

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER
2015

SOLIA

THE HERALD
JACKSON, MI

VOL. LXXX,
No. 11-12



SOLIA

CHAIRMAN:

Most Rev. Archbishop
Nathaniel Popp



VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Right Rev. Bishop Irineu Duvlea

ENGLISH EDITOR / SECRETARY:

Archdeacon David Oancea

ROMANIAN EDITOR:

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. 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>St. John Chrysostom's "Homily on Christmas Morning"</i>	3, 9
<i>Vatra Generations</i>	4-5
<i>Pastoral Letter 2015 – Nativity of Our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, His Eminence Archbishop Nathaniel</i>	6-7
<i>St. Elijah the Prophet Parish, Lennard, Manitoba</i>	8-9
<i>My Family's Experience at the Vatra, Rachel Chebeleu</i>	10
<i>The Incarnation, St. Ephraim the Syrian</i>	11
<i>Vatra Generations Appeal</i>	11
<i>Two New Websites Launched for Bible, Liturgical Texts</i>	12
<i>OCA Holy Synod Concludes Fall Session</i>	13
<i>Financial Report, Mark P. Chestnut</i>	13, 16
<i>In Memory: Traian Lascu</i>	14, 15
<i>In Loving Memory of Cezar Teodorescu, George & Mike Teodorescu</i>	15
<i>Solia Financial Report, Richard C. Grabowski</i>	16

Romanian Section

<i>Din Viața Parohiilor... ..</i>	17
<i>Scrisoare Pastorală 2015, Nașterea Domnului și Dumnezeuului și Mântuitorului nostru Iisus Hristos, IPS Nathaniel</i>	18-19
<i>Proiectul "Generațiile Vetrei"</i>	20-21
<i>Intrarea Maicii Domnului în Biserică a Maicii Domnului, Arhim. Teofil Păcăian</i>	22-23
<i>Psalmul Nașterii, Dumitru Ichim</i>	23
<i>Camp Vatra Fundraiser</i>	24
<i>Colinde: Veniți cu toții / Sosit-a praznicul iar</i>	24



PASTORAL CHANGES

RECEIVED / ASSIGNED

KONKLE, Rev. Fr. John, was accepted by the Episcopate Council on September 3, 2015, pending release from Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington (OCA) which was received on October 18, 2015. He continues in his assignment as resident priest at Holy Dormition Monastery, Rives Junction, MI.

RELEASED

PROTEASA, Archpriest Ion, who was Parish Priest of St. John of Wallachia Mission, Alpine, NJ, was released at his own request to Metropolitan Tikhon, Archbishop of Washington (OCA) for canonical release to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, effective November 1, 2015.

SUSPENDED

CUDRITESCU, Archpriest Ionel, who is retired, was suspended from all priestly functions effective October 21, 2015.

DEPOSED

ARDELEAN, Rev. Fr. Emil, was deposed from the Priesthood, and his name removed from the ranks of the clergy of the Romanian Episcopate and the Orthodox Church in America by the Holy Synod of Bishops, effective October 21, 2015.

MEHEDINCU, Rev. Fr. Daniel, was deposed from the Priesthood, and his name removed from the ranks of the clergy of the Romanian Episcopate and the Orthodox Church in America by the Holy Synod of Bishops, effective October 21, 2015.

ADDRESS CHANGE

Send your change of addresses to:
SOLIA, PO BOX 185
GRASS LAKE, MI 49240 USA
or solia@roea.org

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S "HOMILY ON CHRISTMAS MORNING"

Behold a new and wondrous mystery. My ears resound to the Shepherd's song, piping no soft melody, but chanting full forth a heavenly hymn. The Angels sing. The Archangels blend their voice in harmony. The Cherubim hymn their joyful praise. The Seraphim exalt His glory. All join to praise this holy feast, beholding the Godhead here on earth, and man in heaven. He Who is above, now for our redemption dwells here below; and he that was lowly is by divine mercy raised.



Bethlehem this day resembles heaven; hearing from the stars the singing of angelic voices; and in place of the sun, enfolds within itself on every side, the Sun of justice. And ask not how: for where God wills, the order of nature yields. For He willed, He had the power, He descended, He redeemed; all things yielded in obedience to God. This day He Who is, is Born; and He Who is, becomes what He was not. For when He was God, He became man; yet not departing from the Godhead that is His. Nor yet by any loss of divinity became He man, nor through increase became He God from man; but being the Word He became flesh, His nature, because of impassability, remaining unchanged.

And so the kings have come, and they have seen the heavenly King that has come upon the earth, not bringing with Him Angels, nor Archangels, nor Thrones, nor Dominations, nor Powers, nor Principalities, but, treading a new and solitary path, He has come forth from a spotless womb.

Since this heavenly birth cannot be described, neither does His coming amongst us in these days permit of too curious scrutiny. Though I know that a Virgin this day gave birth, and I believe that God was begotten before all time, yet the manner of this generation I have learned to venerate in silence and I accept that this is not to be probed too curiously with wordy speech. For with God we look not for the order of nature, but rest our faith in the power of Him who works.

What shall I say to you; what shall I tell you? I behold a Mother who has brought forth; I see a Child come to this light by birth. The manner of His conception I cannot comprehend.

Nature here rested, while the Will of God labored. O ineffable grace! The Only Begotten, Who is before all ages, Who cannot be touched or be perceived, Who is simple, without body, has now put on my body, that is

visible and liable to corruption. For what reason? That coming amongst us he may teach us, and teaching, 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.

Christ, finding the holy body and soul of the Virgin, builds for Himself a living temple, and as He had willed, formed there a man from the Virgin; and, putting Him on, this day came forth; unashamed of the lowliness of our nature'. For it was to Him no lowering to put on what He Himself had made. Let that handiwork be forever glorified, which became the cloak of its own Creator. For as in the first creation of flesh, man could not be made before the clay had come into His hand, so neither could this corruptible body be glorified, until it had first become the garment of its Maker.

What shall I say! And how shall I describe this Birth to you? For this wonder fills me with astonishment. The Ancient of days has become an infant. He Who sits upon the sublime and heavenly Throne, now lies in a manger. And He Who cannot be touched, Who is simple, without complexity, and incorporeal, now lies subject to the hands of men. He Who has broken the bonds of sinners, is now bound by an infant's bands. But He has decreed that ignominy shall become honor, infamy be clothed with glory, and total humiliation the measure of His Goodness.

For this He assumed my body, that I may become capable of His Word; taking my flesh, He gives me His spirit; and so He bestowing and I receiving, He prepares for me the treasure of Life. He takes my flesh, to sanctify me; He gives me His Spirit, that He may save me.

Come, then, let us observe the Feast. Truly wondrous is the whole chronicle of the Nativity. For this day the ancient slavery is ended, the devil confounded, the demons take to flight, the power of death is broken, paradise is unlocked, the curse is taken away, sin is removed from us, error driven out, truth has been brought back, the speech of kindness diffused, and spreads on every side, a heavenly way of life has been implanted on the earth, angels communicate with men without fear, and men now hold speech with angels.

Why is this? Because God is now on earth, and man in heaven; on every side all things commingle. He became Flesh. He did not become God. He was God. Wherefore He became flesh, so that He Whom heaven did not contain, a manger would this day receive.

Cont. on page 9

Vatra GENERATIONS



Honor the
PAST.

Serve the
PRESENT.

Prepare for the
FUTURE.

Vatra GENERATIONS is a call to the Romanian Orthodox faithful to support the restoration of the “Hearth” of the Romanian Orthodox Church. In 1938 — nearly eight decades ago — Vatra Romaneasca was established in Grass Lake, Michigan as the home of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America.

Generations have been touched by the experiences they have had at the camps, Congresses, and other activities hosted on the Vatra grounds. As the home of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America, this holy site serves as a Church center that “first of all exists to bear witness to the universality of the eternal message of the Holy Orthodox faith as it is lived in North America” (Archbishop NATHANIEL).

More than 6,500 campers have participated in Camp Vatra over the past 64 years, and countless others have visited the Vatra grounds. Today, the buildings of this holy place are in need of repair to honor the heritage of the Episcopate, support the current work of the Church, and prepare for the needs of future generations. The purpose of **Vatra GENERATIONS** is to complete this project within three years.



Vatra GENERATIONS



Honor the
PAST.

Serve the
PRESENT.

Prepare for the
FUTURE.

Support the cause

The cost for the first phase of restoration of the campus facilities on the Vatra grounds is \$600,000.

Commencement of the project will require \$80,000 by December 2015 to begin restoration of the existing campus facilities. This will include making structural repairs to the main house and pavilion to ensure the buildings can continue to be used for camp, Congress and other activities for the visiting faithful.

The next phase of the project will complete restoration of these campus facilities within the next two years. This will include an international call to raise the remaining \$520,000 in addition to plans for expanded use of the facilities and a preservation plan for the long-term.

Make a commitment

- Consider making an early contribution.
- Consider joining the **Vatra GENERATIONS Campaign Committee** that will lead the effort to complete this worthy project.
- Spread the word of this project.

To Donate and Join the Campaign

Make your check payable to: ROEA, PO BOX 309, GRASS LAKE MI 49240-0309
or donate online at roea.org ([click on Donate button](#))

PASTORAL LETTER 2015

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD AND GOD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

“Everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled.”

Gospel of Saint Luke the Evangelist 24:44

Beloved Spiritual Children in Christ:

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

“May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace, and from us, hierarchal blessings!”

Christ is born! Let us glorify Him!

