St. Mary Antiochian
Orthodox Christian Church

A Parish of the Self-Ruled Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese (antiochian.org) … and …
The Diocese of Charleston, Oakland & The Mid-Atlantic (antiochian.org/east)
(“...the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch!” Acts 11:26)
111 Alberta Avenue – Johnstown, PA 15905-3002
stmaryaocc.org // office@stmaryaocc.org
Most Rev. Metropolitan JOSEPH – Archbishop & Primate
Right Rev. Bishop THOMAS – Auxiliary Bishop
(Diocese of Charleston / Oakland & The Mid-Atlantic)
Very Rev. Fr. Donald E. Shadid, M.Div. & D.Min. – Archpriest & Pastor
Rev. Fr. Anthony G. Roeber, M.A. (Theology) & Ph.D. – Attached Clergy
Renee D’Ettorre – Parish Council Chairperson

“Go to Church … Say Your Prayers … Don’t Forget God!”
(+Fr. Tom Hopko’s Mom)

+ SUNDAY OF THE PHARISEE & THE PUBLICAN +

Sunday, February 21, 2016

Venerable TIMOTHY of Symbola // EUSTATHIOS, Archbishop of Antioch //
ZACHARIAH, Patriarch of Jerusalem // GEORGE, Bishop of Amastris

Glory be to Jesus Christ! Glory be to Him Forever!

We welcome all of you, our Faithful and our Visitors, to St. Mary Orthodox Church! It is a pleasure to have you with us as we glorify and praise the Name of our God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Please sing along with our Choir during the Liturgy.

Please note that the Sacrament of Holy Communion can only be given to Orthodox Christians who have prepared themselves by prayer, fasting, regular Confession (at least twice per year … 7 Yrs. old & up), who attend Liturgy regularly & on time (at least 3 times a month) … and … are at peace with all people.

When receiving Holy Communion, please fold your arms over your chest, open your mouth wide, tip your head back slightly and allow the priest to place the elements in your mouth.

For our non-Orthodox brethren, we welcome you to sing and pray with us, venerate the Cross and receive the Holy Bread at the end of the Divine Liturgy. Please join us again soon.

May God Bless You Always!
**HOLY OBLATION:** Offered by Janice Agypt for the health of All Within The Agypt, George, McLoota & Mulkey Families.

**PASCHAL CANDLES:** Offered in beloved memory of Elizabeth (Andrews) Spada, and in remembrance of her Birthday (Feb. 26), by daughter & son-in-law, Barbara & Buddy Skala, grandson, Andy & his wife, Jill and granddaughter, Stephanie & her husband, Dennis and their children, Brendan & Erin.

**PROSKAMEDIA CANDLES:** Offered in beloved memory of uncle & Godfather, Bernard (Baheejh / Behay) Salem & Mary Lou Angus (+5 Yrs. - beloved daughter of our former parishioner & priest and his wife, Fr. Alexander & Khouria Vivian Curry) by Christine Salem.

**SEVEN-BRANCH CANDLES:** Offered in beloved memory of aunt, Rose Andrews, by Barbara & Eugene Skala and Family and Tony & Marianne Spada and Family.

**PRAYERS OF LITURGICAL REMEMBRANCE**
Offered for the health & recovery of: sister, Dalal George and All Within our St. Mary Parish Family by David & Majda Farra // Lottie Bertino by Mollie Feeney (Khouria Janet’s aunt – Boston, MA) … and …
Offered in beloved memory of: Freda (Corey) Beaugez (Ocean Springs, MS) by Tom & Judy Davidson (dear friends of Lottie [Corey] & Larry Bertino) and David & Majda Farra // Maria Plakakis by David & Majda Farra

**TRISAGION PRAYERS OF MERCY (Naha):** (+40 Days) Offered in beloved memory of uncle, John Unes, uncle & aunt, John & Jeanette (Shadid) Harris and special family friend & “aunt,” Tina Harris by Fr. Don, Khouria Janet, Christopher & Stephen Shadid. **May Their Memory Be Ever Eternal!**

For The Living – “God Grant Them Many Years!” … and …
For The Departed – “May Their Memory Be Ever Eternal!”

- **VARIATIONS & NOTES ON THE LITURGY** -

**THIRD ANTIPHON:** (Troparion During The Little Entrance – Tone Five)
See “Troparion of the Resurrection” Below.

**AFTER THE LITTLE ENTRANCE:**

**TROPARION OF THE RESURRECTION:** (Tone Five)
Let us believers praise and worship the Word, co-eternal with the Father and
the Spirit; born of the Virgin for our salvation. For He took pleasure in ascending the Cross in the flesh, to suffer death and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection.

TROPARION OF THE DORMITION: (Patron Feast Day - Tone One)
In thy birth-giving, O Theotokos, thou didst keep and preserve virginity; and in thy falling-asleep thou hast not forsaken the world for thou wast translated into life, being the Mother of Life. Wherefore, by thine intercessions, deliver our souls from death.

KONTAKION OF THE PHARISEE & THE PUBLICAN: (Tone Four)
Let us flee the Pharisee’s conceited vaunting; let us learn the Publican’s humility, and cry with groans unto the Savior: Thou Who alone art swiftly reconciled, be gracious unto us.

EPISTLE: 2 Corinthians 3:10–15 (Sunday of The Pharisee & The Publican)

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 18:10–14 (Sunday of The Pharisee & The Publican)

Concerning the “Kiss of Peace,” prior to the Nicene Creed, we encourage you to greet those around you with a handshake, saying: “Christ is in Our Midst!”...the response being: He is and Always Shall Be!” In this way, we express: (1) our Joy that God has acted to restore our Communion with Him...and (2) our Hope in the Resurrection from the Dead that is offered to us by our Lord’s own “trampling down death by death!” God is With Us (“Emmanuel”!)

- THIS WEEK’S EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS -
(Church Office: Tues. & Thurs. 9 AM – 4 PM and Wed. & Fri. 3:30 – 6 PM)

+ Tuesday, February 23 – NO DAILY ORTHROS (Morning Prayers).
+ Wednesday, February 24 – DAILY VESPERS – 6 PM.
+ Thursday, February 25 – DAILY ORTHROS (Morning Prayers) – 8 AM.
+ Saturday, February 27 – GREAT VESPERS – 5 PM.
+ Sunday, February 28 – SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON – MATINS @ 8:15 AM & DIVINE LITURGY @ 9:30 AM ... Followed by Fellowship & Church School (Pre-School thru 12th Grade) ... Join us!

