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**ON THE MEND:** Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Metropolitan Savas, Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, Father George & Pani Lillian Hnatko, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smoly nec, Father Lawrence & Matushka Sophia Daniels, Father Joe Cervo, Father John Harrold [Saint Sylvester], Father George Livanos, Igumen Patrick, Pani Mary Ann Chubenko, Father Jim Orr, Father Rick Seilier, Panimatka Laryssa Charest, Fr. Vasyl Sendeha, Father Steve Hutnick [COVID-`9], Father Victor Wronskyj [COVID-19], Father George & Dobrodijka Oksana Bazylevsky, Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Joseph Sliwinsky, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Esther Holupka, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller,

Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [young lady with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Nancy Heinbaugh, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Marta Charron, Mary [Corba], Stella McKeag, Margie Sekelsky, Gary Howell, Fran Fulton, Gina Catanese, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kevin Allen (from Ancient Faith Radio), Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Jodi Hanczar, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Martha Nezolyk, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Jim & Kitty, Phil Bouse, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaugenhaupt, Louis & Teresa Bercelli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Sarah Dorning, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Judi Danser, Darcy, Denis Strittmatter, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam & Gordon Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Mike Pawlyshyn-Jeannie Stutchell's brother, Joe Samchuck—vocations, Albert Heckman, Brianna Stumpf, Stanley Porembka, David & Terry Coyne Hartnett, Mike C., Jennifer Scheirer [Nick Behun's daughter], Catherine Beecham [Father Bob's cousin], JoAnne & Dave Andrews, Rev. Peg Bowman, Pat Jennings, Tim Sams, Mike Ruzzi, Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, Mary Kay Ludovicy, Pastor Sara Irwin, George Dilendorf, Andy Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye,

William Lusherand, Bill Boretsky, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Joe Veto, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Monk Andrew, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Steven—Harry Batch’s cousin, Rose Mary Pavlovich—Mary Anne Kuznik’s Cousin, Stella McKeag, Margaret Sekelsky, Robert Sekelsky, Robert Rodriguez, Dollie Irvin, Joe Mrvos, Alexandra & Bowen, Katherine Kulik, Micky Delans [COVID-19], Pastor Terry Polen, Eleanor Kitt, Stacie & Gary, Dolores Wachnowsky, Maria Warholak, Stacie & Gary, Anna Sekelik, Christy, Mariruth, Rich & Judy Previc, Ben Williams, Denis Strittmatter, Deacon Joe Uzar—vocations, Tim—surgery, Archimandrite Raphael—COVID-19, John Wakin, Olivia—young girl with a brain tumor, Rick & Sharon Morgan, John Stasko [triple by-pass], John, Kris & Kait, Jeff & Mary Jane Double [COVID-19], Barbara Shegat & Chaplain Rachelle Zazzu, and Susan Pulcini—Father Ted Pulcini’s mom. ARNOLD: Homer Paul Kline and Walter Sakol. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

**Not to every one, my friends, does it belong to philosophize about God; not to every one; the Subject is not so cheap and low; and I will add, not before every audience, nor at all times, nor on all points; but on certain occasions, and before certain persons, and within certain limits. —Saint Gregory the Theologian, First Theological Oration**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY to our February Babies: David Shirley on the 1<sup>st</sup> and Kyle James Weiser on the 12<sup>th</sup>! May God grant them all Many Happy, Healthy, Prosperous, and Blessed Years! M’nohaya Lita! God Bless them all!**

**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ... There is NOTHING to keep us from praying...for each other, for our family and friends, and most of all for the first responders—EMTs, nurses, doctors, firefighters, police officers, and members of our military who keep us safe. Be well, and be SAFE!!! God Bless!**

*Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and ALL American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!*

**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 ask 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.

### SERVICES IN SLICKVILLE

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 07 OBEDNITZA—UPSTAIRS!!! 10:30 AM**