Dearly Beloved,

Today, we are celebrating the feast of the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior, Jesus Christ in Bethlehem in Judea, now Israel. Sometimes, we even call this his “birthday.” It was a birth unperceived by the general population of his day but known to Moses, to the Prophets and to David the ancestor of Jesus Christ, all who were anticipating the coming of the Messiah. Glory to God who fulfilled his promise to mankind! As the rest of Israel ate and drank, worked and slept, Emmanuel, God-with-us, was quietly born into the midst of the population: among the Jews, among the Romans, among the Greeks and strangers. Few, indeed, were those who heard the angelic choir glorifying God hovering over the cave in which the Messiah was born. Today, millions repeat the angelic hymns praising the birth of Emmanuel.

From childhood and through his life, our Lord Jesus Christ himself knew the Law of Moses and quoted from it; he knew and repeated the prophecies of centuries before his birth; he knew and sang the Psalms of his forefather David in the synagogues where he listened and where he taught. The people knew these scriptures, and his apostles and the crowds who witnessed his teaching and miracles knew them, too. But that the Scriptures were being fulfilled in their own day, they did not immediately perceive. That is why later, before the ascension, Christ said that “everything written about me” must be fulfilled.

The Apostle Paul in his Letter to the Hebrews echoes this when he says: *“At various times in the past and in different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything that is. He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature”* (Hebrews 1: 1-3).

God, in his love for mankind, first spoke his words through holy men and women, whom we know as Prophets. But to be absolutely clear about his love for us, in the fullness of time, he sent Jesus, his Son, whom we must entitle the unique “Word of God.” Christ speaks from and for the Father to us, not as a servant as were the prophets, but as his own true and only-begotten Son.

In the Creed, we state that we *“...believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Only-Begotten, begotten of the Father before all ages, light of true light, true God of true God...incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man.”* Saint Clement of Rome states: *“Do we not have one God and one Christ and one Spirit of Grace poured out upon us? And is there not one calling in Christ?”* (Letter to Corinthians, Ch. 46).

This personal “Word of God,” whose name is Jesus Christ, speaks the direct word of the Father to us, for Jesus is ever and always present with the Father from the beginning of everything that he brought into existence, even unto all eternity as the second person of the All Holy Trinity. *“He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

This Holy Feast of Christians, the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus the Christ in the flesh, has firm scriptural basis, from the Law of Moses, the Prophecies and the Psalms. Thus it was that after his resurrection from the tomb, for 40 days Jesus remained with them and *“opened their minds to understand the scriptures”* (Luke 24:45). Our Lord in his last instructions to the Apostles stated: *“Everything written about me in the Law of Moses, in the Prophets and in the Psalms, has to be fulfilled.”* [Gospel of Saint Luke the Evangelist 24:44] *“He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

Beginning with Genesis through Revelation, these Scriptures remind us of our need for a Savior, for the birth of the Savior, and for the return of the Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Although we can say that our celebration is of the Nativity or Birth of Christ in the flesh of the Holy Virgin Mary in Bethlehem in Judea in human time, we know that he has existed from before all creation. He is the fulfillment of the Law, the Prophets and Psalms and of the yearning every human soul has to be in companionship with God. *“He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

Saint John the Evangelist reminds us of this pre-existence of the Word of Life saying: *“Something which has existed since the beginning, that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes; that we have watched and touched with our hands: the Word, who is life---is our subject. That life was made visible...which was with the Father and has been made visible to us”* (1 John 1:1-2). *“He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

In hearing the Prophet Isaiah, we realize the great love God has for us in foretelling of the birth of the Savior, thereby giving mankind hope. He did not let us remain in darkness about his love but stated through Isaiah: *“The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light...”*; and *“For there is a child born for us, a son given to us, and dominion is laid on his shoulders; and this is the name they give him: Wonder-Counselor, Mighty-God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace. Wide is his dominion in a peace that has no end”* (Isaiah 9: 6-7). *“He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

This, dear Christian, means that not only can we in spirit go to Bethlehem to adore him there, but even moreso, that God has thrown open the very Gates of Paradise and invited us to enter into his presence, led there by his Son, the child born in a cave and laid in a manger. It means that what Saint John has told us earlier, that “Life that was invisible” has become visible through the womb of his Virgin Mother, our all-holy Lady, the Birthgiver of God, Mary, and was touched, heard, and seen among men. *“He is the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

Let us close these thoughts with the introduction of the wonderful Nativity Kontakia of Saint Romanos the Hymnographer about the Word who is Life: *“Today the Virgin gives birth to him who is above all being; the earth offers a cave to him whom no one can approach. The Angels with shepherds glorify God and the Magi journey with a star, for a little child has been born to us, he who is God before the ages.”* Indeed, Our Lord and God and Savior is *“the radiant light of God’s glory and the perfect copy of his nature.”*

Christ is born! Let us glorify him!

+Nathaniel

+NATHANIEL, Archbishop

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

ST ELIJAH THE PROPHET PARISH LENNARD, MANITOBA



St. Elijah faithful with V. Rev. Fr. Orest Olekshy (OCA) and Fr. Deacon Kenneth Gaber

Editor: Recently, we received the above photo from Sandra Leclerc, a parishioner of St. Elijah Church in Lennard, Manitoba. Although the parish has not had a permanent parish priest since 2008, Rev. Deacon Ken Gaber has been a faithful and constant presence in the parish with visiting clergy serving the Divine Liturgy periodically. Since this is the second oldest parish in the Episcopate, we felt that it was appropriate that we republish below a short, very interesting history that appeared in the Episcopate's "Historical Anniversary Album, 1929-1979." A more complete history is printed in the book, "Romanians in Canada," by Dr. Eleanor Bujea, pp. 106-109, available via the Episcopate's website (roea.org) on the home page in the center section under the heading "Featured Books," immediately above the "News" section; or go to lulu.com and type the title in the search box.

"The beginnings of Sf. Prooroc Ilie go back to Easter Sunday, 1902, when a group of Romanian and Ukrainian pioneers held religious services in the open air, and afterwards set to work building a sod church on the prairie, which was finished the next year and served the farmers' needs until 1908. In that year, on two acres of land donated by Ilie Burla, a finished lumber and plaster church was raised in the rounded style of Bucovina, and the little building decorated with icons brought from the homeland. It was given

its patron name in honor of the first settler and giver of the property, and with this the parish was officially founded by twenty members on July 1, 1908. Voting members rose to thirty-one by 1910, and to fifty ten years later, which was about as high as the parish would go, maintaining a membership of never less than thirty nor more than fifty from then on. The church was blessed by Bishop Policarp in 1936, at the time when Father Glicherie Popa was pastor. On an additional acre given by Ioan Paulenko, Father Popa and the parishioners put their funds together in 1939 and built a comfortable country-style parish house a few yards from the church.

In the early 1950s, the new generation of Romanians in Lennard, seeing that the old church no longer suited their needs, moved toward constructing a new one, and in 1952 laid the foundation of their present building, to be 30 feet by 60 feet in area, with a basement hall for dinners, religious school, and choir rehearsal. Parishioner Peter Gaber designed the plans, which were then executed by the members themselves in collaboration with the Saint Lazar contractor P. Dupont. Eventually, the complete cost of the work amounted to \$20,000 for materials – however, if the parishioners had not done most of the job themselves, this figure would have been doubled.

These hardworking farmers did not have great sums

to invest; and thus, the construction of the church, in order to completely finish, equip, and decorate the building, was spread out over a period of ten years, until 1962. The basic framework, though, was ready to be blessed in 1954 by Archimandrite Daniel Maxim and Fathers Glicherie Popa and Petru Tatoi. In the years which followed, every member of St. Elijah took part in gathering the needed monies for their parish building program. The Ladies Auxiliary, especially, put on a whole series of dinners, parties, bazaars, while the men helped with carpentry and masonry in their free time, so that bit by bit, the finished church took shape. Some days were spent on another very important project. In true Romanian fashion, the original 1908 church was not razed, but moved to the side in the church yard, where it is now a revered shrine, and may one day, hopefully, be a museum. It is not far from the cemetery laid out on the grounds, separated from the new church by a tall stand of trees.

The church contains fourteen large pews with seats for 116 persons, with room for another 150 in the choir and standing. The basement hall also holds about 150. The iconostas was made by Providence Church Goods Company in Winnipeg, but some of the early icons were transferred from the old church. These were mainly prints. Since then, new oil paintings were done by artist I. Gaspar from Winnipeg. With the exception of the shapes of doors and windows, the church exterior is quite close to the design of Holy Trinity in MacNutt, Saskatchewan.

In the time when Archimandrite Martinian Ivanovici pastored St. Elijah (1955-1966), the parish increased in numbers substantially. Records show eighteen members who began the building program in 1952. This had grown to fifty-two by 1961. Father Peter Avram served the parish from 1967 to 1970, followed by Father Constantin Turcoane (1970-71). Father Pan-teleimon Stanciu (1971-1972), and Father John Fleser (1972-1976). Lennard's most recent pastor has been Father Mirone Klysh, born in New York state in 1932, and a graduate of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Seminary in Winnipeg. He also studied at Western Reserve University and the University of Manitoba. Ordained on August 28, 1960, by Metropolitan John of the Ukrainian Church, he pastored a number of Manitoban parishes for seven years between 1962 and 1969 before coming to administer St. Elijah. Under his guidance, the parish has known continued success; and because of its location and relatively large-sized facilities, it is the center of Orthodox religious life in the region, serving also non-Romanian families. Nevertheless, Romanians remain well represented, with about 129 of them in the area, carrying on a tradition of seventy years of active parish life. Today, the 36 members and 75 communicants look forward to the future. A new pastor has been obtained, for Father Klysh's duties in Winnipeg have called him away.

