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### **SAINT PHILIP'S FAST—NATIVITY FAST--ADVENT**

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Metropolitan Constantine, Patriarch Pavle, Metropolitan Theodosius, Bishop Robert, Father Peter Natishan, Father Gerald Olszewski, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Dragan Filipović, Father Elias Katras, Father Stevo Rocknage, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Michael Mihalick [MS], Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Charles Mezzomo, Ollie Pendylshok, Walt & Evelyn Burlack, Joshua Agosto and his family, Harley Katarina Rahuba, Mike and Hilda Holupka, Eva Malesnick, Helen Likar, Stella Peanoske, Joe Nezolyk, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Virginia Bryan, Joseph Sliwinsky, Maria Balo, Linda Mechtly, Mary Mochnick, Mildred Manolovich, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Sandy Gamble, Glen Lucas Burlack, Bernie Vangrin, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Stella Cherepko, Sam Wadrose, Cameron [a boy in Matt's class], Faith—a 7-year-old girl with rheumatoid arthritis, Isabella Olivia Lindgren—a 3-year-old with a brain tumor, Dillon, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Nick Malec [Maxine's brother], Erin, Jim Markovich, Jeff Walewski [thyroid cancer], Carol [Lotinski] Rose, Michael Miller, Dave May, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Alverta, Gary Zurasky, Michael Horvath, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Rita Very & family, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Mildred Walters, Michael Miller, Jim Logue—throat cancer, Liz Stumpf, Ester Tylavsky, Ed Jamison, Theodore Nixon, Charles Johnson, Amy Forbeck, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Gloria Prymak [Liz's niece], Robert Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, John Sheliga, Sabrina, George & Mika Rocknage, Elizabeth Mitchell, Robert McKivitz, Cliff Dow, Marjorie Pershing, Amy Kemerer, Tom Marriott, Joe Farkas, Liz Obradovich, Liz, Helen Pytlak, Halyna Zelinska [Bishop Daniel's mother], Mary Ann, Charlotte, Peter Natishan, Michael Spak, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Brandi Thomas, Eleanor Kelly, and Daria Masur. ARNOLD: Stefania Lucci,

Steve Sakal, Homer Paul Kline, and Steve Ostaffy. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our December babies: Betty O'Masta on the 9<sup>th</sup>, Scot Brunermer on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Joe Nezolyk on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Donna Karas on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and Jean Stutchell on the 29<sup>th</sup>. May God grant them all Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years!**

**2009 Church Calendars are available downstairs. Also, please see Debbie Paouncic if you would like to purchase the \$25 All Saints Calendar Raffle—before January 1, 2009!**

Please remember David Weaver in Mosul, James John Logue, and George Senita assigned to Iraq, Matthew Machak, and ALL American servicemen and women in the Middle East in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American servicemen and women—and bring them all home safely!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR “BOXTOPS FOR EDUCATION” AND CAMPBELL’S SOUP LABELS TO CHURCH. There is a shoebox in the basement for Alex’s Sixth Grade and Matt’s Fourth Grade collections. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP! Love, ALEX AND MATT

**REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!**

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please call Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

**Schedule of Services**

**Sunday, December 07**                      **Divine Liturgy**                      **10:30 AM**  
**25<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, GREAT-MARTYR CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA, GREAT-MARTYR MERCURIUS OF CAESAREA IN CAPPADOCIA, MARTYRS AUGUST-EMPRESS, PORPHYRIUS, & 200 SOLDIERS AT ALEXANDRIA WITH CATHERINE, VIRGIN MASTRIDIA OF ALEXANDRIA, SAINT GREGORY OF PONTUS, MARTYR ALEXANDER AT CORINTH, VENERABLE LUKE-STEWARD OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, SAINT HERMOGENES-BISHOP OF AGRIGENTUM, SAINT PORTIANUS OF AUVERGNE, MARTYR MERCURIUS OF SMOLENSK, VENERABLE MERCURIUS THE FASTER OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