**35<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN-ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE; MARTYRS FELICITAS OF ROME & 7 SONS-JANUARIUS, FELIX, PHILLIP, SILVANUS, ALEXANDER, VITALIS, & MARTIAL; VENERABLE PUBLIUS-ASCETIC OF SYRIA; VENERABLE MARES THE SINGER OF SYRIA**

*Tone 2*

Timothy 1:15-17

Luke 18: 35-43

***Litany in Blessed Memory of Milton G. Chicka, Daniel Pysh, Sara Chicka, Nikolai Pivtoraiko, Evelyn Burlack, Anne Cherepko Mazock, Roy Wyke, & Katherine Debick—Fr. Bob***

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14 OBEDNITZA—UPSTAIRS!!! 10:30 AM**

**36<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; MARTYR TRYPHON OF CAMPSADA NEAR APAMEA IN SYRIA; MARTYRS PERPETUA & SATURUS, REVOCATUS, SATURNINUS, SECUNDULUS, & FELICITAS; VENERABLE PETER OF GALATIA; VENERABLE VENDEMIANUS-HERMIT OF BITHYNIA**

*Tone 3*

1 Timothy 4:9-15

Luke 19:1-10

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21 OBEDNITZA—UPSTAIRS!!! 10:30 AM**

**SUNDAY OF THE PUBLICAN AND THE PHARISEE; AFTERFEAST OF THE MEETING OF OUR LORD; GREAT-MARTYR THEODORE STRATELATES; PROPHET ZECHARIAH-OF THE 12 MINOR PROPHETS; SAINT SAVA II ARCHBISHOP OF SERBIA**

*Tone 4*

2 Timothy 3:10-15

Luke 18:10-14

## **BULLETIN INSERT FOR 07 FEBRUARY 2021**

**35<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN-ARCHBISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE; MARTYRS FELICITAS OF ROME & 7 SONS-JANUARIUS, FELIX, PHILLIP, SILVANUS, ALEXANDER, VITALIS, & MARTIAL; VENERABLE**

**PUBLIUS-ASCETIC OF SYRIA; VENERABLE MARES THE SINGER OF SYRIA**

**TROPARION—TONE 2**

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal,  
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead!  
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,  
All the powers of heaven cried out:  
O Giver of Life! Christ our God! 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 2**

Hell became afraid, O Almighty Savior,  
Seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb!  
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam,  
Beheld this and rejoiced with Thee!  
And the world, O my Savior, praises Thee forever!

**PROKEIMENON—TONE 2**

**READER:** The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

**PEOPLE: The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.**

**READER:** The Lord has chastened me sorely, but he has not given me over to death.

**PEOPLE: The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.**

**READER:** The Lord is my strength and my song.

**PEOPLE: He has become my salvation.**

**ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 2**

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble! The name of the God of Jacob protect you!

Save the king, O Lord, and hear us on the day we call!

**The Sunday after Theophany** Matthew 4:12-17

*Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee; And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land*

*of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (KJV)*

God's Holy Church continues to remember and celebrate the Lord Jesus Christ's baptism in the Jordan River by John. Celebrating Jesus' baptism is a major feast in the Church worthy of extended attention and consideration.

Each believer's baptism is an identity changing experience meriting considered thought throughout life. At Holy Baptism, the believer "puts on Christ" and afterwards is sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Thoughts and efforts following baptism are to be directed toward the Kingdom of God. God's Holy Church offers the opportunities and nourishment during the remaining time of life to continue on the path to life eternal.

The Holy Mysteries of the Church, Confession, Communion, Marriage, Ordination and Holy Unction strengthen the believer's bond with Christ. Prayers and the Divine services keep the believer united with Christ.

The hunger in the soul requires attention throughout life. God's Church is where to satisfy the hunger. Nourishment from sources outside the Church are insufficient to keep the soul at peace.

The Lord God in wisdom provided the Church for believers until the glorious Second Coming. God's Church enables believers to experience Christ fully and to prepare for the Second Coming and Final Judgment.