As of December 15, 1978, Rev. Nicolae Marioncu
SOLIA NOV/DEC 2015

became parish priest at St. Elijah. Father Marioncu is from the Banat of Yugoslavia, a graduate of St. Sava Theological Seminary in Belgrade, and was ordained on August 21, 1949, by Bishop Visarion in Belgrade. He came to the United States in 1965, after sixteen years of service in Yugoslavian churches. Parishes in Worcester, Massachusetts, and Hollywood, Florida, were under his care until 1972, when he was accepted into the Episcopate and served a number of years at St. John the Baptist in Woonsocket, Rhode Island.

Thus, St. Elijah goes on confidently, the new beside the old, an island of Orthodoxy amidst the vast reaches of Manitoba."

BE A FRIEND OF SOLIA

Send your donation to:
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate
PO BOX 185
GRASS LAKE, MI 49240 USA

St John ... *Cont. from page 3*

He was placed in a manger, so that He, by whom all things are nourished, may receive an infant's food from His Virgin Mother. So, the Father of all ages, as an infant at the breast, nestles in the virginal arms, that the Magi may more easily see Him. Since this day the Magi too have come, and made a beginning of withstanding tyranny; and the heavens give glory, as the Lord is revealed by a star.

To Him, then, Who out of confusion has wrought a clear path, to Christ, to the Father, and to the Holy Spirit, we offer all praise, now and forever. Amen.

FAMILY CHALLENGE

The 12 Days of Christmas

The 12 Days of Christmas refer to the period of Dec. 25 – Jan. 5. It is a primarily a festal time, spanning from Christmas Day until the Eve of Epiphany (Theophany), which is the only day where fasting is observed.

Visit the following website for a parent companion to the GOA Department of Religious Education zine *For to Us a Child is Born* (www.goarch.org/archdiocese/departments/religious/christmas_guide). This supplement features suggested activities for celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas as a family, but you can also create your own! The most important thing is to not let a day go by without marveling at the transformative gift we received in Christ's Nativity. Are you ready to take the Challenge?

*From the Orthodox Observer,
December 2015, p. 27*

MY FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE AT THE VATRA

By Rachel Chebeleu



My husband, Radu, daughters Sofia, Vivienne and Cecilia and my mother-in-law Carmen, first visited the Vatra in 2013 at the Episcopate's Family-Life Conference. The Vatra is located in the midst of beautiful farmland in the middle of Michigan. The campus, as you will see in the video (<https://youtu.be/fjbzEdUu6o8>), is very serene. The warmth we immediately felt there was amazing. We all felt as if we "belonged" there. The Vatra is a place where one can truly feel peace, holiness, and safety.

My oldest daughter Sofia, age 10 at the time, attended the Camp Vatra for Juniors, a two-week camp, later that same summer. Sofia learned so much about the Orthodox Faith in the classes held daily, enjoyed doing the variety of chores each child is assigned, was greatly impacted spiritually by visits to two nearby monasteries, enjoyed free time with other Orthodox children, and learned portions of the Matins and Vesper services by heart, due to attending these services daily. She thrived in this camp atmosphere for young people that has been held at the Vatra every year since 1953.

Sofia attended the camp last year with Radu's niece, who was visiting us from Romania. Our niece had not practiced the Orthodox faith very much, but really thrived in the accepting atmosphere of the Vatra. We are hopeful that this experience established a good basis for the future of her Orthodox faith.

I am not working outside the home right now, so I had the time this past summer to volunteer at Camp Vatra for Juniors. My 10 year old Vivienne and also Sofia, now 12, attended the Camp. I worked in the kitchen at the Vatra for two weeks – this was an

experience that changed my life. I was able to meet wonderful Orthodox men and women, fellow volunteers from around the United States, who believe in the "mission" of the Vatra. Cecilia, my 8 year old, helped as much as she could.

I was able to witness first-hand the atmosphere of Camp Vatra. The young people, around others of Romanian heritage, who are also Orthodox, truly love being in a place where they can learn about their faith, while at the same time socialize with others who share the same beliefs.

I sometimes had time between the preparation of meals to sit in on the daily courses taught by the priests to the young people. They learn about the Liturgy service, the saints, the history and doctrines of the Church, the Bible; and in addition, they talk about the real challenges our children face in today's world and how to handle these situations, with strong consideration of the principles of our faith.

The feeling that my girls had, being around Orthodox Christian friends for two weeks, was refreshing and energizing for them. In their school, they don't have any Orthodox friends. They only meet with other Orthodox young people briefly at Church here each Sunday. In order for our young people to continue to keep the faith as adults, it is very necessary that it become part of their lives, not just a church service that they attend every Sunday morning. Camp Vatra teaches them the prayers for different parts of the day, the importance of regular Confession and Communion, and the joy of fellowship with others who share the same faith.

In addition, Camp Vatra allows the young people to do all of these things, while being in a safe place where they can walk about freely, even late at night; where they can hear the bells each morning and walk in the morning dew to the chapel to worship God; where they sing the United States, Canadian, and Romanian National Anthems at the Flag Raising each morning; where they can sit and learn directly from His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel; and also where they can make the Orthodox faith “their own” through the influence of the many mentors – priests, deacons, nuns, monks, and lay people.

Vatra is a treasure and a gift that the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America has, thanks to God’s goodness, and the support of many generations of Campers, Congress attendees, and Church members. The campus is lovely, but it is absolutely showing the signs of aging. In order to continue to serve our Episcopate, I know first-hand that many repairs and renovations are needed. We need to have a good place for our young people, in particular, to continue to come for two weeks of shelter from the world to learn about our beautiful and rich Orthodox faith.

Vatra is appropriately named – “The Hearth” – it is a place where everyone feels comfortable, welcome, and safe. My family could feel the loving arms of the Vatra as soon as we set foot on the hallowed soil. I pray that through your generosity and support, the Vatra will be able to serve many future generations of Orthodox adults and youth in the beautiful farmland of the mid-western United States.

Rachel Chebeleu and her family are members of Descent of the Holy Spirit Church, Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.



THE INCARNATION

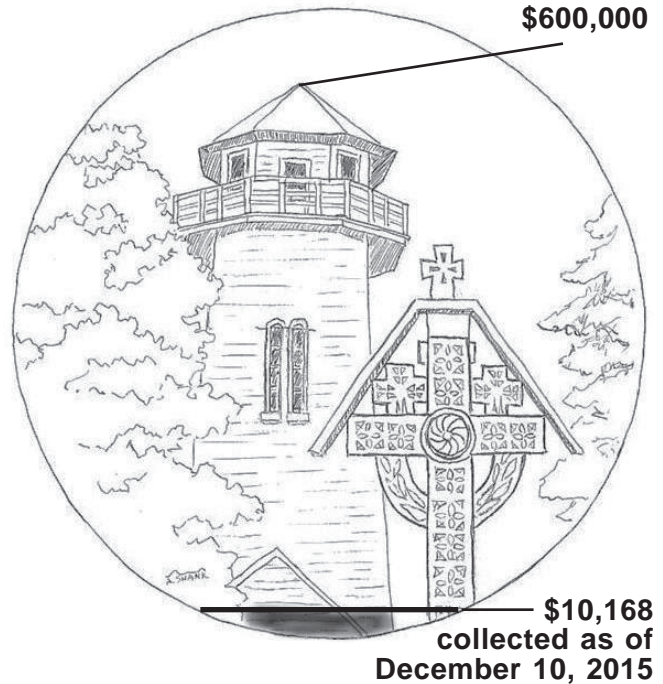
“Today God came unto sinners; let not the righteous man exalt himself over sinners! Today the Most Rich One became poor for our sake; let the rich man invite the poor to his table!”

“Today we received a gift which we did not ask for; let us bestow alms to those who cry out to us and beg! The present day has opened the door of heaven to our prayers; let us also open our door to those who ask of us forgiveness!”

“Today the Godhead placed upon Himself the seal of humanity, and humanity has been adorned with the seal of the Godhead!”

St. Ephraim the Syrian

VATRA GENERATIONS APPEAL



**Help fill the Grey Tower
with your donation today!**

DONATION FORM

☐ **YES!** I want to join the Vatra Generations Campaign with a gift of:

☐ \$10,000 ☐ \$5,000 ☐ \$1,000 ☐ \$500
☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$Other_____

Name (please print): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Email: _____

Mail your check payable to:
Romanian Orthodox Episcopate
PO Box 309, Grass Lake MI 49240-0309
To donate via credit card, go to: roea.org and
click on the DONATE button.
Donations are tax-deductible.

TWO NEW WEBSITES LAUNCHED FOR BIBLE, LITURGICAL TEXTS

NEW YORK – The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Department of Internet Ministries has launched two new websites as part of the new .BIBLE top level domain (TLD) initiative. The .BIBLE TLD joined .com and .org this past year as a new option for website addresses on the Internet. The websites are: www.GreekOrthodox.bible and www.Septuagint.bible.

The Department of Internet Ministries is one of only a select number of key ministry partners of the American Bible Society participating in this initiative in 2015. American Bible Society is administering the new .Bible TLD, with the aim to open up a new platform for engagement with the Scriptures. Domain names ending with .BIBLE will be available for public purchase in early 2016 (for more information please visit www.nic.bible).

“There is no mission more sacred than sharing the message of the Gospel and giving people from around the world the opportunity to engage with the Scriptures on a daily basis,” said Theo Nicolakis, chief information officer of the Archdiocese and BIBLE TLD Advisory Council member. “These new sites continue the Archdiocese’s Two New Websites Launched for Bible, Liturgical Texts legacy and strong commitment to digital ministry.” “We are honored to have the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Department of Internet Ministries as one of our key ministry partners,” said Scott Wennermark, director of Strategic Advancements for the .BIBLE TLD. “The GreekOrthodox.Bible and Septuagint.Bible sites represent exactly the kind of technology innovation and vision that the Archdiocese is known for.”