House Blessings Have Begun! ... NEW! NEW! NEW! ... If you would like your Home Blessed this year, please call the Church Office and ask to be put on the House Blessing List for 2016 ... Thank You! The Church Secretary, Angela, or Fr. Don, will then contact you to schedule a time for the Blessing of your Home!
THOSE IN SPECIAL NEED OF OUR PRAYERS: CONEMAUGH HOSPITAL: Lottie Bertino (#A–1011) & Sophie Regula (#R–841); ARBUTUS PARK MANOR: Mitchell Azar (#423); CAMBRIA CARE CENTER: Marie Hyde (#413) & Donna Haider (#130); LAURELVIEW VILLAGE: Very Rev. John (#104) & Matushka Olga Govrusik (#528), Janet Fronis (#918), George Heider (#210), Vivian Salem (#315) and Dorothy Wensel (#812); LAURELWOOD CARE CTR: Dawn (Joseph) Hagins (#8–D); THE VILLA ASSISTED LIVING: Genevieve Milkie (#202), Becky Azar; Renee D’Ettorre; Elaine Heider; Dorothy Krinock; Martha McLoota & Peter Povich. May God be with all of Them & all of Those who are ill and / or in need!

+++ CONFESSION SCHEDULE +++
After All Weekday + Saturday Services and By Appointment Before Services.
Due to Fr.’s Commitment to Matins, Confession Will Not Be Offered On Sunday Mornings.

MEMORY ETERNAL: It is with a “bright sadness” that we announce that Freda (Corey) Beaugez (sister of Lottie Bertino & aunt of Larry Bertino - Ocean Springs, MS) has “Fallen-Asleep in the Lord.” We pray that our Lord will grant her Rest in His Heavenly Kingdom where all of His Blessed Saints do Repose; and we ask Him to grant His Mercy & Peace (John 14:27) to all within the Beaugez, Corey & Bertino Families, and us, as we all mourn her Passing with the Hope of Christ in our Hearts (1 Thessalonians 4:13). May Her Memory Be Ever Eternal!

St. Mary Parish Financial Snapshot
As of January 31, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>January 2016*</th>
<th>Year to Date*</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parishioner Giving</td>
<td>$ 23,703.00</td>
<td>$ 23,703.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses Paid</td>
<td>$ 14,140.65</td>
<td>$ 14,140.65</td>
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<td>Parishioner Giving vs. Expenses Paid</td>
<td>$ 9,562.35</td>
<td>$ 9,562.35</td>
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*Please Note that the Income listed here is only from our Parishioners’ Envelopes.

A SPECIAL “THANK YOU!“: On behalf of our St. Mary Parish Family, Fr. Don and our Parish Council would like to offer a special “Thank You!” to: Albert Ghantous and his Employees of “Elias Painting” for their beautiful & thorough painting of our Restrooms, which are in the Hallway outside of our Social Hall ... and ... Bob & George Audey and Stan of S.R. & G. Construction, as well as their Employees, for their prep work in the Bathrooms ... the plastering & touch-up in the Women’s Restroom and the removal of the old Electric Heat
Units in both Restrooms. We pray that “God Will Grant Albert and all within the Ghantous & Jackson Families, the Employees of Elias Painting & their Families, all within Bob, George & Stan’s Families and the Employees of S.R. & G. Construction and their Families Many, Many Years of Health, Joy, Peace (John 14:27) & Happiness! We are so blessed to have parishioners who care so much for our Lord’s House! Thank You & God Bless!

Attention Ladies ... Join Us For A Scrip Lunch!
+ Please join the Ladies of St. Mary to fundraise – while we eat!
+ 2nd Tues. of each month ... March 2016 Location = Harrigan’s
+ Buy a Gift Card from Olga, Becky or Kelli (or share one with a friend) and St. Mary will earn 10% of whatever you spend, including the Tip!

CAN WE KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU VIA E-MAIL?: If you will give us your e-mail address, we can keep in touch with you concerning Parish News, Events, etc. We will not share your information with anyone. Please send your e-mail address to office@stmaryaocc.org ... Thank You & God Bless!

*** DO NOT FORGET TO BUY YOUR SCRIP AFTER CHURCH TODAY!
WE HAVE ALL THE BRANDS YOU NEED ... GIANT EAGLE, SHEETZ, ETC.!

WE NEED YOU AT THE FAMILY KITCHEN ... LET US SERVE THE LORD!: Our Lord tells us that when we serve those “in need,” we serve Him! Our Parish Family has been helping to serve Weekend Meals at The Family Kitchen downtown at 231 Bedford Street for several years. This year, we have been asked to help on 3 Weekends ... the dates are: Saturday, May 28, Sunday, August 28 & Saturday, December 31. We meet at the Kitchen at 11 AM and are done by about 1 PM. We have also been asked to make a Donation of $350.00 each time to help defer the expenses of each meal. If you can help us down at The Kitchen and/or with a Donation, please contact Fr. Don or our Parish Office (255-2148). We have always “taken away” from our experience more than we “have given” – please help us out if you can! Thank You & God Bless!

“Find out how much God has given you. From it, take what you need. The remainder which you do not require is needed by others. The excesses of the rich are the necessities of the poor.” – Blessed Augustine
**HOLY OBLATION SPONSORS NEEDED:** The prayerful work of offering the Holy Bread for our Divine Liturgy is a sacred opportunity which we should all partake of when we are able. It is one of the ways that we can participate in the Holy Divine Liturgy, by offering our simple gifts of bread, wine & water to God, with our prayers that He will return them to us as the Body & Blood of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ! One does not have to be able to bake the Holy Bread. We have it at the Church and are seeking sponsors. However, if you would like to learn how to bake the Holy Bread, please let Fr. Don know.

Unfortunately, we are having difficulty in obtaining Holy Bread Sponsors each week. It is our Orthodox tradition that each parishioner, as a member of our St. Mary Parish Family, participate in this ministry. When we pass the Sign-Up Sheet around in the Sanctuary, or at any time, you may sign-up for this wonderful ministry. Thank you for your cooperation!

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**READINGS & INSPIRATION from the Diocese of Charleston**

SPIRITUAL NOTES + BIBLE STUDY + SPIRITUAL NUGGETS

Please note that there is a new section on our Diocesan Webpage at the Antiochian Archdiocese Website ... antiochian.org/charleston/readings. Here you will find: **“Spiritual Notes”** (His Grace, Bishop THOMAS has long provided his flock with appropriate weekly teachings selected from his treasured collection of essays, articles, homilies & more, including many rare pieces from earlier decades of The Word), **“Bible Study”** (A weekly study of scripture from His Grace, Bishop THOMAS, Fr. Stephen DeYoung & the Diocese of Charleston, Oakland and the Mid-Atlantic) and **“Spiritual Nuggets”** (Brief meditations & quotations offered by Fr. Noah Bushelli).