Continuous and lasting joy exist in the Church for the attentive and serious believer. The present Gospel describes the light associated with Christ which prevails over any darkness.

During these days when the Coronavirus and world events often create gloom and despair, the light of Christ offers brightness, hope and promise. Following Christ is the certain path to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Each person has the opportunity to pray during the course of the day. The Lord Jesus Christ welcomes the person heeding the message to repent of sins. Regardless of age and state in life, sincere repentance makes a difference.

St. John the Baptist preached repentance. Jesus Christ preached repentance.

Repentance affords new beginnings in life. Believers constantly sin. We all say and do things we do not want to do or say that are harmful to ourselves and/or others.

When we fall into sin, we need to repent and begin again. Repentance and confession afford new beginnings. God's love heals and welcomes the person choosing to repent.

The Divine services guide believers and provide nourishment for the mind, heart and soul. Care of the body includes receiving the Precious Body of Blood of Christ on a regular basis.

Fasting according to the Church's teachings including abstaining from activities perilous to the soul keeps the believer focused on the Kingdom of God. The Holy Gospel enriches attentive hearts, minds and souls.

Considering Christ's baptism and our own personal baptism grounds the believer in the Church. God's presence through the centuries is verified in the Holy Gospel.

Believers are expected to continue to learn and grow in Christ throughout life. Stagnancy is dangerous to the soul. Procrastination and lukewarm faith put the soul in peril.

Believers are given the time of life only once. Time is never replaced. Choosing to actively live in Christ and follow Christ is an investment in the Kingdom of God.

The Lord Jesus Christ said: "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Mt.6:20)

The remaining time of life is unknown. The day Jesus Christ will return for the Second Coming and Final Judgment is not known. The day each person will take his or her last breath is not known.

The time of life is to be used wisely and purposely to thank and glorify God and seek God's Kingdom. Peace, love, and joy exist in life for believers centered in Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit.

Prayer, effort, and work are required to rid the mind, body and soul of the filth that emanates from sin. Repentance changes the heart and mind. God is ever-present to help the believer in the effort to repent and change for the better.

Baptism is the healthiest beginning of life. Baptism is the important beginning of life. The way the believer utilizes the remaining time of life determines the believer's present and ever-lasting experiences.

*Afterfeast of Theophany. Sunday after Theophany. St. Theodosius the Great. January 11/24, 2021. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

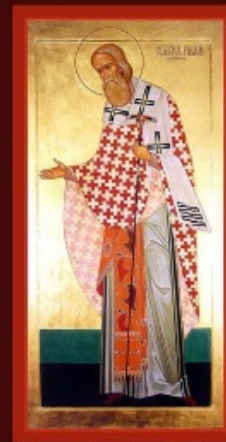
### **Father George L Livanos**

A monk with eye trouble was told by the doctor he had cataracts and would need surgery—but not right away; they needed to wait until the condition had progressed a little more. The monk waited but then suddenly lost his eyesight. He went to another doctor for the surgery, who told him,



“Unfortunately, it’s too late; you should have come to me sooner; now it’s too late; I can’t do anything for you—you’re going to be blind for the rest of your life, because you didn’t have cataracts like the other doctor told you, it was something else.” The monk, instead of getting angry or depressed, instead of blaming the first doctor, said “May it be blessed! God knows what is best for me, and it was God who ‘blinded’ the first doctor when he made his mistaken diagnosis.” Until the day he died, he never said one word against the first doctor, nor did a single thought about the matter ever pass through his mind.