GreekOrthodox.Bible

The www.GreekOrthodox.Bible site will serve as the central hub for the development of multi-lingual, Scripture-based technology services, mobile apps, and Biblical resources for the Orthodox Christian Church worldwide. In 2016, www.GreekOrthodox.Bible will be expanded to serve as a central clearinghouse for Liturgical texts and prayers in the life of the Orthodox Christian Church—all of which are deeply rooted in the Scriptures. **Visitors will also have the ability to build and download Liturgical services automatically for any given date.** GreekOrthodox.Bible is the culmination of nearly two decades’ work by the Department of Internet Ministries, which originally began as an initiative to digitize the Typicon of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1997. The result of this initiative, now known as the Online Chapel Digital Engine, has served as the foundation for many of the Archdiocese’s most popular offerings over the past 17



years such as the Online Chapel on www.goarch.org, Bulletin Builder, and the Daily Readings mobile app.

Septuagint.Bible

The Septuagint (LXX), also called the Translation of the Seventy, is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament). The Septuagint has been a living part of the faith and worship of the Orthodox Christian Church since the time of the Apostles. It still serves as the source for the Old Testament readings in the various liturgical services of the Orthodox Church. *Septuagint.Bible* is a joint initiative between the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and the Hellenic Bible Society. The aim of www.Septuagint.Bible is to:

- Make available the living Septuagint text as it is used in the sacred services of the Orthodox Christian Church as well as for private devotion in the life of Orthodox Christians worldwide.
- Promote easy accessibility to the Septuagint.
- Publish a properly edited edition of the Septuagint for use in the Divine Services of the Orthodox Christian Church.

About .BIBLE (dotBIBLE)

The .Bible TLD is part of American Bible Society’s digital strategy to achieve its goal of seeing 100 million Americans engaging with the Bible and 100 percent of the world’s languages open for Scripture Engagement by 2025. The addition of .Bible will accelerate global online Bible access and facilitate engagement in ways not previously possible.

Published by the Orthodox Observer, December 2015, p. 2.



OCA HOLY SYNOD CONCLUDES FALL SESSION



SYOSSET, NY [OCA]
The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America concluded its fall session at Saint Andrew House, Detroit, MI, on Friday, October 23, 2015. His Beatitude, Metropolitan Tikhon, presided at the sessions.

Among the decisions and actions taken by the hierarchs were the following:

After concluding a Church Court held on October 19, the hierarchs canonically deposed the retired Archbishop Seraphim from the status and all sacred functions of the episcopacy, removed him from the ranks of the clergy, and returned him to the status of a lay monk.

In his report to the Holy Synod, Metropolitan Tikhon shared his ongoing work on his "The Apostolic Work of the Church: Building the House of the Lord in Our Lands," which will provide a "guiding framework for the Orthodox Church in America" during the next triennium and beyond. Using the image of the four pillars of the altar table at the consecration of a church, he proposed that the OCA build its apostolic work on the "the foundation, which is Christ," and the pillars of the spiritual life, stewardship, evangelism and outreach, and external relations.

Mission Planting Grants were awarded to Saint Katherine Mission, Cardiff, CA; Saint John the Evangelist Mission, Tempe, AZ; Saint James Mission, Beaufort, SC; Saint Nektarios Mission, Waxahachie, TX; and Saint Juvenaly and His Companion Mission, Wasilla, AK.

The Holy Synod reviewed the text of a "Service of Prayer after a Miscarriage or Stillbirth," which was approved for use. The text will soon be available on the OCA web site in PDF format for downloading.

A resource dealing with end-of-life issues from the Orthodox Christian perspective, titled "A Gift for My Loved Ones," was reviewed and approved. Prepared by the Department of Christian Service and Humanitarian Aid, the resource will soon be available on the OCA web site in PDF format for downloading.

Members of the Holy Synod expressed their gratitude to His Eminence, Archbishop Nikon of Boston and New England and the Albanian Archdiocese for his decade of devoted service as Episcopal Liaison for the OCA Pension Board.

The hierarchs decided that the section on Spiritual Courts that appears in the previous Statute of the

Orthodox Church in America will remain in effect until the revision of this section in the new Statute is approved.

Protopresbyter Leonid Kishkovsky updated the Holy Synod on External Affairs via conference call.

A number of decisions presented by the Board of Theological Education with regard to ordination and related matters were ratified.

Additional agenda items included a discussion on a number of legal matters, various clergy issues, and the setting of dates for Holy Synod and Metropolitan Council meetings in 2016.

FINANCIAL REPORT

EPISCOPATE SUPPORTER

Psa Martha MacLellan, Winnipeg, MB	\$250.00
Dumitru & Valentina Bodiu, West Bloomfield, MI	\$100.00
Dorothy Aldea, Royal Oak, MI	\$100.00
M/M Victor Dinu, Skokie, IL	\$100.00
M/M Phil Paranuik, Fredericton, NB.....	\$100.00
Saveta Ciocanea, Cleveland, OH	\$97.56
Sylvia Cantor, Cleveland, OH	\$50.00
Jessica & Joseph Wise, Rocky River, OH	\$48.70

2015 EPISCOPATE ASSESSMENT

St Nicholas, Troy, MI	\$4,375.00
St Dimitrie, Frederick, CO	\$1,325.00
St Andrew, Potomac, MD	\$1,220.00

2016 EPISCOPATE ASSESSMENT

St Elias, Ellwood City, PA.....	\$1,500.00
---------------------------------	------------

GENERAL DONATIONS

Liviu & Aurelia Costin, Humble, TX	\$2,000.00
National A.R.F.O.R.A.	
(Seminarian Scholarship Fund)	\$1,500.00
Holy Transfiguration, Manchester, CT.....	\$1,000.00
Peter Petkas, Houston, TX	
(In honor of Archbishop Nathaniel)	\$1,000.00
National A.R.F.O.R.A. (Hierarch Travel Fund) .	\$1,200.00
National A.R.F.O.R.A. (Vatra Housekeeping)....	\$1,200.00
National A.R.F.O.R.A. (Camp Vatra).....	\$1,200.00
St Andrew, Potomac, MD	
(2014 Special Assessment).....	\$500.00
St Dumitru, New York, NY (Travel Expense)	\$500.00
St Mary, Las Vegas, NV	
(2014 Special Assessment).....	\$500.00
St Pantelimon, St-Eustache, QC	
(2014 Special Assessment).....	\$500.00
St Thomas, St Louis, MO	
(2015 Special Assessment).....	\$100.00
Sts Constantine & Elena, Lilburn, GA	
(Travel Expense)	\$500.00

Cont. on page 16

IN MEMORY TRAIAN LASCU

Traian Lascu, born in Palos, Romania on September 24, 1923, to Traian and Maria (Stanciu) Lascu, fell asleep in the Lord on December 8, 2015, at the age of 92 in Florida. He was the beloved husband of Maria Lascu; beloved brother of Elena Itu (Romania), Gheorghe Lascu (Romania), Ana Munteanu-Ramnic (deceased), Maria Neder (deceased), Pandelescu (deceased), Vasile



Balaban (deceased), Ion Bell (deceased) and Maria Lascu (deceased); beloved uncle of Eugen, Cristina, Florin, Maria, Costica, Elena, Daniela and Silvia. Survived by beloved cousins Maria and Lulu Bogdan, along with their daughter, Carmen Bogdan; beloved cousin Aneta Iambor, along with her children, Gheorghe and Elena Oprean (daughter) and Mihai Iambor (son). Traian is also survived by respected family friend Gheorghe Marinescu. Visitation and Wake Service took place on December 11, 2015, at the John N. Santeiu & Son Funeral Home, Garden City, Michigan; and the funeral service was served by Protopresbyter Laurence Lazar on December 12, 2015, in the presence of His Eminence, Archbishop Nathaniel at St. George Cathedral, Southfield, Michigan. Burial was at St. Mary's Romanian Orthodox Cemetery at the Vatra in Grass Lake, Michigan.

Traian Lascu was an important personality in the history of the Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America due to his extensive work with *Solia*, the *American Romanian Orthodox Youth (AROY)*, the *Orthodox Brotherhood* and the *V.D. Trifa Romanian-American Heritage Center*. He also was the author of two books: "A.R.O.Y. – The American Romanian Orthodox Youth – A Short History 1950-1974," published in 1974; and "VALERIAN: 1951-1984," published in 1984. The following information was gleaned from an article of *Memories* that he had written several years ago.

After having spent three years wandering through Czechoslovakia, Germany and France as a refugee, Traian Lascu accepted his cousin George Ulita's offer to emigrate to Canada where he arrived (Halifax) on December 24, 1951. He spent several weeks in Sudbury, Ontario, where he enrolled in English classes for immigrants and excelled in learning the language.

He then travelled to Timmins, Ontario, where he was hired to work in the Aunor Gold Mine. Three years later, when the mine went on strike, he traveled to Windsor, Ontario where his cousin George worked for General Motors. Due to a downturn in the economy, no factory work was available; however, through the active refugee Cultural Association, he met Florence Gaspar whom he married six months later in Detroit at St. George Cathedral. The day following the wedding, he traveled with Florence and their good friend Eugen Siara to the Vatra to meet Bishop Valerian, whom he had never met, but knew about as a student leader in Romania.