“Thank You!” to our Father-in-Christ and Shepherd, His Grace, Bishop THOMAS for this opportunity to grow in our knowledge “of” God! **May God Grant Saidna THOMAS Many, Many Years!**
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

We really ought to confess our poverty, our destination to the Lord our God. This is what the tax collector confessed, who did not so much as dare to raise his eyes to heaven. As a man and a sinner he did not have the wherewithal to lift up his eyes. He was looking at his own emptiness, but he knew what ample wealth the Lord disposed of. He knew that he was coming, thirsty, to the fountain. He indicated his parched throat; he earnestly beat the breast he wanted filled. “Lord,” he said, beating his breast, lowering his eyes to the ground, “be gracious to me, a sinner” (Luke 18:13).

What I say is, that he was already to some extent rich, since he had the idea of making such a request. After all, if he had been completely poor, from where would he have been able to produce these gems of confession? All the same, it was a better endowed and wealthier man who went down justified from the Temple. The Pharisee, though, went up to pray and did not ask for anything: “They went up to the Temple,” He says, “to worship” (Luke 18:10). One asks, the other does not. And where did this other belong? “There are those who think themselves rich though they have nothing” (Proverbs 13:7). “Lord,” he said, “I thank you that I am not like other men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers, like this tax collector here, for example. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of everything I possess” (Luke 18:11-12).

He was being boastful, but it was all hot air, no solid substance. He thought himself rich though he had nothing. The other man admitted he was poor, though he already had something. To say nothing else, he had the earnestness to confess. And they both went down. “But that tax collector,” He says, “was justified more than that Pharisee. For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and who humbles himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:14).

St. Augustine of Hippo

For more information on Eastern spirituality, visit www.ecpubs.com
THE WELCOMING OF OUR GUESTS: Fr. Don would like to ask all within our St. Mary Parish Family to help him with the Welcoming of Guests to our Liturgical Services. If you have a Family Member or Friend who is visiting that you would like publically welcomed, or if you see someone new, please get their name and inform Fr. Don of this before, or if need be, during the Service via a note. Remember, Fr. Don is leading us in our Liturgical Prayer and his concentration and attention are directed towards the proper celebration of the Divine Services. Your help in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

Thank You and God Bless!

MONTHLY CANDLES: 2016 Monthly Candle Prayer Sheets on Brochure Table in Hallway... Paschal Candles / Proskamedia Candle / Seven-Branched Candle... requested Donation... $20 per Candle per Month... can be more than 1 sponsor per candle per month... unless candle is sponsored for more than 1 month, sponsorship expires at end of the month, no matter when it is started in that month. Thank You!

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEKLY BULLETIN: In your Prayer Requests, please indicate whether each person is an Orthodox or non-Orthodox Christian, so that Fr. can properly commemorate your Orthodox Christian Loved Ones on the Holy Paten, and thus in the Chalice. Please know that all names that you submit are commemorated in the Holy Services throughout the Week. It is indeed an awesome responsibility & great Joy to offer your Prayers before God! Thank You & God Bless!
IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING PARISHIONER ENVELOPES & “ARCHDIOCESAN OFFERING”

Please be reminded that our St. Mary Parish Council has, after prayer, discussion & review of our current Envelope System and Financial Offerings to the Archdiocese, approved a few changes to our current Envelope System:

a) we have gone back to the Boxes of Envelopes, rather than having the Envelopes mailed out each month … please pick up your Box of Envelopes on the Front Pew;

b) regarding the Archdiocese Assessment that was collected “per baptized soul” a few years ago, our Antiochian Archdiocese moved into a system of “proportionate giving” … to provide an example to us all and to take away some of the time consuming record keeping that was involved with the system of “assessments” … thus all parishioners are reminded that, in keeping with the Holy Scriptures, our St. Mary Parish Family submits 10% of our Annual Receipts (minus Fundraiser Expenses, Donations, and a few other deductions) to the Archdiocese, whether we receive this amount from our Parishioners or not … therefore, all of our Faithful are asked to please submit their Archdiocesan Offering, which has been increased to $50 per Baptized Soul in your Family, to our St. Mary Parish as soon as they are able;

c) in light of the above, we have gone back to using the “blue” Archdiocese Envelope … it is in the February section of your Box of Envelopes … again, please submit this with the appropriate Offering (now $50 per Baptized Soul) … and, if you wish to spread this Offering out over a short period of time, please do so, and indicate this on your Envelope … and …

d) lastly, note that only those Offerings that were received by Sunday, December 27, 2015, will be recorded as 2015 Contributions. The “End of the Year Statements” will be mailed out in January … if you do not get yours, please call the Parish Office.

If you have any questions about this part of your Calling to Christian Stewardship, please see Fr. Don, Susan Joseph or Renee D’Etore.

Thank You and God Bless You & Your Families During 2016 and Always!
The Canaanite Woman

Masters, Fathers, Mothers, Brothers & Sisters, Bless!

I

“The.”

In Christ,
+Fr. Noah

++ + A Prayer for Peace + + +

With the recent surge of Terrorism related Violence, Fr. Don would like to ask all of our Faithful to join him in offering “A Prayer for Peace” for one and all. Please add this to your Rule of Prayer as we seek the Peace that only God can provide through the Power of the Holy Spirit, for the Peace of this world is so temporary & fleeting (John 14:27). May God help us to remember that our true enemies are the Powers of Darkness, not the flesh & blood of our Lord’s Creation!

*Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.*
As it has been noted during the last several years, our Archdiocese has been moving towards a “Tithing” system of giving in regards to our parishes and their contributions for our Archdiocesan Ministries... thus, in 2006 we were asked to give 8% of our Parish’s Income to the Archdiocese, in 2007 it was 9% and since 2008 and forward, it has been 10% ... this was approved at the 2005 Archdiocesan Convention in Dearborn, MI ... in the Holy Scriptures, our Lord asks for our “Tithe” (10%) ... our returning 10% of what He has blessed us with so that His Work may be done ... (Leviticus 27:30 / Deuteronomy 14:22-29 / Malachi 3:8) ... so, let us offer our thanks to God for the wise guidance of our Hierarchical, Clergy & Lay Leadership as we seek to always fulfill His Will for His Vineyard, the Church;

Also, please be reminded that the “Archdiocese Obligation” is $50.00 per baptized person in your family ... and as in the past, our Parish Council asks that you please submit your contribution towards this, by the Sunday before Christmas, using the Blue Archdiocese Envelope that came in your January Packet of Envelopes;

Along with all of this, please know that the Archdiocese Budget has been increasing yearly due to our rapid growth over the last several years, “Thanks be to God!” ... and today, an estimated 350,000 faithful of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America are served by nine hierarchs and over four-hundred and fifty clergy in 238 churches throughout the United States & Canada ... For years now, other Orthodox jurisdictions have been assessing their membership almost double this amount ($50.00 per baptized soul) per year, not to mention their Diocesan assessments ... There will be no Diocesan Assessments within the Antiochian Archdiocese ... please plan for this as you prayerfully plan your stewardship for 2016;

Lastly, note that only those offerings which were received by Sunday, December 27, 2015, will be recorded as 2015 Contributions. The “End of the Year Statements” will be mailed out later this month ... if you do not get yours, please call the Parish Office ... and ...