Tone 8  
Ephesians 4:1-6  
Luke 13:10-17

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Thomas Bryan, John Hanczar, Mary Blitzkan, Marjorie Yarmeak, Mary Sharon, Frank Barankovich, Mary Krevanich, Katherine Holowaty, & Rose Pynch—Fr. Bob Parastas in Blessed Memory of Joseph Yakim, Eva P. Thompson, & John Pendlyshok—Ollie***

**Sunday, December 14**                      **Divine Liturgy**                      **10:30 AM**  
**26<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, PROPHET NAHUM, RIGHTEOUS PHILARET THE MERCIFUL OF AMNIA IN ASIA MINOR, MARTYR ANANIAS OF PERSIA, SAINT IOANICIUS OF DEVIC, SERBIA**  
Tone 1  
Ephesians 5:9-19  
Luke 18:18-27 [Gospel of the 30<sup>th</sup> Sunday]  
*Litany in Blessed Memory of Victor Burlack—Walt & Evelyn*  
*Parastas in Blessed Memory of Nicholas & Catherine Behun—Behun Family*

**Sunday, December 21**                      **Divine Liturgy**                      **10:30 AM**  
**27<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, VENERABLE PATAPIUS OF THEBES, HOLY APOSTLES OF THE 70: SOSTHENES, APPOLLOS, CEPHAS, TYCHICUS, EPAPHRODITUS, CAESAR & ONESIPHORUS, HOLY 362 MARTYRS OF AFRICA BY THE ARIANS, MARTYR VICTORIA, MARTYR ANTHUSA AT ROME, VENERABLE CYRIL-ABBOT OF CHELMOGORSK**  
Tone 2  
Ephesians 6:10-17  
Luke 18:12-19  
*Litany in Blessed Memory of Mary Pekich—40 Days—Fr. Bob*

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 07 DECEMBER 2008**

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
GREAT-MARTYR CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA, GREAT-MARTYR MERCURIUS OF CAESAREA IN CAPPADOCIA, MARTYRS AUGUST-EMPRESS, PORPHYRIUS, & 200 SOLDIERS AT ALEXANDRIA WITH CATHERINE, VIRGIN MASTRIDIA OF ALEXANDRIA, SAINT GREGORY OF PONTUS, MARTYR ALEXANDER AT CORINTH, VENERABLE LUKE-STEWARD OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA, SAINT HERMOGENES-BISHOP OF AGRIGENTUM, SAINT PORTIANUS OF AUVERGNE, MARTYR MERCURIUS OF SMOLENSK, VENERABLE MERCURIUS THE FASTER OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

### **TROPARION—TONE 8**

Thou didst descent from on high, O Merciful One!  
Thou didst accept the three-day burial to free us from our sufferings!  
Our Lord, our Life and Resurrection, Glory to Thee

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### **KONTAKION—TONE 8**

By rising from the tomb,  
Thou didst raise the dead and resurrect Adam.  
Eve exults in Thy Resurrection,  
And the world celebrates Thy Rising from the dead,

O greatly Merciful One!

### **PROKEIMENON—TONE 8**

**READER:** Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!

**PEOPLE: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!**

**READER:** In Judah, God is known; His name is great in Israel!

**PEOPLE: Pray and make your vows before the Lord our God!**

**READER:** Pray and make your vows.

**PEOPLE: Before the Lord our God!**

### **ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 8**

Come let us rejoice in the Lord! Let us make a joyful noise to God our Savior!

Let us come before His face with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to Him with psalms.

Cheerfulness consists in not regarding things as our own, but as entrusted to us by God for the benefit of our fellow servants. It consists in scattering them abroad generously with joy and magnanimity, not reluctantly or under compulsion. *St. Symeon the New Theologian*

### **PERMANENT CONFERENCE OF UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX BISHOPS BEYOND THE BORDERS OF UKRAINE**

*To the Venerable and Christ-loving clergy and laity of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Europe, South America, the United States of America and in Ukraine.*

***May the Grace of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all!***

We are currently living through the Pre-Nativity Fast – also known as Philip’s Fast because it begins on 15/28 November, the day following the Feast of the Holy Apostle Philip and known in the Western Church as Advent. This fast continues to the Great Feast of the Nativity of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ – the Incarnation – God becoming one of us for no other reason than to prove the depth of His Love for us.