Traian's father-in-law, Jack Gaspar, owned a print shop in Detroit which took over the printing of *Solia* on a bi-weekly basis when Bishop Valerian moved the operation from Cleveland in 1954. Traian became a printing apprentice in the family business and over time became responsible for the production of *Solia*, which included writing, printing and administration. In 1955, he was appointed AROY Editor and contributed an article in every issue. After his election as National AROY President in 1957, he wrote a column called the "President's Corner." Additionally, he wrote articles in English of general interest about events at the Vatra and AROY Conventions. During the Episcopate Congress at the Vatra, he manned the *Solia* stand. Traian's work schedule and time away from home as a result of his heavy involvement with the Episcopate and AROY stressed his relationship with his wife, and after seven years of marriage, Florence and Traian divorced. In 1962, he married Olga Rodenczuk (a marriage which was to last until her death 39 years later). He took a job with the *Detroit Free Press* and enrolled in Wayne State University, which didn't allow him any more time to work for the *Solia*. In 1967, he graduated from Wayne State and was hired by the State of Michigan, Department of Education, Vocational Rehabilitation Services. When the printing of *Solia* was moved to Woodward Avenue in Detroit, his new job afforded him the ability to occasionally help out with the *Solia*, especially on publication day. He became the English editor, and Bishop Valerian was the Romanian editor. Due to his many years of association with the Bishop and *Solia* operations, he knew how the Bishop expected the paper to look; so, when the Bishop could not return in time from parish visits, Traian singlehandedly produced the paper.

Concerned about what was happening to the older AROY members once they reached the age of 45, the supposed upper limit of belonging to the organization, Traian approached Bishop Valerian and suggested that a third Episcopate auxiliary be formed. The 1967 Episcopate Congress approved the formation of this auxiliary, named the "Orthodox Brotherhood," a direct translation of "Fratia Ortodoxa," a religious lay organization created in Romania to combat the prose-

Cont. on page 15

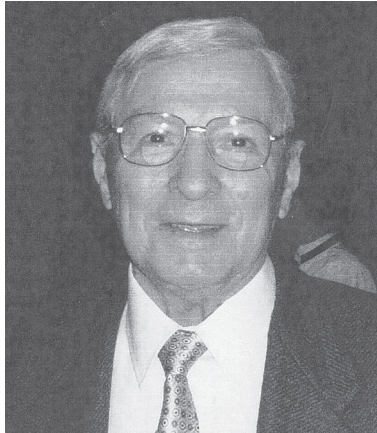
IN LOVING MEMORY OF CEZAR TEODORESCU

*Lasati clopotul sa plinga cu al lui voce de arama
Lasati turnul ca sa miste trupul lui de fier
Caci de stele mai aproape el le da acuma seama
Ca un suflet bun si nobil se indreapta catre cer.*
(Mihai Eminescu)

Cezar Teodorescu was born in Romania in 1923. Our father was peaceful and private, but also loud and vigorous in his belief in the principles behind the American dream, a free Romania, and his absolute belief in God.

Cezar was an amazing man in many ways. He swam the Danube to escape Communist Romania after serving in the Romanian army in World War II, arriving on, of all days, July 4th, 1951, in Yugoslavia, with no possessions to his name.

He crossed the Alps on foot, eventually being interned in a refugee camp in Italy. From there, Cezar crossed the Atlantic and took a job cutting trees in Northeast



Canada, so poor that he shared shoes with his best friend. Next he mined gold, made his way to Toronto and finally Detroit, working for General Motors.

He met our mother Doina at the Vatra in Jackson, Michigan (again magically on a 4th of July weekend) and was married shortly after.

Family dominated the second half of Cezar's life, first with his sons Mike and George, and then with his beloved grandchildren, Alexandra, Rachael, Brendan and Gabrielle. He retired after 37 years with GM with an outstanding service record, and traveled extensively with our mother in retirement.

Cezar was an extremely proud American-Romanian, always extolling the greatness of his adopted country and celebrating Romanian culture and freedom from tyranny in 1989. He devoted himself to being an outstanding father and grandfather, doting over his grandkids, their beloved 'Grandpa', with whom his generosity knew no bounds. For Cezar, his kids and grandchildren were the #1 priority; he was enormously proud of each of them.

Cezar Teodorescu passed away peacefully on January 20, 2015.

May God rest his soul, Dumnezeu sa-l odihneasca. We miss him dearly as Husband, Father, Grandfather and Friend.

George & Mike Teodorescu

Traian Lascu ... *Cont. from page 14*

lytizing efforts of Evangelical missionaries. Following the organizational meeting in October 1967, Traian became Chairman of the steering committee charged with presenting By-Laws at the next Conference. The next Conference elected him to be the Orthodox Brotherhood's first Chairman; and, he was heavily involved in the organization for years to come.

In 1974, the Episcopate Congress approved Archbishop Valerian's proposal to create a Heritage Center; and, two years later, Traian was drafted President of the Center with Archbishop Valerian acting as the Chairman of the Board. Thus began another long-running collaboration with the Archbishop in addition to Solia. Following the Archbishop's falling asleep in the Lord in January 1987, Traian fulfilled the role of one of three trustees to administer a Trust left by the Archbishop for the sole benefit of the Heritage Center, and he became Chairman of the Board. As a result of Traian's suggestion, the name of the center was changed to the "Valerian D. Trifa Romanian-American SOLIA NOV/DEC 2015

PRAY AND WORK FOR ORTHODOX UNITY IN NORTH AMERICA

NEW 50TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION OF THE POFTĂ BUNĂ COOKBOOK

\$14.00 ea. – U.S. Funds

Make check payable to:

ST. MARY'S SOCIETY

c/o Marie Sandru

3097 W 230th ST

NORTH OLMSTED OH 44070

Heritage Center." Following Traian's retirement from his job with the State of Michigan, he made several trips a month to the Center and served as editor of the Center's *Information Bulletin* until his he was forced to retire from these positions in order to take care of his wife who was in the grips of Alzheimer's disease. She fell asleep in the Lord in August 2001. A year later, he married Maria from Romania and lived a peaceful and uneventful life with the exception of yearly trips to Romania to visit her family there.

May his memory be eternal!

SOLIA

October 4, 2014 - December 11, 2015

We gratefully acknowledge the following donations and subscriptions to Solia - The Herald:

FRIENDS

Nicolae Filipescu Trust, Birmingham, MI	\$5,000.00
Anonymous, USA	500.00
A.R.F.O.R.A.	500.00
Orthodox Church Supplies, Jamaica Plain, MA.....	155.00
Paul & Carmen Scales, Arlington, TX.....	110.00
Madalena Ilcus, Jupiter, FL	100.00
Florika Zurz, Flushing, NY	100.00
(IMO Parents Adam & Margareta)	
Nicolae Filipescu, Birmingham, MI	50.00
(IMO Letitia Filipescu)	
William Monroe, Brooklyn, OH	50.00
(IMO Eugenia Monroe)	
George & Elizabeth Oancea, Jackson, MI	50.00
Alex & Maria Constantinescu, Calgary, AB	50.00
Gheorghe & Valeria Dumitrescu, Tallahassee, FL	40.00
Dan Miclau, Naples, FL	30.00
Anonymous, USA	30.00
George Ungham, Beaver Falls, PA	30.00
Rev. Fr. Andrew Lesko, Redlands, CA	25.00
Moise Murgu, Lakewood, OH	20.00
Florence Westerfield, Warren, MI	20.00
Cristofor & Stela Focsan, Pinellas Park, FL.....	20.00
Alexa Ungurian, Oakbank, MB	20.00
Margareta Raica, Carefree, AZ	20.00
Bonita Morin, Scottsdale, AZ	20.00
Ielita Daba, Oak Park, MI	15.00

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Joe Albritten, Carson City, NV
Maura Andronic, Clairsville, OH
Susan Branea, Banning, CA
Michael D. Buzash, Terre Haute, IN
Cheryl Ciulei, Greensboro, NC
Jenica Costache, Aurora, CO
Dr. Gabriel Curtis, Chester, PA
Robert Donus, Rockville Center, NY
Doina Dumitrescu, Princeton, NJ
Gheorghe/Valeria Dumitrescu, Tallahassee, FL
George Fara, Santa Monica, CA
Maria Finley, Las Vegas, NV
Niculae Ghetu, Mesa, AZ
Arne & Mariana Greaves, Jackson, MS
Rev. Fr. Andrew Lesko, Redlands, CA
Alexandria Lupu, Lake Havasu City, AZ
Milian Maur, Speedway, IN
Ersilia Maximo, Philadelphia, PA
Teodor & Irina Nadrau, Caledonia, MI
Valerie Papenheim, Venice, FL
John Petiu, Philadelphia, PA
Cynthia Pollack, Warren, MI
Michael Preda, Georgetown, TX
Vera Puscas, Midland, TX
Saint Mary Church, Saint Paul, MN
Edmund & Carolyn Sunday, Uniontown, OH
Elaine Timariu, McDonald, OH

Andy & Oana Trincia, Sacramento, CA
Mariana Vajda, Toms River, NJ
Vestal Publishing, Cliffwood, NJ
Florika Zurz, Flushing, NY
John DeMintici, Toronto, ON
George Galat, Burlington, ON
Willis Soprovich, Hairy Hill, AB

Financial Report *Cont. from page 13*

Michael & Eugenia Babu, Fairfield, CT (Good health of John & Alexandra Babu).....	\$100.00
Madelena Ilcus & Joseph Ilcus, Jupiter, FL.....	\$100.00
George & Audrey Fatsy, Trumbull, CT	\$50.00
Michael Cristache, Farmington Hills, MI	\$45.00
Marcella Bourean, Warren, MI	\$40.00
Lillian Fedorovici, Livonia, MI	\$40.00
Nicolae & Alexandra Roddy, Bellevue, NE.....	\$25.00
Psa Martha MacLellan, Winnipeg, MB (ACE Fund).....	\$20.00

DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONS

Helen Leonte, Indio, CA.....	\$50.00
Psa Martha MacLellan Winnipeg, MB	\$15.00

BUCHAREST FIRE VICTIMS

Holy Cross Ladies Auxiliary, Alexandria, VA	\$500.00
---------------------------------------------------	----------

VATRA GENERATIONS DONATIONS

Mike & Katica Chiriac & children, Middle Village, NY	\$2,500.00
Liviu & Aurelia Costin, Humble, TX	\$1,000.00
Steve & Katherine Miroy, Stafford, VA.....	\$1,000.00
Bill Ailes, Fairlawn, OH.....	\$500.00
David & Susan Barsan, Cuyahoga Falls, OH	\$300.00
M/M John Pop Jr, Northbrook, IL	\$250.00
Deacon & Mrs Wayne Wright, Uniontown, OH ...	\$250.00
(IMO Flora Grossmayer)	
Rachel & Radu Chebeleu, North Wales, PA	\$200.00
Horia & Mihalea Draghiciu, Muncie, IN.....	\$200.00
Dr Ioana Cristescu, Westlake, OH	\$100.00
Frank Kuziak, Stow, OH.....	\$100.00
Deborah Morgan, Akron, OH	\$100.00
Claudiu & Delia Popoviciu, Highland Hts, OH....	\$100.00
Stefana Popoviciu, Hudson, OH	\$100.00
Sally Shantz, Wadsworth, OH	\$100.00
Ed & Carolyn Sunday, Uniontown, OH.....	\$100.00
Dave & Pauline Witmer, Akron, OH	\$100.00
Robert & Christine Tyulty, Norton, OH	\$30.00



DIN VIAȚA PAROHILOR...