If you have any questions about this part of your stewardship, please see Fr. Don, Susan Joseph or Renee D’Ettorre. Thank You!
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Thank You and God Bless You & Your Families During 2016 and Always!
Epistle

Priest: Let us attend.

Reader: Make vows to the Lord thy God, and perform them.
In Judah God is known; His Name is great in Israel.

Priest: Wisdom.

Reader: The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy
(3:10–15)

Priest: Let us attend.

TIMOTHY MY SON, you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my sufferings; and what befell me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra. What persecutions I endured; yet from them all, the Lord rescued me. Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evil men and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.
THE LORD SPOKE THIS PARABLE, “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank Thee that I am not like other men, extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.”
SAINT ZACHARIAS PATRIARCH OF JERUSALEM

During the reign of the Greek Emperor Heraclius, the Persian Emperor Chozroes attacked Jerusalem in the year 614 A.D. Chozroes pillaged the city, removed the Honorable Cross [of Christ] to Persia and took an enormous number of Christians into bondage, among them was Patriarch Zacharias. The Jews assisted Chozroes in committing evil against the Christians. Among the other Jewish wickedness, this one is mentioned: the Jews purchased from Chozroes 90,000 Christians as their slaves and slew them all. The aged patriarch Zacharias remained in bondage for fourteen years. Many miracles occurred in Persia as a result of the Honorable Cross, so even the Persians said: "The Christian God came to Persia." Later on, Heraclius forced the Persian emperor to return the Honorable Cross to Jerusalem along with the patriarch and the remaining captives. Emperor Heraclius himself bore the Cross on his shoulders into the Holy City. St. Zacharias spent his remaining days in peace and took up habitation with the Lord in the year 631 A.D. He was succeeded on the throne by Patriarch Modestus and followed by St. Sophronius (March 11).

THE VENERABLE TIMOTHY

Timothy was a recluse in a place called Symbola on the Asiatic side of Mount Olympus. In his youth, Timothy entered a monastery, was tonsured a monk and until old age spent his earthly time in fasting, prayer, vigils and ceaseless labor. He remained pure and chaste throughout his entire life. To the pure and chaste God gives authority over evil spirits and He gave this to Timothy. Though his labors for the salvation of his soul, St. Timothy succeeded to build in himself a beautiful home for the Holy Spirit. This holy man died in the year 795 A.D.

SAINT EUSTATHIUS THE ARCHBISHOP OF ANTIOCH

Eustathius was a great zealot and protector of Orthodoxy. As such, he was especially prominent at the First Ecumenical Council [Nicaea 325 A.D.], where he intellectually and systematically refuted the teaching of Arius. With the other Holy Fathers, Eustathius confessed correctly that Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, is equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit according to divine Hypostasis [natures]. Following the death of Emperor Constantine, the Arians somehow again gained prevalence and began to bitterly persecute Orthodoxy. St. Eustathius was ousted from his throne and exiled, at first to Thrace and after that to Macedonia. Eustathius suffered much and long until, in the end, he gave up his holy soul to God in the year 345 A.D.

REFLECTION

What is fortune telling? There are three kinds of belief, which have their origin in fortune telling: belief in blind chance, belief in things and belief in the almighty power of the spirits of darkness. Through fortune telling, events are prophesied, the power of things differentiated and an oath is sworn to the spirits of darkness. Not any faith so decisively condemned and rejected fortune telling as did the Christian Faith. Not any faith, except Christianity is free and pure of fortune telling. Other faiths are, more or less, fortune telling and some consist only of fortune telling. Fortune telling means to subject man to lower things and beings lower than man. From this, one can say that fortune telling can be called a belief in darkness. That is why the Apostle Paul speaks: "Avoid profane and silly myths. Train yourself for devotion" (1 Timothy 4:7). Christianity is a Faith of light in two senses: First because it elevates man above chance, above all things and above the spirits of darkness; and Second that it subordinates man only to the authority of the Living, Wise and Almighty God. The All-seeing God exists that is why blind chance does not exist. In spiritual union with this All-seeing and Living God, man can be more exalted than all things and more powerful than all the spirits of darkness.

To God Be Glory and Praise Always! Amen.
Prayer Before Receiving Holy Communion
From St. Basil the Great

O Lord, I know that I am unworthy to receive thy Holy Body and Precious Blood; I know that I am guilty, and that I eat and drink condemnation to myself, not discerning the Body and Blood of Christ my God. But trusting in thy loving-kindness I come unto thee who has said: He that eateth my Body and drinketh my Blood shall dwell in me and I in him. Therefore, O Lord, have compassion on me and make not an example of me, thy sinful servant. But do unto me according to thy great mercy, and grant that these Holy Gifts may be for me unto the healing, purification, enlightenment, protection, salvation and sanctification of my soul and body, and to the expulsion of every evil imagination, sinful deed or work of the Devil. May they move me to reliance on thee and to love thee always, to amend and keep firm my life; and be ever in me to the increase of virtue, to the keeping of thy Commandments, to the communion of the Holy Spirit, and as a good defense before thy dread Judgment Seat, and for Life Eternal. Amen.

Troparion — Tone 4

The head of the Forerunner rose from the earth as a star, / Brilliant with rays of healing and immortality. / It gathers the choirs of angels in heaven, / And assembles the human race on earth / To sing with one voice the glory of Christ our God.

Kontakion — Tone 3

O Prophet of God and Forerunner of Grace, / Your head has blossomed from the earth as a sacred rose. / We are ever being healed, / For as of old, You preach repentance to the world.
How to Prepare for the Holy Eucharist

To all those who partake of the Body & Blood of Christ when they participate in the Divine Liturgy:

As Orthodox Christians, we are called to the Chalice each and every time that we celebrate the Divine Liturgy; however, it is most essential that we prepare ourselves to receive the Lord, so that we will not approach unworthily and risk experiencing the "consuming," rather than the "purifying" fire of the Eucharist.