This is a period, which is often not the focus of contemporary Orthodox and non-Orthodox Christians, secularized and smothered in the over-commercialization of the “Xmas” season. The fast is, according to the Church Fathers, a time of mercy, kindness, compassion, self-examination – a time, which challenges us to personal

renewal in the Light of Christ's Gospel. It is a sacred season, during which we are called to make a spiritual journey from wherever we are in the world – from the “now” in our parish churches, which we all too often have difficulty seeing beyond – to the City of Bread – Beth-lehem and into a cave, the “Holy of Holies”, and to a manger, pre-figuring the Chalice of the Eucharist, in order to bring the gift of ourselves to the Jesus Christ, Who is the Bread of Life.

In ways that we may never fully comprehend, we make this journey like the Magi, like the shepherds. We each bring our gifts and we dedicate them to Christ. These are gifts willingly given for the good of others – the gold, frankincense and myrrh of our parenting, teaching, healing, friendship and compassion – in other words, our Love for one another.

We must live through this fast period and each day of our lives in a prayerful attitude of openness to the empowering and unending Presence of the Loving and Living God. Living an Orthodox Christian life makes heavy demands on us. But, God gives us His strength. The Power, the Love and the Grace of God are always with us – in our “community work”, the Liturgy and all other Divine Services, in our private prayer life, in all creation and every single one of His human creatures! That living Presence makes all things new!

Such an attitude of openness, of awe and wonder and joyful expectancy is what it takes to receive the strength to fulfill our life's purpose. Our God is the God of Life and He never stops with a sense of self-satisfaction to say: “We've got it!” It is always a movement on into the future. It is always His Presence with us now, doing some new thing. We may be in the depths of despair and we may feel ourselves caving in, but that is precisely when He moves in and the Light breaks through and the hope and the power and the healing come.

Simply put, our goal during this Pre-Nativity Fast is to mature in Christ, to attain to spiritual quality and excellence in our profession of the Orthodox Christian Faith, to invite Christ Jesus into our very being, to proclaim to an increasingly nominal and apathetic Christian society that, which it would rather not hear: “I bring you tidings of great joy...a Savior is born...He is Christ the Lord!” and He can be found in the hearts and homes of those who proclaim Him by their willingness to “let our light so shine before men, that they might see our good works and give glory to our Father Who is in Heaven” [Matthew 5:16].

We call you all, as our spiritual children, to pray fervently during this season for the leaders of the world we live in today. It is a secularized world full of strife, economic weakness and political instability. Evil often manifests itself in the cleverest of ways during such times. Pray for the maturity of those who lead all our nations and most especially those who lead in Ukraine, that their heart's desire will always be to build a strong nation based on a system of law. Pray that our Holy Ukrainian Orthodox

Church unites and returns to its historical role as the moral conscience of the nation.

May He, Who so loved the world that He sent His Only-Begotten Son to be our Lord and Savior, assist us in our resolve to mature and be nourished by the word of Truth and Life-giving mysteries. May we grow and mature in Faith as Ukrainian Orthodox Christians so that others, having witnessed the Faith manifested in our personal lives and in our parish communities, will be drawn to Christ and like the shepherds of Bethlehem, will glorify and praise God for all that they had seen and heard through us.