Deschiderea noii biserici a Parohiei Sfinții Trei Ierarhi din Seattle, WA, 2 noiembrie 2015 - IPS Părinte Nathaniel împreună cu Preotul Paroh Ioan Cătană, clerul prezent și credincioșii.



Aniversarea de 30 de ani a Parohiei Pogorârea Sfântului Duh, Ridgewood, NY - 18 noiembrie 2015, IPS Părinte Nathaniel împreună cu Preoții Parohi Viorel Dumitrescu și Ionuț Preda și clerul slujitor la Vecernia Mare.



Vizita IPS Părinte Nathaniel la Manchester, CT în parohia Schimbarea la Față, cu ocazia aniversării de 15 de la înființare, 22 noiembrie 2015 - tinerii parohiei împreună cu Părintele Arhiepiscop, Părintele Arhidiacon Vicar David Oancea și Preotul Paroh Daniel Moldovan.



Aniversarea de 20 de ani a Parohiei Sfântul Andrei, McKees Rocks, Pittsburgh, PA - 25 noiembrie 2015, IPS Părinte Nathaniel împreună cu Preotul Paroh Vasile Bârsan și credincioșii.

SCRISOARE PASTORALA 2015

NASTEREA DOMNULUI SI DUMNEZEULUI SI MANTUITORULUI NOSTRU IISUS HRISTOS

“...toate cele scrise despre Mine în legea lui Moise, în profeți și în psalmi trebuie să se plinească.”

(Luca 24:44)

Iubiții mei fii duhovnicești: Preacucernic Cler, Preacuvioși Monahi, și 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!

Iubiți Credincioși,

În această mare zi, prăznuim Nașterea Domnului Dumnezeuului și Mântuitorului nostru Iisus Hristos, născut în Betleemul Iudeii, în Israelul de azi. Numim această sărbătoare, “ziua Sa de naștere,” o naștere, însă, neînțeleasă de cei din vremea aceea, dar binecunoscută de proorocii din vechime, de Moise, de David și de sfinții strămoși, care așteptau venirea lui Mesia. În timp ce întregul Israel își ducea viața de zi cu zi, acolo în iesle sărăcăcioasă, Emanuel – care se tâlcuiește, Dumnezeu este cu noi – se naște în mijlocul poporului, printre neamuri: evrei, romani, greci și chiar străini, în cetatea Betleemului. Dar atunci foarte puțini, cu adevărat, au fost cei care au auzit cântarea îngerilor care slăveau pe Dumnezeu și înconjurau locul unde Mesia a binevoit a se naște. Însă astăzi, milioane de oameni cântă și laudă nașterea lui Hristos, Emanuel.

Domnul Hristos, în a Sa lucrare pământească, a cuvântat din Legea lui Moise, a reamintit poporului profețiile despre de nașterea Sa și a cântat psalmii strămoșului David. Poporul cunoștea aceste scripturi ca de asemenea și ucenicii săi care au fost martori la lucrările Sale. Doar faptul că Scripturile aveau să se împlinescă în ziua cea rânduită, ei aceasta nu au putut imediat realiza. De aceea, mai tarziu, înainte de înălțarea Sa la ceruri, Hristos le spune “toate cele scrise despre mine” trebuie să se împlinescă.

Sfântul Apostol Pavel mărturisește acest lucru spunând: “în multe rânduri și-n multe feluri grăindu-le Dumnezeu odinioară părinților noștri prin profeți, în zilele acestea de pe urmă ne-a grăit nouă prin Fiul, pe Care L-a pus moștenitor a toate, prin Care și veacurile le-a făcut, fiind El strălucirea slavei Sale și chipul ființei Sale” (Evrei 1:1-3).

Bine știm că, Dumnezeu, din iubirea sa pentru oameni, ne-a grăit mai întâi prin sfinții prooroci. Dar pentru a arăta în mod și mai direct această iubire pentru noi, la plinirea vremii, a trimis în lume pe Iisus Hristos, Fiul Său, pe care îl numim “Cuvântul Lui Dumnezeu.” Hristos ne grăiește totul de la Dumnezeu Tatăl, nu ca rob precum profeții, ci ca adevăratul și unul născut Fiul Său.

În Crez, mărturisim, “cred...și într-unul Domn Iisus Hristos, Fiul lui Dumnezeu, Unul Născut, Care din Tatăl s-a născut mai înainte de toți vecii, Lumină din Lumină, Dumnezeu adevărat din Dumnezeu adevărat...S-a întrupat de la Duhul Sfânt și din Maria Fecioara și S-a făcut om.” Sfântul Clement Romanul spunea: “Oare nu avem numai Un singur Dumnezeu, Un Hristos și Un Duh Sfânt care s-a revărsat peste noi? Și oare nu este numai o chemare în Hristos?” (Epistola către Corinteni, 46).

Acest personal “Cuvânt a lui Dumnezeu” care se numește Iisus Hristos, ne aduce nouă direct pe Dumnezeu Tatăl. Hristos, a doua persoană a Sfintei Treimi, este și a fost dintotdeauna cu

Tatăl de la început a adus toate într-o ființă și toate într-o veșnicie, *“fiind El strălucirea slavei Sale și chipul ființei Sale.”*

Acest sfânt praznic al creștinilor, sărbătoarea Nașterii Domnului și Dumnezeuului și Mântuitorului nostru Iisus Hristos în trup, are fundamente scripturistice, în legea lui Moise, a Profețiilor și în Psalmi. De aceea după Învierea Sa din morți, pentru 40 de zile a rămas pe pământ cu ucenicii Săi și *“le-a deschis mintea ca să’nțeleagă Scripturile”* (Luca 24:45) pentru ca în cele din urmă spuse ucenicilor Săi, Domnul a întărit cuvintele proorociilor de demult *“...toate cele scrise despre Mine în legea lui Moise, în profeți și în psalmi trebuie să se plinească”* (Luca 24:44).

Incepând de la Facere și până la Revelație, Sfintele Scripturi ne aduc aminte de nevoia pe care omenirea o are de un Mântuitor, de nevoia nașterii Mântuitorului, de nevoia reînțoarcerii Mântuitorului, care este Hristos, Dumnezeu. Știm că naștera Domnului Hristos este întruparea Sa în lume, în timp și spațiu, din pânțele Fecioarei Maria în Betleemul Iudeii, și totodată știm și că Hristos a fost înainte de timp și de toate cele create. El însuși este împlinirea Legii și a Profețiilor și Psalmilor dar și a dorinței arzătoare a fiecărui suflet de a fi împreună cu Dumnezeu, *“fiind El strălucirea slavei Sale și chipul ființei Sale.”*

Sfântul Ioan Evanghelistul ne amintește despre Cuvântul Vieții: *“Ceea ce era de la început, ceea ce noi am auzit, ceea ce cu ochii noștri am văzut, ceea ce am privit și ceea ce mâinile noastre au pipăit despre Cuvântul Vieții – și viața s-a arătat, și noi am văzut-o și mărturisim, și vă vestim viața de veci care la Tatăl era și care nouă ni s-a arătat – (1 Ioan 1:1-2) “fiind El strălucirea slavei lui Dumnezeu și chipul ființei Sale.”*

Auzind și cuvintele Proorocului Isaia, ne dăm seama de nemăsurata dragoste a lui Dumnezeu pentru noi în făgăduința nașterii Mântuitorului, care avea să aducă nădejde întregii omeniri. Dumnezeu nu ne-a lăsat în întuneric din dragostea Sa: *“Poporul cel ce umbla în întuneric a văzut lumină mare” ... “Că Prunc ni S’a născut, Fiu, și ni S’a dat, a Cărui stăpânire Și-o poartă pe umăr; și numele Lui se cheamă: Înger-de-mare-sfat, Sfetnic minunat, Dumnezeu tare, biruitor, Domn păcii, ... Mare va fi stăpânirea Lui și păcii Lui nu-i va fi hotăr”* (Isaia 9:5-6). El însuși *“fiind El strălucirea slavei lui Dumnezeu și chipul ființei Sale.”*

Aceasta, înseamnă, iubiți credincioși, că nu numai în duh trebuie să mergem către Betleem să ne închinăm Lui, ci mai ales, să înțelegem că Dumnezeu a deschis ușile Raiului și ne-a primit pe toți la sine oriunde ne găsim noi, duși fiind acolo de Fiul Său, pruncul născut în peșteră și culcat în iesle. Mai precis, așa cum ne spune Sfântul Ioan Evanghelistul, *“că Viața care a fost nevăzută”* a devenit acum văzută prin pânțele Maicii, Preasfânta și Preacurata Născătoarea de Dumnezeu și pururea Fecioara Maria, fiind atins, văzut, auzit de oameni, *“fiind El strălucirea slavei lui Dumnezeu și chipul ființei Sale.”*

Incheiem aceste gânduri cu frumoasele cuvinte al condacului praznicului Nașterii Domnului, compus de Sfântul Roman Melodul, despre *“Cuvântul Vieții”*: *“Fecioara astăzi pe Cel mai presus de ființă naște și pământul peșteră Celui neapropiat aduce. Îngeri cu păstori slavoslovesc și magii cu steaua călătoresc. Că pentru noi S-a născut prunc tânăr, Dumnezeu Cel mai înainte de veci.”* Cu adevărat Domnul și Dumnezeuul și Mântuitorul nostru Iisus Hristos este strălucirea slavei lui Dumnezeu și chipul ființei Sale.