With this in mind, the following guidelines will help us in our preparation:

+++ No excessive partying or socializing on Saturday evening … we should keep ourselves in a quiet & prayerful atmosphere, reading the gospels and epistles of the New Testament and praying the "Prayers of Preparation" before Communion (these latter prayers can also be done on Sunday Morning if there is time);

+++ Maintain a prayerful atmosphere on Sunday morning ... (difficult with children, yes, but not impossible ... try it!);

+++ No consumption of food or drink past a reasonable bedtime the night before (preferably no later than Midnight) ... this includes no coffee, no smoking and no chewing gum on Sunday morning as well;

+++ If you need your medicine in the morning, please take it ... if you are supposed to eat or drink something with it, then do so as moderately as possible;

+++ As always, we should partake of the Sacrament of Confession at least 2 - 4 times a year if we are taking Communion frequently (hint: use the 4 fasting periods of the liturgical year…Advent, Great Lent, Apostles’ Fast & Dormition Fast) ... if we are not frequent communicants (3-4 times per month), then Confession before Communion is necessary each time we partake;

+++ At the very least, attend the Sunday cycle of prayer ... Saturday Evening Vespers, Sunday Morning Matins (Morning Prayers) and Sunday Divine Liturgy ... if we attend Sunday Liturgy irregularly (e.g. – missing more than once a month), then we should not be taking Communion each time we attend, unless we have had Confession in the recent days prior;

+++ Be on time to the Divine Services and be at Peace with all people ... if we arrive at Church after the Little Entrance with the Gospel, we should not receive Communion on that day ... it is truly a sign of disrespect when we enter the services late and / or when we leave the Liturgy early (before the Dismissal) ... and ... our Lord tells us that we cannot love God and hate our brother ... for whoever is "angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment;" (Matthew 5:22) ... and ...+

+++ Fellowship Hour is not to be started until after the Divine Liturgy is completed!

Please strive to practice these Spiritual Disciplines and at the very least, observe the guideline above concerning regular Divine Liturgy attendance.
Greetings to all who read this Announcement ... please read on.

Our St. Mary Parish Family has a “Wish & Needs” List for our ministries within our Parish and our Community. How can you help?!? First & foremost, please keep our Parish Family in your prayers as we seek to be the Church, the Body of Christ present & active in the world today. Secondly, if you are able to offer something towards any of these, please see Fr. Don, Margie Hamaty or Larry Bertino. If you can think of any items that you believe our Parish needs or could use, please let us know. These are just some of the items on our “Wish & Needs” List:

+ Life-Size Icons on Back Wall of Altar Area - American Hierarchical Saints
+ Remodeling of Parish Kitchen ... Project is 99% done ... come & take a look!
+ Vestibule Icon Project ... Thematic Iconography in our Narthex / Candle Area
+ Replacement of Wooden Doors in Church, Hallway & Social Hall

Any donation that you can offer will be most appreciated.

Thank You & God Bless!

His Grace, Bishop THOMAS is pleased to announce a new Orthodox Christian Bible Study that is available each week online ... “Ancient Faith Bible Study,” a weekly commentary on the Wednesday Scripture Readings! Each Tuesday, a new Study will be available ... just point your browser to: www.ancientfaithbiblestudy.blogspot.com . Please email questions and comments you may have to Fr. Stephen De Young, Fr. Bogdan Bucur, and Michael Simmons. Their Email Links are found at the bottom of the Bible Study. Thank You & God Bless!
IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEKLY BULLETIN

In your Prayer Requests, please indicate whether each person is an Orthodox or non-Orthodox Christian, so that Fr. can properly commemorate your Orthodox Christian Loved Ones on the Holy Paten, and thus in the Chalice. Please know that all names that you submit are commemorated in the Holy Services throughout the Week. It is indeed an awesome responsibility & great joy to offer your Prayers before God! Thank You & God Bless!

NEW HISTORY PROJECT WILL HIGHLIGHT MIDDLE-EASTERN BUSINESS OWNERS!

Our own Dr. Matthew Stiffler, son of Bob & Helene, is excited to announce the start of a new History Project through the Arab American National Museum (AANM) in Michigan. He wants to document the history of business ownership among the Lebanese & Syrian Community here in Johnstown, PA. As Matt says: “The Lebanese & Syrian immigrants, as well as their children & grandchildren, have made a tremendous impact on the city over the last 100 years. This history will soon be lost if we do not preserve it.” He is hoping that people in Johnstown will donate digital copies of some of their photos & documents (they will keep the originals) showing this history of business ownership. Thus, their family photos would be preserved in the AANM’s digital collections, and would help to tell this important history. If people are interested and have photos & documents to share, please e-mail Dr. Matthew Stiffler at mstiffler@accesscommunity.org. You can see an example of the AANM’s digital collections by visiting www.aanm.contentdm.oclc.org. Thank You & God Bless!

OUR PARISH OFFICE NEEDS E-MAIL ADDRESSES:

If you will give us your e-mail address, we can keep in touch with you concerning Parish News, Events, etc. We will not share your information with anyone. If there is anything that you would like to see on our Parish Website, please contact Fr. Don. Thank You!

HILLTOP SENIORS - THIS IS FOR YOU:

The Hilltop Seniors Association invites you to join us. Dues are $5 per year and our Meetings are held at The Grove. Join and meet your neighbors and have an opportunity to participate in fun activities & bus trips. For information, please contact: Lois Tomb @ 255-2877 or Nora Dorian @ 255-1578. You may mail Dues to Nora Dorian @ 545 Goucher St., Apt. 81, Johnstown, PA 15905. Thank You!
WE NEED YOU AT THE FAMILY KITCHEN ... LET'S SERVE THE LORD!  Our Lord tells us that when we serve those “in need,” we serve Him!  Our Parish Family has been helping to serve Weekend Meals at The Family Kitchen downtown at 231 Bedford Street for several years.  This year, we have been asked to help on 3 Weekends ... the dates are: Saturday, May 28, Sunday, August 28 & Saturday, December 31.  We meet at the Kitchen at 11 AM and are done by about 1 PM.  We have also been asked to make a Donation of $350.00 each time to help defer the expenses of each meal.  If you can help us down at The Kitchen and/or with a Donation, please contact Fr. Don or our Parish Office (255-2148).  We have always “taken away” from our experience more than we “have given” – please help us out if you can!  Thank You & God Bless!

Ten Commandments for a Happy Church!

1) **Speak to people.**  Speak to everyone, especially to those whom you don’t know.  There is nothing quite so nice as a cheerful word of greeting.