*Assuring you of our prayers and love and requesting yours, we remain your servants in the Lord,*

**+ Constantine**

*Metropolitan – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA and in Diaspora*

**+ John**

*Metropolitan – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

**+ Antony**

*Archbishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA*

**+ Ioan**

*Archbishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Diaspora*

**+ Yurij**

*Archbishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

**+ Jeremiah**

*Bishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church, South America Eparchy*

**+ Ilarion**

*Bishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

**+ Andrij**

*Bishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada*

**+ Daniel**

*Bishop – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA*

a word from the desert

Let us allow Christ to speak through us. He desires it more than we do. For He made this instrument and wouldn't want it to be useless and idle. He always wants to keep it in His hands. Why, then, don't you make it useful for the Maker's hand? Why do you allow your soul to be unstrung, relaxed through luxury, and allow the whole harp to be useless to Him? You should keep all its parts completely stretched, well strung, and reinforced with spiritual salt. For if Christ sees your soul tuned this way, He will make His music through it. When this has taken place, you will see angels leaping for joy – archangels and the cherubim too. So then, let us become worthy of His spotless hands. Let us invite Him to strike our hearts.

St. John Chrysostom

--archived as a blog at: <http://wordfromthedesert.squarespace.com/>

Abba Poemen said, "If three men meet, of whom the first fully preserves interior peace, and the second gives thanks to God in illness, and the third serves with a pure mind, these three are doing the same work."

A brother asked Abba Poemen, "How can a man avoid speaking ill of his neighbor?" The old man said to him, "We and our brothers are two images; when a man is watchful about himself, and has to reproach himself, in his heart he thinks his brother better than he; but when he appears to himself to be good, then he thinks his brother evil compared to himself."

Abba Poemen the Great, commemorated 27 August/09 September

a word from the desert

And her months were fulfilled, and in the ninth month Anna brought forth. And she said to the midwife: "What have I brought forth?" And she said: "A girl." And said Anna: "My soul has been magnified this day." And she laid her down. And the days having been fulfilled, Anna was purified, and gave the breast to the child, and called her name Mary.

And the child grew strong day by day; and when she was six months old, her mother set her on the ground to try whether she could stand, and she walked seven steps and came into her bosom; and she snatched her up, saying: "As the Lord my God lives, you shall not walk on this earth until I bring you into the temple of the Lord." And she made a sanctuary in her bed-chamber, and allowed nothing common or unclean to pass through to her.

And she called the undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, and they led (attended her). And when she was a year old, Joachim made a great feast, and invited the priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and all the people of Israel. And Joachim brought the child to the priests; and they blessed her, saying: "O God of our fathers, bless this child, and give her an everlasting name to be named in all generations." And all the people said: "Amen. So be it, so be it." And he brought her to the chief priest; and they blessed her, saying: "O God most high, look upon this child, and bless her with the utmost blessing, which shall be for ever." And her mother snatched her up, and took her into the sanctuary of her bed-chamber, and gave her the breast.

And Anna made a song to the Lord God, saying: "I will sing a song to the Lord my God, for He has looked upon me, and has taken away the reproach of mine enemies;

and the Lord has given the fruit of His righteousness, singular in its kind, and richly endowed before Him. Who will tell the sons of Ruben that Anna gives suck? Hear, hear, you twelve tribes of Israel, that Anna gives suck." And she laid her to rest in the bed-chamber of her sanctuary, and went out and ministered unto them. And when the supper was ended, they went down rejoicing, and glorifying the God of Israel.

And her months were added to the child. And the child was two years old, and Joachim said: Let us take her up to the temple of the Lord, that we may pay the vow that we have vowed, lest perchance the Lord send to us, and our offering be not received. And Anna said: Let us wait for the third year, in order that the child may not seek for father or mother. And Joachim said: So let us wait. And the child was three years old, and Joachim said: Invite the daughters of the Hebrews that are undefiled, and let them take each a lamp, and let them stand with the lamps burning, that the child may not turn back, and her heart be captivated from the temple of the Lord. And they did so until they went up into the temple of the Lord. And the priest received her, and kissed her, and blessed her, saying: "The Lord has magnified your name in all generations. In you, on the last of the days, the Lord will manifest His redemption to the sons of Israel. And he set her down upon the third step of the altar, and the Lord God sent grace upon her; and she danced with her feet, and all the house of Israel loved her.