***That one soldier  
has fallen  
does not mean  
the entire army  
is defeated.***



St Ignatius (Brianchaninov)

**THE GREATEST LESSON FOR EVERY FIRST YEAR SEMINARIAN OR  
CONVERT TO ORTHODOXY!**

*via Metropolitan Savas & Proto Daniel Rogich*

“Not to every one, my friends, does it belong to philosophize about God; not to every one; the Subject is not so cheap and low; and I will add, not before every audience, nor at all times, nor on all points; but on certain occasions, and before certain persons, and within certain limits. Not to all men, because it is permitted only to those who have been examined, and are passed masters in meditation, and who have been previously purified in soul and body, or at the very least are being purified. For the impure to touch the pure is, we may safely say, not safe, just as it is unsafe to fix weak eyes upon the sun's rays. And what is the permitted occasion? It is when we are free from all external defilement or disturbance, and when that which rules within us is not confused with vexatious or erring images; like persons mixing up good writing with bad, or filth with the sweet odors of ointments. For it is necessary to be truly at leisure to know God; and when we can get a convenient season, to discern the straight road of the things divine. And who are the permitted persons? They to whom the subject is of real concern, and not they who make it a matter of pleasant



gossip, like any other thing, after the races, or the theatre, or a concert, or a dinner, or still lower employments. To such men as these, idle jests and pretty contradictions about these subjects are a part of their amusement."  
—*Saint Gregory the Theologian, First Theological Oration*

### **Via Metropolitan Savas Zembillas**

This is from St Gregory the Theologian's Oration 2: "In Defence of his Flight to Pontus, and his Return, After his Ordination to the Priesthood, with an Exposition of the Character of the Priestly Office."

A little background: Gregory was 32 years old when he returned to his home town of Nazianzus from Athens, where he had been a student, in 361. He was ordained a presbyter by his father, also named Gregory. The younger Gregory, who was drawn to the monastic life, resented his father for forcing ordination upon him, calling it an "act of tyranny." He left Nazianzus within days and traveled to Annesoi in Pontus, where he lived as an ascetic for while with a friend with whom he had studied in Athens, the future St. Basil the Great, at Annesoi in Pontus. The following year, however, at Basil's urging, he returned home to assist his father. At Nazianzus, Gregory found the people resentful of him for having abandoned them, suspecting him of having done so in pursuit of a grander appointment. In this oration, Gregory tried to make peace with the community by explaining his motives for running away. Far from feeling himself too good for them, he confessed that he felt himself unworthy of the high calling of the priesthood.

"With these thoughts I am occupied night and day: they waste my marrow, and feed upon my flesh, and will not allow me to be confident or to look up. They depress my soul, and abase my mind, and fetter my tongue, and make me consider, not the position of a prelate, or the guidance and direction of others, which is far beyond my powers; but how I myself am to escape the wrath to come, and to scrape off from myself somewhat of the rust of vice. A man must himself be cleansed, before cleansing others: himself become wise, that he may make others wise; become light, and then give light: draw near to God, and so bring others near; be hallowed, then hallow them; be possessed of hands to lead others by the hand, of wisdom to give advice." (Oration 2, ch. 71)



ne must be purified before purifying others

be instructed before instructing

become light in order to enlighten

draw near to God before approaching others

be sanctified in order to sanctify

Saint Gregory the Theologian *Oration II*, 71

### **The Word and Words**

***Psalm 17:4-Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. (KJV)***

The Word of God carries life-giving power and protects the believer from sin. Believers do well to immerse themselves in God's Word and live accordingly. Welcoming the Word into personal life unifies the believer with the Divine. God's Word enriches human understanding and guides human life to the Kingdom. Learning from God's Word is primary for serious believers during earthly life.

***Psalm 19:4-Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. (KJV)***

Always be deliberate and grateful for the opportunities to learn from God's Word. Be wise in recognizing the power and dangers of words used in daily conversation. Ensure that words spoken and considered are pleasing and blessings from the Lord. Refrain from hurting others with words spoken in haste with ill intent and malice. Master the use of words filled with love and freely let them prevail in daily speech.

***Psalm 33:6-By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. (KJV)***

The Word results in Creation and in creativity worthy of thought throughout life. Draw strength and wisdom from the Word and apply the lessons in everyday life. Seek the joy found in the Word and savor the immeasurable heights to explore. Be completely nourished and regularly satisfy the soul's hunger with the Word. Find great personal contentment and enrichment in defense of the Word's power.