2) **Smile at people.**  It takes 72 muscles to frown and only 14 to smile.  Your smile is one of your finest assets.  Use it!  It doesn’t cost a thing!!

3) **Call people by name.**  The sweetest music to any person’s ears is the sound of his or her own name.  If you don’t know the person’s name, introduce yourself and likely the person will respond with his or her name.

4) **Be friendly & helpful.**  If you want friends, learn to be a friend.  Everyone needs them.  No one has too many.

5) **Be cordial.**  Try to speak and act as if everything you do is a genuine pleasure.

6) **Be genuinely interested in people.**  Try to like everybody and everybody will like you.  Do not limit yourself to a few friends when there are so many likable people about you.

7) **Be generous with praise.**  And be just as sparing with criticism.

8) **Be considerate of the feelings of others.**  Usually, there are three sides to a controversy: yours, the other person’s and the right one.

9) **Be alert to give service.**  What we do for others counts most in life.  Try giving yourself away.  It’s fun!

10) **Develop a sense of humor.**  To this good sense of humor, add a generous dose of patience and a dash of humility.  Then get ready to receive many blessings.  They’re sure to come!
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*** Parish Scrip Earnings Exceed $35,000.00 in 9 Yrs.!!! ***

Please remember to use Scrip for all of your Household, Family & Holiday Shopping ... especially gas & groceries! Scrip is Fundraising while you shop!

See Olga Hodge, Martha McLoota or Becky Azar for details.

*** DO NOT FORGET TO BUY YOUR SCRIP AFTER CHURCH TODAY! WE HAVE ALL THE BRANDS YOU NEED ... GIANT EAGLE, SHEETZ, ETC.!!! ***
Today, we express our appreciation for the various ministries of The Order of St. Ignatius. Thus, we say “Thank You!” to the Members of this Service Order. *May God Bless Them All & Grant Them Many Years!* In light of this, please also consider the following!

**OUR CALLING, ORTHODOX PHILANTHROPIST?**

Philanthropist…a beautiful sounding word. Philanthropist…a word even more beautiful in meaning. Philanthropist … lover of mankind! We are all called to be philanthropists … to love each other … to take care of each other … but how?

In our Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese, a vehicle of Orthodox Philanthropy was called into existence by our beloved Chief Shepherd & Father of Thrice-Blessed Memory, Metropolitan PHILIP, when he created “The Order of St. Ignatius” (1976). May Saidna PHILIP’S Memory Be Ever Eternal! As you have heard for many years, the Order serves our Archdiocese as her philanthropic arm through its support of the Antiochian Village, our educational programs, our missions, our retired clergy, and many, many other worthy ministries. For the past thirty-eight years this has been accomplished through a body of people, now over four thousand in number, who have been willing to serve God through committed giving.

If you have considered the Order before and didn’t join, there are always opportunities to learn more … just ask any one of our parishioners who are members of the Order … Tony Abraham, Jim Azar, Larry Bertino, Lisa Catanese, Renee D’Ettorre, William & Lindsay (Heider) Fennell, Albert Ghantous, George & Elaine Heider, Norman Joseph, Dr. Adib Khouzami, Ed Makdad, Jr., Sandy Milkie, Sub-Deacon Todd Mokhiber, Christine Salem, Fr. Don, Khouria Janet, Christopher & Stephen Shadid and Loretta Shahade.

You are invited to discover how God’s abundance toward you may be thankfully returned to Him through generosity toward His People. “Come and See!”…God may be calling you to serve Him in this way.
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<tr>
<th>Why you should join the Order of St. Ignatius of Antioch?</th>
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<td>• Service and commitment to the Church</td>
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<td>• Teach the Orthodox way by utilizing your talents.</td>
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<td>• Involvement in the life of the Church, willingly and joyfully, being instruments of peace.</td>
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<td>• Grateful to Almighty God for His many blessings.</td>
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<td>• Never say “No” when the Lord and the Church call for a job to get done.</td>
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<td>• Acknowledgement of our sinfulness and weakness; realizing the need for growth through the Sacraments of the Church.</td>
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<td>• Totally committed and dedicated to the growth of the Archdiocese and the realization of its programs and goals.</td>
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<td>• Inner satisfaction and fulfillment by being part of a dynamic, dedicated and visionary group of faithful, where love and friendship grow.</td>
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<td>• Unselfish giving and living for the glory of God not only on the parish and regional level but on the Archdiocese level as well.</td>
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<th>Donate to the Order through Electronic Fund Transfer ...</th>
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<td>• For the rank of Knight or Dame, which is a $500 donation per year, $41.67 is deducted around the 5th of each month.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• For the rank of Commander, which is a $1,000 donation per year, $83.34 is deducted around the 5th of each month.</td>
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<td>• Life Members ($15,000 either in one donation or spread over three years) can also have a monthly deduction. Please contact the Administrator at the Archdiocese for more info.</td>
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<td>• Complete an Order application and include a signed authorization form (available for print at <a href="http://www.orderofstignatius.org">www.orderofstignatius.org</a> or from the Administrator) which authorizes The Order to begin deductions the following month.</td>
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<td>• Include the required $60 induction fee with the application and the banking information will be taken from the check.</td>
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<td>• Members can upgrade at any time.</td>
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<td>• Members on the EFT system never receive a dues reminder or have to be concerned about writing a check and finding a stamp.</td>
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Now The Order can be more accessible to members of the Archdiocese through the Electronic Fund Transfer System (EFT). Many people pay their utility bills, rent, mortgages, car payments and gym dues through automatic deductions. It is far more time efficient and cost effective to eliminate checks, stamps, and having to remember to pay invoices.
OUR BULLETIN IS ONLINE!: Did you know that thanks to the wonder of the Internet and our Webmaster, Jay McClatchey, our Weekly Bulletin is now Online! All you have to do is go to: stmaryaocc.org ... and then click on "Weekly Bulletin" (on the left menu). Please check out the Bulletin before you come to Church ... that way you will be prepared to fully participate in the Liturgical Worship & Praise of our Lord! A special “Thanks!” to Jay for his ministry!

WEEKDAY LITURGICAL SERVICES AT ST. MARY PARISH: One of the purposes of our precious Church, as given to us by our Lord Himself, is to serve as the Meeting Place of Heaven & Earth ... and this is beautifully fulfilled via our Liturgical Services. Indeed, it is when we are in our Congregational/Corporate Liturgical Prayer that we are participating in the Eternal Worship of God’s Heavenly Kingdom! Complementing this, the Holy Mothers & Fathers of our Church have always attested to the belief that our Life in Eternity will simply be the Utmost Fulfillment of our Life here on Earth ... i.e. if the priority of our Earthly Life is seeking Communion with God, then our Eternity will be a Fulfillment of that Communion ... and conversely, if the priority of our Earthly Life is spent in the pursuit of earthly things, thus separating us from God, our Eternity will be one of separation from God ... i.e. - Hell!