And her parents went down marveling, and praising the Lord God, because the child had not turned back. And Mary was in the temple of the Lord as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an angel.

from the Protoevangelium of James 5-8

*The Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, 21 November/04 December*

a word from the desert

St. Niphon, the Patriarch of Constantinople, before he ascended the episcopal throne had been a novice at St. Dionysius' holy monastery (on Mt. Athos). After he had directed the Church of Christ for many years, he resigned from the throne and returned to the monastery where he toiled for his repentance, without revealing his identity.

He said that his name was Nicholas and that he desired to be a monk. The hegumen (abbot) warned him first that it was customary in the monastery for every beginner to be assigned the task of caring for the monastery's animals. The saint accepted with joy and stayed outside where the stable was and took care of the



mules, feeding, watering, and keeping them clean. He thus demonstrated insurmountable patience and humility.

Every night the monks saw a pillar of light rising from the stable to the sky. They told the hegumen about it, and he hegumen in turn prayed to God to reveal to him the meaning of this supernatural happening. And indeed it was revealed immediately to the hegumen that this person whom he had assigned the task of animal care, who also had to carry firewood from the forest, the Niphon the Ecumenical Patriarch who long ago had been one of the brotherhood of the monastery.

On the same night of this revelation to the hegumen, who was overwhelmed by the saint's total humility, he called all the priests and deacons and asked them to vest and to stand in line with the other monks carrying the liturgical fans, candles and incense, waiting to receive the saint when he returned from the forest leading the animals and carrying firewood. When he arrived wearing his old raso and with dust on his uncombed hair, they all fell on their knees asking for his blessing and saying, "Our Patriarch, your humility is enough! Take your shepherd's staff and lead us all to the pasture of salvation!"

from An Athonite Gerontikon

THE LAW IS THE LAW—via Mike Holupka

So 'if' the US government determines that it is against the law for the words 'under God' to be on our money, then, so be it.

And 'if' that same government decides that the 'Ten Commandments' are not to be used in or on a government installation, then, so be it.

I say, 'so be it,' because I would like to be a law abiding US citizen.

I say, 'so be it,' because I would like to think that smarter people than I are in positions to make good decisions.

I would like to think that those people have the American public's best interests at heart. BUT, YOU KNOW WHAT ELSE I'D LIKE?

Since we can't pray to God, can't Trust in God and cannot post His Commandments in Government buildings, I don't believe the Government and its employees should participate in the Easter and Christmas celebrations which honor the God that our government is eliminating from many facets of American life.

I'd like my mail delivered on Christmas, Good Friday, Thanksgiving, & Easter. After all, it's just another day.

I'd like the US Supreme Court to be in session on Christmas, Good Friday, Thanksgiving, & Easter as well as Sundays. After all, it's just another day.

I'd like the Senate and the House of Representatives to not have to worry about getting home for the 'Christmas Break.' After all it's just another day.

I'm thinking that a lot of my taxpayer dollars could be saved, if all government offices & services would work on Christmas, Good Friday, & Easter. It shouldn't cost any overtime since those would be just like any other day of the week to a government that is trying to be 'politically correct.'

In fact....I think that our government should work on Sundays (initially set aside for worshipping God...) because, after all, our government says that it should be just another day....What do you all think????

If this idea gets to enough people, maybe our elected officials will stop giving in to the 'minority opinions'and begin, once again, to represent the 'majority' of ALL of the American people. SO BE IT.....

Please Dear Lord, Give us the help needed to keep you in our country! 'Amen' and 'Amen' Touché!

Once the order was given at Scetis, "Fast this week." Now it happened that some brothers came from Egypt to visit Abba Moses and he cooked something for them. Seeing some smoke, the neighbors said to the ministers, "Look, Moses has broken the commandment and has cooked something in his cell." The ministers said, "When he comes, we will speak to him ourselves."

When the Saturday came, since they knew Abba Moses' remarkable way of life, the ministers said to him in front of everyone, "O Abba Moses, you did not keep the commandment of men, but it was so that you might keep the commandment of God."