Hristos se naște! Mariți-L!

Cu doriri de sănătate, pace și într-o bună sporire,

+ Nathaniel

† NATHANIEL

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

Proiectul „**GENERAȚIILE VETREI**”



Cinstiți
TRECUTUL.

Slujiți în
PREZENT.

Pregătiți
VIITORUL.

Proiectul „**GENERAȚIILE Vetrei**” este un apel către creștinii ortodocși români pentru a sprijini restaurarea sediului Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America "Vatra Românească." În 1938 – cu aproape opt decenii în urma - Vatra Românească a fost înființată în Grass Lake, Michigan ca sediul al Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America.

Generații întregi au beneficiat de experiențele frumoase trăite la taberele de vară, la congresele episcopiei și la alte activități găzduite la Vatra. Ca sediu al Episcopiei Ortodoxe Române din America, acest sfânt locaș este un centru al vieții bisericești care "în primul rând există pentru a da mărturie despre universalitatea veșnică a sfintei credințe ortodoxe așa cum este trăită în America de Nord" (Arhiepiscopul NATHANIEL).

Peste 6500 de tineri au participat la Taberele de Vară de la Vatra în ultimii 64 de ani, și mult mai mulți creștini au vizitat așezământul Vatra Românească. Astăzi, clădirile acestui sfânt locaș au nevoie de reparații majore pentru a cinsti moștenirea Episcopiei, pentru a susține activitatea curentă a Bisericii, și pentru a consolida nevoile generațiilor viitoare. Scopul Proiectului „**Generațiile Vetrei**” este de a finaliza aceste lucrări de restaurare în termen de trei ani.



Proiectul “**GENERAȚIILE** VETREI”



Cinstiți

TRECUTUL.

Slujiți în

PREZENT.

Pregătiți

VIITORUL.

Sprrijiniți Proiectul

Costul pentru prima fază a restaurării clădirilor de la Vatra Românească este de \$600.000.

Demararea proiectului va necesita \$80.000 până în decembrie 2015 pentru a începe lucrările de restaurare. Aceste lucrări vor include efectuarea de reparații structurale la reședință (casa principală) și la pavilion pentru a asigura starea sa de funcționare pentru tabăra de vara, la Congres și alte activități pentru credincioșii care vor vizita acest loc.

Următoarea etapă a proiectului va include restaurarea celorlalte clădiri în următorii doi ani. Această etapă va include în primul rând un apel general pentru a strânge restul de fonduri până la \$520.000, apoi planuri de utilizare extinsă a clădirilor și un plan de conservare pe termen lung.

Faceți un angajament pentru sprijinirea proiectului:

- Faceți o contribuție acum.
- Luați în considerare participarea în **Comitetul de strângere de fonduri**, care va duce la bun sfârșit acest vrednic proiect.
- Promovați în comunitatea parohială necesitatea și

Donăți și Participați în Comitet

Faceți un cec către: ROEA, PO BOX 309, GRASS LAKE MI 49240-0309
ori faceți donație online la roea.org (apăsati pe butonul “Donate”).

INTRAREA IN BISERICA A MAICII DOMNULUI

Arhimandrit Teofil Părăian

(Mănăstirea Brâncoveanu, Sâmbăta de Sus, 21 noiembrie 1997)

La slujba Sfântului Maslu este o alcătuire, o rugăciune către Maica Domnului, cu următorul cuprins: “Pe tine, preacuratul palat al Împăratului ceresc, ceea ce esti multlăudată, te rog, curătește-mi mintea mea cea întunecată cu tot felul de păcate și o fă locas înfrumusetat al dumnezeiestii Treimi, ca să laud și să măresc puterea ta și mila ta cea nemăsurată, fiind mântuit eu, netrebnicul robul tău”.

Această rugăciune ne pune în atenție măreția Maicii Domnului. O numim pe Maica Domnului “palat preacurat al Împăratului ceresc”; o numim pe Maica Domnului “multlăudată”. Dorim ca prin mijlocirea Maicii Domnului să fie curățită mintea noastră “de tot felul de păcate”, dorim să fie făcută mintea noastră “locas înfrumusetat al dumnezeiestii Treimi”. Cerem aceasta “ca să laud și să măresc puterea ta și mila ta cea nemăsurată”. Avem în vedere măreții ale Maicii Domnului pe care ni le pune în atenție Sfânta noastră Biserică, dar pe care noi nu le putem înțelege și nu le putem pretui la măsura lor, pentru că nu avem condițiile ca să stăm cu admirație în fata Maicii Domnului.

O stim pe Maica Domnului “palat al Împăratului ceresc”, o stim “multlăudată”, o stim mijlocitoare, înfrumusetătoare de suflet, stim că are putere și milă, stim că are mărire, stim că toate acestea trebuie luate în seamă. Pentru toate acestea trebuie să-i aducem laudă Maicii Domnului, dar nu putem face aceasta, pentru că lucrurile lui Dumnezeu nu pot fi înțelese numai din puterea omului.

Maica Domnului este Maica Dumnezeului nostru, este cea aleasă de Dumnezeu ca prin ea să vină în lumea aceasta Fiul Său. Este cea care L-a purtat în pântecul său pe Mântuitorul lumii, este cea care L-a născut pe Cel ce este om adevărat și Dumnezeu adevărat. Maica Domnului este mama Mântuitorului nostru și atunci este multlăudată; nu este nimeni în lumea aceasta ca Maica Domnului, nimeni nu are măsurile Maicii Domnului. Iar măsurile Maicii Domnului sunt mari, pentru că ea este în legătură cu Treimea cea dumnezeiască, cu puterea care a umbrat-o, cu Duhul Sfânt care S-a pogorât peste ea, cu Fiul ei și Dumnezeul nostru pe care L-a născut.

Maica Domnului este locas al Preasfintei Treimi. Este mărire a toată lumea, care din oameni a răsărit și pe Cuvântul L-a născut. Este “mai înaltă decât cerurile și mai curată decât strălucirile soarelui”. Este “mai cinstită decât heruvimii și mai mărită, fără de asemănare, decât serafimii”, fiindcă este Maica Dumnezeului nostru. Pe toate acestea noi le spunem cu cuvântul. Am vrea să le înțelegem cu gândul și să le trăim cu simțirea, dar din puterea noastră nu putem face aceasta decât la măsurile noastre, și atunci cerem

de la Maica Domnului ajutor să înțelegem și să laudăm mărire ei, puterea ei, mila ei.

Ar trebui să avem mereu astfel de gânduri măcar la sărbătorile Maicii Domnului, cinci fiind acestea: Nasterea Maicii Domnului în 8 septembrie, Intrarea în Biserică a Maicii Domnului, în 21 noiembrie, Soborul Maicii Domnului, în 26 decembrie, Bunavestire, în 25 martie, și Adormirea Maicii Domnului, în 15 august. Dar noi ne întâlnim cu Maica Domnului și în alte zile la slujbele noastre, când zicem: “Spăi-mântatu-s-au toate de dumnezeiască mărire ta, că tu, Fecioară neispită de nuntă, ai avut în pântec pe Dumnezeu Cel peste toate și ai născut Fiul pe Cel fără de ani, pe Cel ce dăruiește pace tuturor celor ce te laudă pe tine”.

Ne gândim la Maica Domnului în timpul sfintelor slujbe, când auzim: “Pe preasfânta, curată, preabinecuvântată, mărita, Stăpâna noastră, de Dumnezeu Născătoarea și pururea Fecioara Maria, cu toți sfintii să o pomenim”. Ne gândim la Maica Domnului când auzim la sfintele slujbe: “Pe Născătoarea de Dumnezeu și Maica Luminii, întru cântări cinstindu-o, să o mărim”.

Ne gândim la Maica Domnului când ni se spune: “Pe tine, preacuratul palat al Împăratului ceresc, ceea ce esti multlăudată”. Ne gândim la Maica Domnului când se spun cuvintele: “De tine se bucură, ceea ce esti plină de dar, toată făptura, soborul îngeresc și neamul omenesc; ceea ce esti biserică sfântită și rai cuvântător, lauda fecioriei, din care Dumnezeu S-a întrupat și prunc S-a făcut Cel ce este mai înainte de veci. Că bratul tău - scaun l-a făcut și pântecul tău mai desfătat decât cerurile l-a lucrat. De tine se bucură, ceea ce esti plină de har, toată făptura, mărire tie!”. Ne gândim la Maica Domnului ca la ceea ce este mai presus de minte și de cuvânt, căci ni se spune: “Pe tine, Maica lui Dumnezeu, cea mai presus de minte și de cuvânt, care ai născut negrăit sub ani pe Cel fără de ani, credinciosii, te mărim”.