In light of this, Fr. Don is pleased to announce that our Daily Services have resumed. Our Schedule is as follows:

Tuesday & Thursday Mornings – Daily Orthros (Morning Prayers) @ 8 AM ... and ... Wednesday Evening – Daily Vespers (Evening Prayers) @ 6 PM.

Please join us as we begin & end our days with Prayer ... let us gather together as the Family that God has called us to be!

REMINDER: RELIGIOUS GIFT ITEMS AVAILABLE: Just a reminder ... we do have some religious items available for sale in our Social Hall ... just see Margie Hamaty, Kathy McMillan, Rita Azar or Renee D’Etore. Thank You!

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See Olga Hodge, Martha McLoota or Becky Azar for details.
NEW MISSIONS IN OUR DIOCESE...

Fr. Don has received the following e-mail from His Grace, Bishop THOMAS:

“Beloved in Christ,

The Diocese of Charleston, Oakland & the Mid-Atlantic, of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese, is pleased to announce that we are beginning to establish two new missions. The first is a “Mission Station” in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This is a fruit of our FOCUS Ministry in Pittsburgh. For information about this mission endeavor, you should contact Sub-Deacon Paul Abernathy (see Fr. Don). The second mission ministry is being attempted in Talbot County, Maryland. An advertisement is attached (see Fr. Don if you are interested), offering information about our first meeting, which I plan to attend.”

May God Bless These Missions as they seek to grow in membership and glorify Him through their ministry within their respective communities!

WE HAVE A WEBSITE ... CAN WE HAVE YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS?

Did you know that our Parish has a Website ... and ... our Parish Office is connected to the Internet?!? Yes, we are “catching up” with Technology and we have some interesting things on our Site (e.g. a video of the 1960s Groundbreaking and Consecration of our Church). Jay McClatchey is our Web Master. If you will give us your e-mail address, we can keep in touch with you as well. Lastly, if there is any news that you would like posted on our Site and / or if you have any ideas, please contact Fr. Don and Jay.

FAMILY KITCHEN / SATURDAY KITCHEN WISH & NEEDS LIST: The Family Kitchen / Saturday Kitchen (Clinton Street – Downtown) has issued a new “Wish & Needs List”... Coffee, Flour, Brown Sugar, Sugar & Creamer Packets, Sweet & Low / Equal Packets, Salt & Pepper, Parsley Flakes, Garlic Salt, Paprika, Poultry Seasoning, Onion Salt, Allspice, Lemon Pepper, Rosemary, Italian Seasoning, Chili Powder, Pepper Flakes & Meat Tenderizer. If you can help by donating any of these, or perhaps a SCRIP Card for Giant Eagle, etc., that would be greatly appreciated! Thank You and God Bless!

“Find out how much God has given you. From it, take what you need. The remainder which you do not require is needed by others. The excesses of the rich are the necessities of the poor.” – Blessed Augustine
MONTHLY CANDLES: The 2016 Monthly Candle Prayer Sheets are now on the Brochure Table in the Hallway. The three candles available are the Paschal Candles (2 large candles in front of the Iconostasis and on each side of the Holy Doors), the Proskamedia Candle (candle on the Holy Altar) and the Seven-Branched Candle (7 branched candle at the back of the Holy Altar). Please note that the requested Donation for each Candle is $20.00 per month.

Also, please note that there can be more than one sponsor per candle per month, and unless a candle is being sponsored for more than one month, the sponsorship will expire at the end of the month, no matter when it is started in that month.

+++ A Prayer for Peace +++
Almighty God and Creator, You are the Father of all people on the earth. Guide, I pray, all the nations and their leaders in the ways of justice and peace. Protect us from the evils of injustice, prejudice, exploitation, conflict and war. Help us to put away mistrust, bitterness and hatred. Teach us to cease the storing and using of implements of war. Lead us to find peace, respect and freedom. Unite us in the making and sharing of tools of peace against ignorance, poverty, disease and oppression. Grant that we may grow in harmony and friendship as brothers and sisters created in Your image, to Your honor and praise. Amen.

OUR PARISH OFFICE NEEDS E-MAIL ADDRESSES: If you will give us your e-mail address, we can keep in touch with you concerning Parish News, Events, etc. We will not share your information with anyone. If there is anything that you would like to see on our Parish Website, please contact Fr. Don. Thank You!

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Please join us as we begin & end our days with Prayer ... let us gather together as the Family that God has called us to be!
Ancient Faith Today with Kevin Allen will cover topics from popular culture to politics from a Orthodox Christian perspective. The program will stream live, with listener call-ins from around the world, twice a month on Sunday nights at 8:00 p.m. Eastern/5:00 p.m. Pacific on Ancient Faith Radio's Talk Station.

Orthodoxy Live with Fr. Evan Armatas offers listeners an opportunity to ask pointed questions about the Orthodox Church. Perfect for seekers, converts, and casual Orthodox Christians alike, this program is your chance to ask the tough questions about the Orthodox faith. Fr. Evan is a great communicator and well-versed in all aspects of Orthodox theology. The program streams live, with listener call-ins from around the world, on the first and third Sundays of each month at 8:00 p.m. Eastern/5:00 p.m. Pacific on Ancient Faith Radio's Talk Station.
Do you enjoy helping people? Looking for a way to give of yourself in a positive way? You can serve our Lord by serving others!

**Community Nursing Hospice Care**

**Home Care Volunteers** - Provide socialization by visiting with the patient & respite for the Caregiver.

**Bereavement Volunteers** - Follow up with the primary caregiver after the patient dies through phone calls, cards, letters or a visit once a month.

**Spiritual Care Volunteers** - Provide spiritual support with prayer, offering Communion or Bible Reading and are involved in our Annual Memorial Services. This group consists of Pastors, as well as lay people.

Reference & Criminal Background Checks and Training Required.

For more Information ... **855-254-4116**.

**Home Nursing Agency**

**Hospice Volunteers** - show compassion, are emotionally present and listen, write letters, read, talk or listen, provide administrative support, work as part of the Hospice Team, are responsible & dependable, etc.