Abba Moses the Ethiopian, commemorated 28 August/10 September  
troparion and icon at: <http://www.comeandseeicons.com/m/cap19.htm>

My children, always remember Jesus so that in all your weaknesses you may find the appropriate medicine. Are you in pain? By calling on Jesus you will find relief and enlightenment. Are you in affliction? Call on Jesus and behold, consolation will dawn

in the realm of your heart. Are you overcome by discouragement? Do not neglect to set your hopes on Jesus, and your soul will be filled with courage and strength. Are you bothered by carnal thoughts that allure you to sensual pleasure? Take the consuming fire of the name of Jesus and set fire to the tares. Are you oppressed by some worldly affair? Say, "Enlighten me, my Jesus, how to deal with the matter which lies before me. Work it out in accordance with Thy holy will." And behold, you will be at peace and will walk with hope.

Counsels from the Holy Mountain, Elder Ephraim of the Holy Mountain (Athos)

*a word from the desert*

The mouth which is continuously giving thanks receives blessing from God. In the heart that always shows gratitude, grace abides.

*St. Isaac the Syrian, 7th century*

**UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE USA  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS  
PRESS RELEASE**

*Ihumen Gregory (Woolfenden) of Blessed Memory!*



**It is with a profound depth of sadness and prayer that the Consistory Office of Public Relations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA prayerfully announces that the servant of God, Ihumen Gregory (Woolfenden), pastor of the Nativity of the Most Holy Birth-Giver of God Ukrainian Orthodox parish, New Britain, CT and professor of St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary has reposed in Christ—born to eternal life—after the long and arduous struggle.**

*Funeral services are scheduled as follows:*

**December 1 – 7 PM - Panakhyda at St. Mary Parish, New Britain, CT  
December 2 – 10 AM - Divine Liturgy at St. Mary Parish, New Britain, CT.**

**December 3 – 10 AM - Rite of the Monastic Funeral at St. Andrew Memorial Church, South Bound Brook, NJ.**

**His Eminence Archbishop Antony, President of the Consistory of our Holy Church has requested that we include Fr. Gregory in our prayers and liturgical commemorations and participate in the funeral services.**

*May his memory be eternal!*

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

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***BIOGRAPHY OF IHUMEN GREGORY (WOOLFENDEN) OF BLESSED MEMORY.***

**Ihumen Gregory (Woolfenden), of blessed memory, pastor of the Nativity of the Most Holy Birth-Giver of God parish in New Britain, Connecticut, reposed in the Lord on Thursday, 20 November 2008 at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA., following a brief illness. Ihumen Gregory is survived by his grieving mother, Sheila Wood, who resides in England and brother, Jeffrey Woolfenden and his wife, who reside on the Island of Crete, Greece.**

**Ihumen Gregory was born and educated in Liverpool, England, with later work experience in London. He studied, 1970 – 1976, at the Venerable English College, Rome, while reading for degrees in Philosophy and Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. Ordained deacon in the Roman Catholic Church 9 July 1976, and priest 16 July 1977. Ihumen Gregory, in the secular world Fr. Graham Woolfenden, served parishes of the Liverpool Archdiocese and also**

worked in the Liverpool Metropolitan Tribunal, occasionally serving the Ukrainian community in Oldham, England. He graduated M.Phil at the University of Manchester, 1989, and Ph.D., 1998, at Heythrop College, University of London, thesis entitled Daily Prayer: Its Origin and Its function.

From 1989 till 2004, Ihumen Gregory lectured in Liturgy and Worship at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, and was a member of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Oxford. He served as a member of the board of directors and Chair of the academic advisory committee, of the Institute of Orthodox Christian Studies in Cambridge.

He was a member of numerous Learned Societies: Societas Liturgica (International), Society for Liturgical Study (Britain – Chairman, 1994 – 1998). Review Editor of Eastern Churches Journal. Member of board of Eastern Christian Publications (USA). Chairman of the Council of Fellowship of SS Alban and Sergius. Member of an international Catholic Orthodox theological consultation, The Kyivan Churches Study Group. Member of Faith and Order consultation on Baptism. Was retained as consultant on books of prayer for Oxford University Press and consultant on the Liturgical series of Ashgate Publishing. Also served as member of the Sourozh diocese committee for liturgical texts and rubrics. Ihumen Gregory's publications include Daily Prayer in Christian Spain, Joyful Light and Daily Liturgical Prayer.

