crinului/ și lunii/ și stelelor/ și soarelui fă-le un semn/ din inima mea pentru Tine/ ca să le torn în candelă undelemn!*” (**A unsprezecea oră**, s. n.).

În fine, se poate conchide că poetul-preot, Dumitru Ichim, își sprijină creația poetică pe texte biblice, despre **diferența** din miezul Divinității și pe cea „derivată” din sânul omului, și că are privirea fixată înduioșător pe termenul mijlocit și mijlocitor, adică pe chipul prea omenesc și divin al lui Iisus. Uitarea „graiului” este doar o încercare a devenirii mântuitoare. De aceea, smerit, Dumitru Ichim împrăstie câteva semințe pentru roadă, spunând, aproape în șoaptă, că una dintre acestea este chiar făptura omenească. Sămânța de preț care trebuie să încolțească din moarte, să crească prin moarte și să înflorească peste moarte. Ca rodul să-i ajungă în cer. Precum Iisus.

(Despre **fapta** sa, este de ajuns să amintim că Dumitru Ichim s-a născut cu un ceas înaintea Sărbătoririi Adormirii Maicii Domnului, în 1944, la Dărmănești – Bacău, luând numele și prenumele tatălui său, cântăreț al bisericii de acolo, că a trecut prin Seminarii teologice din țară și străinătate, că și-a dat doctoratul cu teza **The Orthodox Liturgy and the World** și a ajuns, în cele din urmă, preot la Parohia „Sf. Ioan Botezătorul” din Kitchener, Canada. (S-a căsătorit cu Florica Bațu, poetă de sânge aromân, tatăl ei aromân originar din Albania.). Mai mult, că efortul său teologic și de aplecare apostolică și-a adăugat izbânda zidirii unei noi biserici, sfințită pe 14 august 1994, exact când el și-a rotunjit cinci decenii de viață. Copil, primește darurile botezului în biserică din Dărmănești și ca preot le „ofere” copiilor și românilor din Canada. Simbolic traseu, subliniat și de titlul tezei de doctorat și de hramul bisericii!)

Dumitru VELEA