**Healing Patch** - offers a soft place to fall for children & their families who have lost a loved one ... here they can discover they are not alone in their grief by interacting with others who have encountered similar losses ... some of a volunteer's qualities: compassion, empathy, acceptance of others, flexibility, dedication & commitment ... must be at least 21 years of age ... volunteers do not “fix” what has happened ... they bring Hope & Healing back into the life of a child!

For more Information ... **800-445-6262**  
(ext. 4119 - Patty ... or ... 4110 - Melody).
Think About This...

In light of the recent Sandy Hook School Shooting, and in remembrance of the Amish School Shooting of 2006, we reprint this reflection by our own Terry Mattingly.

Please keep the young Victims and their Families in your Prayers.

(This column was syndicated by Scripps Howard News Service on October 4, 2006.)

The helicopters kept making circles in the air so that the cameramen could keep showing the dairy farms and country roads, the bonnets and wide-brimmed straw hats, the horse-drawn buggies and the one-room schoolhouse framed in yellow police tape.

Soon the facts started going in circles as police recited a litany about 600 rounds of ammunition, a shotgun, a semiautomatic pistol, a stun gun, explosives and, later, the killer’s sick collection of chains clamps, hardware and sexual aids. Witnesses said Charles Carl Roberts IV was angry with God, angry with himself, haunted by guilt, fed up with life and driven by a hellish grudge.

Then journalists began asking questions that went in circles, the questions that nag clergy as well as state troopers. Why? Why the Amish? How could God let this happen? How can justice be done now that the killer is dead?

“Like everyone else, I could not believe what I was seeing on my television,” said Johann Christopher Arnold, senior elder of the Bruderhof communes. While sharing many beliefs with the Amish and Mennonites, the Bruderhof (“place of the brothers”) embrace some modern technology. Still these movements share European roots in pacifism, simple living and an emphasis on the sanctity of human life.

“The Amish are our cousins so I know some of what they must be feeling,” said Arnold, in his thick German accent. “I know these parents are hurting, I know they are asking questions, but I know that they know the answer is forgiveness. Tragedy and pain can soften our hearts until they break. But if we trust God this will help us to feel compassion.”

The gunman’s stunned wife released a media statement that showed her understanding of her Amish neighbors and their beliefs. She knew she could appeal for prayers and forgiveness, even though outsiders might find her words hard to fathom.

++ + Over + + +
Our hearts are broken, our lives are shattered, and we grieve for the innocence and lives that were lost today,” said Marie Roberts. “Above all, please pray for the families who lost children and, please, pray, too, for our family and children. Some of the Amish went ever further. One woman told the Los Angeles Times: “I am very thankful that I was raised to believe you don’t fight back. You should forgive.”

To grasp the Amish point of view, it’s crucial to understand that they truly believe God desires justice, but also shows mercy and “they believe that these are not contradictory things,” said Arnold. “They know that God said, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay.” The Amish certainly believe that this killer will not go without punishment, but they also believe that his punishment is in God’s hands.”

These are hard words in an age when many Americans hold one of two competing beliefs about eternity and God’s judgment.

Millions of believers – lukewarm and fervent alike – assume that the really bad sinners are the people who commit the really bad sins, those spectacular sins tied to violence, drugs and sex. These really bad people are condemned to hell.

Meanwhile, many other people believe that all people are automatically going to heaven, no matter what they believe or what they do. According to this point of view, the massacre inside the West Nickel Mines Amish School will have no impact on the eternal destiny of Charles Carl Roberts IV.

Once again, the Amish believe that God knows all and that God, and only God, can judge. What the Amish emphasize, stressed Arnold, is that forgiveness is the only way that humans can break a cycle of violence and sin.

In this case, the gunman left suicide notes that showed that he was driven by guilt and a grudge that he would not surrender. It appears that Roberts could not forgive God and could not forgive himself.

In the end, this killed him and through him this grudge killed others.

“If you hold a grudge, it will live on in your heart until it leads to violence of some kind,” said Arnold. “If you do not forgive, then you cannot be healed. Forgiveness can heal the forgiver as well as the one who is forgiven. This is what the Amish believe. It will be hard and it will take time, but this is what they now must strive to live out for all the world to see.”

Terry Mattingly (www.tmatt.net) directs the Washington Journalism Center at the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. He writes this weekly column for the Scripps Howard News Service. Terry is also a member of our sister parish, Holy Cross Orthodox Church, in Linthicum, MD.
Parish Scrip Earnings Over $35,000.00!!!

Our Scrip Coordinator, Olga Hodge, is pleased to report that since the inception of our Scrip Program in December of 2005, we have raised over $35,000.00 for our Parish!

Remember, our Parish Family benefits each and every time that you shop with Scrip, because instead of paying with Cash or Credit, you use pre-paid Gift Cards from your favorite and most trusted local & national retailers.

Please remember to use Scrip for all of your Holiday, Household & Family Shopping ... Food, Gas, Gifts, Dining Out, Appliances, etc.

Scrip is Fundraising while you shop!

Please see Olga Hodge, Martha McLoota or Becky Azar after Church to get your Scrip. As always, Becky Azar has Scrip at her Home during the Week.

+++ Thank You & God Bless! +++
We really ought to confess our poverty, our desti-
tination to the Lord our God. This is what the tax
collector confessed, who did not so much as dare
to raise his eyes to heaven. As a man and a sinner
he did not have the wherewithal to lift up his eyes.
He was looking at his own emptiness, but he knew
what ample wealth the Lord disposed of. He knew
that he was coming, thirsty, to the fountain. He
indicated his parched throat, he earnestly beat the
breast he wanted filled. “Lord,” he said, beating his
breast, lowering his eyes to the ground, “be gracious
to me, a sinner” (Luke 18:13).

What I say is, that he was already to some extent
rich, since he had the idea of making such a request.
After all, if he had still been completely poor, from
where would he have been able to produce these
gems of confession? All the same, it was a better
dowered and wealthier man who went down justified
from the Temple. The Pharisee, though, went
up to the Temple,” He says, “to worship” (Luke
18:10). One asks, the other does not. And where
did this other belong? “There are those who think
themselves rich though they have nothing” (Pro-
erbs 13:7). “Lord,” he said, “I thank you that I am
not like other men, unjust, extortioners, adulterers,
like this tax collector here, for example. I fast twice
a week, I give tithe of everything I possess” (Luke
18:11-12).

He was being boastful, but it was all hot air, no
solid substance. He thought himself rich though he
had nothing. The other man admitted he was poor,
though he already had something. To say nothing
else, he had the earnestness to confess. And they
both went down. “But that tax collector,” He says,
“was justified more than that Pharisee. For every-
one who exalts himself shall be humbled, and who
humbles himself shall be exalted” (Luke 18:14).

St. Augustine of Hippo

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