In the summer of 1996, Ihumen Gregory's deep understanding and love of Holy Orthodoxy was culminated by his acceptance of the faith and reception into the Russian Orthodox diocese of Sourozh in England by the late Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) in 1996. He took the monastic tonsure in 2000 by the hands of Ihumen Andrew (Wade) in Turin, Italy.

In 2004 Ihumen Gregory was received into the UOC of USA. Over the next four years he lovingly served in three parishes: St. Nicholas in Monessen, PA, St. Mary's in Lorain, OH, and St. Mary's in New Britain, CT. He also was assistant professor of Liturgics at St. Sophia Ukrainian Orthodox Theological Seminary and lecturer at Yale Theological Seminary. The monk Gregory was elevated as Ihumen by

the hands of Archbishop Antony at his parish of St. Mary's in New Britain, CT in 2007.

Ihumen Gregory was known by both his spiritual children and academic colleagues as a most approachable and warm person. His many spiritual gifts were multiplied by the ability to share them freely with anyone who came into his orbit. He is deeply mourned by friends, colleagues, students and parishioners and we all will miss his boundless love for life and contagious laughter. We pray that he find rest in green pastures and hear the voice of his Lord and Maker, "Come good and faithful servant, you have been faithful in little things, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world".

Diligently attending to his spiritual needs during the last moments upon this earth were the Reverend Fathers Bazyl Zawierucha, Stephen Masliuk, Anthony Perkins and the Rev. Deacon Anthony Szwez who served the Canon for the Departure of the Soul and the Litiya for the Departed as Ihumen Gregory slipped into the embrace of our Holy Fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

*MAY THE LORD GRANT HIS DEPARTED SERVANT, IHUMEN GREGORY MEMORY ETERNAL!*

a word from the desert

There was an old man living in the desert who served God for many years and said, "Lord, let me know if I have pleased you." He saw an angel who said to him, "You have not yet become like the gardener in such and such a place." The old man marveled and said to himself, "I will go off to the city to see both him and whatever it is that he does which surpasses my work and toil of all these years."

And so the old man went and came to the place he had heard about from the angel, and found the man sitting and selling produce. He sat with him for the rest of the day, and as the man was leaving, the old man said to him, "Brother, can you give me shelter in your cell tonight?" The man was overcome with joy and welcomed him. Therefore they went to his cell and after the man had prepared things for the old man's refreshment, the old man said to him, "Have charity, brother, and tell me of your manner of life."

Because the man did not want to speak of it the old man persisted for a great while in urging him to do so. Finally, having been shamed into it, the man said, "I usually eat late in the evening and when I finish, I set aside only what I need for my food, and the rest I give to those in need, and if I am host to any of God's servants, I give it to them. And when I get up in the morning, before I sit down to work, I say, 'This city, from the least to the greatest, will enter the kingdom because of their righteousness, but I alone will inherit punishment because of my sins.' And again, in the evening when I go to sleep, I say the same thing."

When the old man heard this, he said to him, "This practice is good, but not so good as to surpass my labors of all these years."

While they were getting ready to eat, the old man heard people in the street singing songs, for the cell of the gardener was in a public place. Therefore the old man said to him, "Brother, wanting as you do to live according to God, how do you remain in this place and not be troubled when you hear them singing these songs?" The man said, "I tell you, abba, I have never been troubled or scandalized." When he heard this, the old man said, "What, then, do you conceive in your heart whenever you hear these things?"

And he said, "That they are all going to the kingdom." When he heard this, the old man marveled and said, "This is the practice which surpasses my labor of all these years." In apology he said, "Forgive me, brother, I have not yet approached this standard." And without having eaten, he withdrew again into the desert.