***Psalm 119:11-Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. (KJV)***

Fill the heart, mind and soul with the Word and guard against the soul's pollution. The Word offers purity and truth to cleanse the self of

sinful ways and impurities. Be diligent in learning the Word and ways of the Word to lift life to the heights. Guard against the wiles of the devil by arming the self with the Word's power. Use the Word as armor against attacks that would put the soul in great jeopardy.

***Psalm 119:105-Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. (KJV)***

Follow the ways of the Word from the time of baptism until earthly departure. Wisely cherish the Word and be completely attentive in heeding the way to follow. Love hearing the Word and following the Word all the days of earthly life. Let personal life reflect the Lord's love for each person in daily relationships. Apply lessons from the Word in daily life in order for personal growth to continue.

*Apodasis of Theophany. Holy Martyrs Hermylus and Stratonicus. January 13/26, 2021.  
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*

## **TO HAVE AND TO HOLD**

by

Candace Irving

*His hands were leathery and gnarled, with plump veins crisscrossing the backs. I can still feel them clasped in mine as we drove to the hospital at the beginning of the end. Those same hands, so firm when they raised me, trembled now. "What am I going to do without her?"*

*Love soon taught his hands new skills. They were steady once again as he placed the pills that kept his nightmare at bay between her lips. They were strong as he carried her from the bed, gentle as he settled her in a chair.*

*They were familiar as he cradled her close and whispered, "I love you, Tiger."*

*Until one day, those hands that held her for thirty-seven years were empty.*

*They shook uncontrollably as he twisted off his glasses and wiped at his grief, never quite reaching it all. It was he who needed comfort then, and so I did what I'd seen him do so many times for her. I reached out and held him as he let her go.*

*He still keeps flowers in the vase for her, only now there's a picture of her beside it. He still speaks to her and shares his day. He still misses her.*

*But a new serenity surrounds him now. He doesn't fear death, for he knows she is waiting to embrace him.*

*~Happy Birthday, Mom.*

# Vestments of an Orthodox Priest

**Phelonion:** the large vestment worn over all of the other vestments. It is symbolic of the robe that was put on Christ during His Crucifixion and also represents a separation from sin and passion.

**Pectoral Cross:** the cross worn around the neck which denotes priestly status in some traditions. Wooden, silver, gold, and jeweled crosses each refer awards bestowed upon the priest for service to the Church. Some priests of high rank are blessed to wear two crosses.

**Zone:** the belt which holds awards and the epitrachelion in place while the priest is fully vested and thus represents a priest's readiness to serve.

**Palitza:** a diamond shaped piece of cloth worn on the right hip. This award in the slavic traditions is conferred after the gold pectoral cross. In byzantine traditions it denotes the wearer's blessing to hear confessions. It is a symbolic sword which represents the priest as a spiritual warrior, and the Gospel as the sword of the Spirit.

**Sticharion:** is the vestment worn under the other vestments and is a form of the baptismal garment. Altar servers, deacons, priests, and bishops wear sticharion, but the one worn by the priest bishop are usually much lighter material.

**Mitre:** is an award given to an arch-priest after many years of service. It usually is decorated with four icons, Christ, the Theotokos, John the Baptizer, and the Holy Cross. It symbolizes the crown of thorns which was placed on Christ during His Crucifixion as well as the royalty of Christ as the King of Kings.

**Epitrachelion:** the double stole worn around the neck of every priest or bishop during all liturgical functions. It is symbolic of the grace given to the priest at his ordination. The seven crosses on the epitrachelion represent the seven Great Sacraments of the Orthodox Church.

**Nabedrennik:** a rectangular piece of cloth worn on the hip. This is often the first award a priest will receive for service to the Church. It is worn on the right hip until replaced by the palitza and is moved to the left. It shares the same meaning as the Palitza.

*"they (priests) shall put on linen robes... and when they go out into the outer court to the people, they shall put off their robes in which they minister and they shall lay them up in the chamber of the sanctuary"*  
(Ezek. 44:17)