Astăzi, la sărbătoarea aceasta, ne gândim la legătura Maicii Domnului cu Templul din Ierusalim. Templul din Ierusalim era un locas sfânt, ceea ce aveau evreii mai de căpetenie, mai înalt, mai deosebit, un fel de cer pe pământ, un fel de loc în care se uneste cerul cu pământul. Dorința evreilor era ca fiecare să ajungă la Templul din Ierusalim. Acolo, după Tradiția Bisericii, preasfânta Fecioară Maria a stat 12 ani și fost educată împreună cu alte fecioare, până la vârsta de 15 ani.

Templul din Ierusalim era ceva deosebit, dar în el era o încăpere mai presus decât orice în această lume. Acolo era Chivotul Legii, în care erau cele două Table ale Legii, pe care erau scrise cele 10 Porunci, era Toiagul lui Aaron, care odrăslise, era un vas cu mană

din cea care căzuse spre hrana evreilor în pustie, după ce trecuseră Marea Rosie, când au fost eliberați din robia Egiptului, erau doi heruvimi care aveau aripile întinse peste Chivotul Legii... Acolo nu intra decât o dată pe an, singur, arhiereul.

În credința Bisericii noastre este și adevărul că Maica Domnului a stat în această încăpere, vreme îndelungată, deși sunt unii care spun că lucrul acesta era cu neputință. Și totuși, Biserica noastră zice, în alcătuirile ei de slujbă: "Ceea ce s-a hrănit în Sfânta Sfințelor, celei îmbrăcate cu credința și cu înțelepciune și cu neîntinată feciorie, maimarele Gavriil i-a adus din ceruri închinăciune".

Nu trebuie să fim încurcați în gândurile noastre de astfel de nepotriviri, ci trebuie să știm că dacă lucrul acesta n-a fost cu putință în chip obisnuit, a fost cu putință în chip mai presus de fire. În Epistola către Evrei a Sfântului Apostol Pavel este scris că Domnul nostru Iisus Hristos, Arhiereul cel vesnic, n-a intrat niciodată într-o Sfântă a Sfințelor făcută de mână omenească. Și totuși a intrat în Sfânta Sfințelor, în Sfânta Sfințelor pe care o închipuia Sfânta Sfințelor de aici, de pe pământ. Sigur, așa a fost și cu Maica Domnului.

Maica Domnului, cea pregătită ca să-L nască pe Mântuitorul lumii, cea pregătită ca în pânțele ei să se unească firea omenească cu firea dumnezeiască în Mântuitorul nostru Iisus Hristos, a intrat și ea în Sfânta Sfințelor - prin viața ei, prin gândurile ei, prin mărețiile ei, prin darurile ei. A intrat în Sfânta Sfințelor care este smerenia, pentru că la Bunavestire a zis către îngerul binevestitor "Iată roaba Domnului, fie mie după cuvântul tău!" (Luca 1, 38), iar Sfânta Elisabeta i-a zis: "Binecuvântat este rodul pântecelei tale!" (Luca 1, 42).

Toate acestea s-au întâmplat având-o în vedere pe Maica Domnului, care este "mai înaltă decât cerurile" și, dacă este mai înaltă decât cerurile Bisericii noastre, dacă este mai curată decât strălucirile soarelui, sigur că prin aceasta a intrat în Sfânta Sfințelor nefăcută de mână omenească - prin viața ei, prin ceea ce purta în suflet, prin ceea ce a avut în gândurile ei când se pregătea să nască pe Mântuitorul, prin ceea ce a gândit, prin ceea ce a simțit când L-a purtat în pânțele ei pe Mântuitorul lumii.

Maica Domnului, ea însăși este Sfântă a sfinților, Sfântă mai înaltă decât toți sfinții. La măsurile Maicii Domnului nu există nici un sfânt. Noi așa o cinstim pe Maica Domnului, ca pe cea mai înaltă dintre toți sfinții, ca pe cea mai aleasă, ca pe ceea ce este unică în lumea aceasta. Dacă ea a fost închipuită de Sfânta Sfințelor, de încăperea aceea din Templul din Ierusalim în care nu putea să intre decât o dată pe an singur arhiereul, dacă a fost închipuită de Sfânta Sfințelor, atunci este ea însăși Sfântă a Sfințelor. Biserica noastră ne-o prezintă ca fiind un "sicriu însufletit", un chivot: "Ca de un sicriu însufletit, ca de un chivot însufletit al lui Dumnezeu, nicicum să nu se atingă

mâna necredinciosilor, iar buzele credinciosilor, fără tăcere glasul îngerului strigând, cu bucurie să zică: «Bucură-te, cea plină de dar, Domnul este cu tine!»".

Asa a zis îngerul, așa zicem și noi, de aceea avem bucuria de a fi cinstitori ai Maicii Domnului. O primim pe Maica Domnului așa cum ne-o prezintă Biserica, o ținem în sufletul nostru cu evlavie câtă o avem și ne silim să urmăm exemplul Maicii Domnului în supunerea față de Mântuitorul, în grija față de oameni, în tăcerea care se desprinde din faptul că avem atât de puține cuvinte ale Maicii Domnului în Sfânta Evanghelie. O avem pe Maica Domnului ca exemplu de milostivire pentru cei ce au trebuință de ajutorul ei și, știind că Maica Domnului nu este numai mama Mântuitorului, ci și mama noastră, ne gândim și la însusirile de mamă pe care le are preasfânta Fecioară Maria față de credincioșii care fac ceea ce a zis ea să facă, adică ascultă de Mântuitorul nostru Iisus Hristos.

Să-I multumim lui Dumnezeu pentru aceste daruri ale Bisericii noastre, să multumim lui Dumnezeu pentru faptul că Maica Domnului este și mama noastră. Să multumim lui Dumnezeu pentru faptul că avem pe Maica Domnului mijlocitoare pentru binele nostru, să multumim lui Dumnezeu că avem pe Maica Domnului ajutoarea noastră. Să nu uităm că "ceea ce poate Dumnezeu cu puterea, poate Maica Domnului cu rugăciunea", și să avem încredere în ajutorul ei. Să-i urmăm cât putem exemplul, ca să avem și noi parte de binecuvântarea Domnului nostru Iisus Hristos acum și pururea, amin!



PSALMUL NAȘTERII

Acolo, înlăuntru - când ciocănit, când trapul...
Sub pericard de ceruri, în sânul lui - odăi!
Cum m-ai pârât la lume că n-ai un' să pleci capul,
Pot să-nțeleg cu lemnu-mi jucânde-le-Ți vâpăi?

Văzându-Te, ca Tată, nu Te-a certat când lutul
Îl modelai în palmă, dar ar fi trebuit!
Cum să închei zidirea de n-ai prin chei sărutul?
Și-atunci, fără să știe, pe-ascuns L-ai jefuit,

Trei nopți cărând cu lemnul, ce nu gândea seraful,
Că-n jocul Tău cu huma Te ascundeai deplin,
Și-n peșteră Fecioara o să-nvelească jaful,
Ce apele Iubirii le va nunti în vin.

Parcă chemări de toacă, odăii' -aud, ce-ades le
Credeam că-mi bat la ușă, dar Tu-mi zâmbești din iesle.

Dumitru Ichim
Kitchener, Ontario

CAMP VATRA FUNDRAISER

Camp Vatra alumni and supporters, show your pride and support for Camp Vatra by purchasing a limited-edition Tshirt or Sweatshirt today! All proceeds from this sale will go toward helping to fund another year of programs for our youth.

This is a limited time offer, so don't miss your chance to order now. (After January 15, shirts will no longer be available.)

Purchase online only at: www.booster.com/CampVatraCollection

Cu ocazia praznicului Nașterii Domnului și a Noului An 2016, urăm tuturor cititorilor Revistei Solia, bucurie și pace în inimi, spor și veselie în case, nădejde și trăire în Cel ce este și se naște în ieslea din Betleem. Un sincer și călduros: LA MULTI ANI!



VENIȚI CU TOȚII

Veniți cu toții dimpreună
Să ne facem voie bună
Să ne bucurăm de Domnul
Și să strigăm cu tot omul.

Că ne e Domn și mântuintă
Și să strigăm cu credință
Lui din hotarele toate
I se închină țări și gloate.

Ca marea cu valuri înalte
Dea Lui mână sunt lucrute
De El sunt făcuți și munții
Și brazii mari și mărunții.

El a făcut tot pământul
Singur numai cu Cuvântul
Și nouă ne este Domnul.
Împărat peste tot omul.

Iar cați în El nu crezură
Ispitiră și văzură
Părăsiți de Domnul fură
Căzând în dreapta Lui mână

SOSIT-A PRAZNICUL IAR

Sosit-a praznicul iar
De care ne bucurăm
Că Iisus din cer coboară
Să se nască-n Viflaem

Din Maria, Maica sfântă,
Mama lui Dumnezeu
N-are loc să se-odihnească,
Să nască pe Fiul Său.

Ea umblă din casă-n casă
Și nimenea n-o lăsa
Ea bătea din poartă-n poartă,
Până din oraș ieșea

La păstori cum ei sosiră
După ce se odihniră
Cerul frumos strălucea,
De o stea ce răsărea

Ei mergeau pe drum plângând,
Sfântul Iosif și zicând:
"Eu mai văd departe-n zare
Noi vom merge pe-o cărare"

Steaua de la răsărit
Se duce spre asfințit
Să le-arate la magi locul
Unde s-a născut Hristosul

Să se bucure oricine
De nașterea lui Hristos
Că ne-a scos din focul veșnic
Dupa cum proroci-au spus

Să se roage lumea-ntreagă
Împăratului Ceresc
Să trimită pacea sfântă
La tot neamul omenesc

Scapă Doamne cu tărie
Pe toți cari se roagă Ție
Iar praznicul luminat
Cari cu drag l-am așteptat

Noi dorim ca să vă fie
La mulți ani cu bucurie
La mulți ani s-aveți noroc
De nașterea lui Hristos