

# HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH Parish Newsletter

New Parish Center: 20937 Ashburn Rd., #110, Ashburn, VA July 2018

AS THE DAYS GET SHORTER THE WEEKS OF MATTHEW WILL BRING US TO THE ELEVATION OF THE CROSS AND THE END OF THE CHURCH YEAR

## JUNE—DAY 15 HOURS, NIGHT 9

- 20 Wed *St. Nicolas Cavásilas of Thessaloniki (+ca. 1385)*  
 21 Thu *Summer Solstice*  
 23 Sat 6:00 p.m. *Great Vespers—the last till Fall*  
 24 Sun<sup>4•III•Mt4</sup> *Nativity of John the Baptizer*  
 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Busenberg*  
 29 Fri ↓ *Leaders of the Apostles, Saints Peter and Paul*

## JULY—DAY 14 HOURS, NIGHT 10

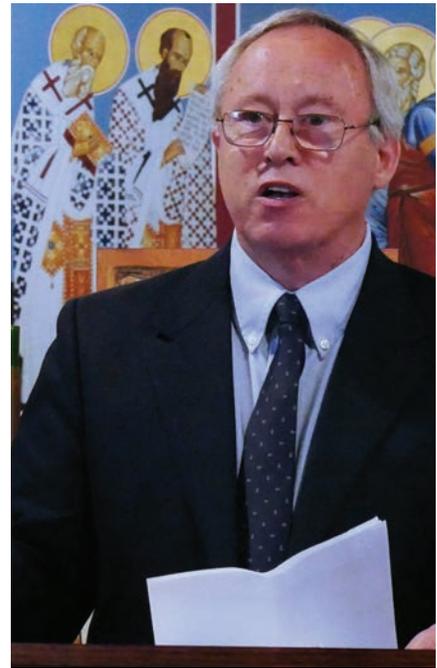
- 1 Sun<sup>5•IV•Mt5</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Lefchick*  
 8 Sun<sup>6•V•Mt6</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Ellmore*  
 15 Sun<sup>7•VI•Mt7</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Hawkins*  
 22 Sun<sup>8•VII•Mt8</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Helton*  
*26th Anniversary of the sudden exodus of Protopresbyter John Meyendorff (+1992)*  
 29 Sun<sup>9•VIII•Mt9</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Krisa*

## AUGUST—DAY 13 HOURS, NIGHT 11

- 5 Sun<sup>10•I•Mt10</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Morrow*  
 6 Mon ↑ *Transfiguration of the Lord—Bless grapes and fruit*  
 12 Sun<sup>11•II•Mt11</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Mosholder*  
 15 Wed ↑ *Dormition of the Holy Theotokos—Bless flowers*  
 19 Sun<sup>12•III•Mt12</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Smith*  
 26 Sun<sup>13•IV•Mt13</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Tarassova*

## SEPTEMBER—DAY 12 HOURS, NIGHT 12

- 2 Sun<sup>14•V•Mt14</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Warden*  
 9 Sun<sup>15•VI•Mt15</sup> 10:00 a.m. *Divine Liturgy—Coffee Hour: Wayland*  
 14 Fri ↑ *Elevation of the Holy and Life-Giving Cross*  
*And End of the Ecclesiastical Year*



Dear Fr. Paul,

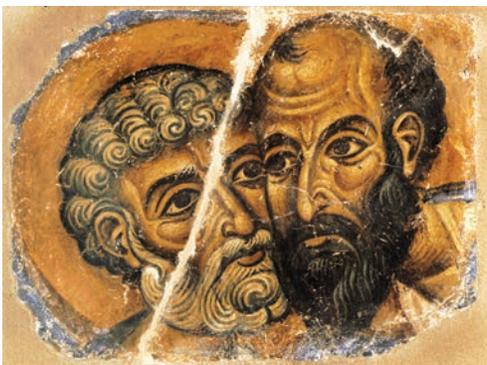
Thanks again for your warm hospitality this past weekend. It was great to catch up, and especially to see a parish where the Liturgy is alive and reflects the vision of both Schmemmann and New Skete.

We are stuck in Vermont for a few extra days because when I took my car in for the annual inspection, it needed \$3K+ in repairs....

Have a good summer.

Paul [Meyendorff]

*What follows is Dr. Paul Meyendorff's Valedictory to St. Vladimir's Seminary given upon his retirement Commencement Day two years ago. He conjures up the school Fr. Paul encountered beginning in the Fall of 1967. In passing he calls attention to Mr. Serge Verkhovsky, professor of dogmatic theol-*



Saints Peter and Paul, fragment of a fresco dating from the late Comnenian period, ca. 1170–1180, Monastery of Vatopedi, Mount Athos. The Embrace of the Apostles Peter and Paul as an independent theme expressing peace and unity of the Churches East and West was adopted at an early stage in Eastern Church art, following prototypes known in early Christian art. (See *Treasures of Mount Athos, Thessaloniki*, 1997, pg. 40.) Alas, this peace and unity have been disrupted.

From the earliest centuries Peter has been portrayed with a full head of curly white hair and a short trim beard, and Paul with a receding hairline and dark V-shaped beard, and with such consistency as to convince modern art historians that these images are based upon reminiscence.

*Acts of the Apostles* is part two of Luke's Gospel. About 150 A.D., when Christians wanted the four Gospels bound in a single volume, parts one and two of Luke were separated. The title *Acts of the Apostles* was probably given to the second part at this time, and means, in point of fact, the Acts of Peter and Paul.

ogy. To save time, Mr. Verkhovsky and Father Paul took an instant dislike to each other. His subject was *School Theology*—what some call *systematic scholastic*—basically *Latin*—*theology*. As a theologian Verkhovsky was third rate. He had no use for what Schmemmann and Meyendorff were teaching and thinking—and he had a following. Not in their league, one wondered what he was doing at St. Vladimir’s in the first place. After reading this adieu, Fr. Paul came to realize that Mr. Verkhovsky symbolizes the massif of indifference to Schmemmann-inspired *Renewal*, the source of the *New Darkness* that has been creeping up on the OCA since the death of Father Meyendorff in 1992. But, not to worry. Paul Meyendorff’s speech is levelheaded, uplifting and prophetic.

### **Dr. Paul Meyendorff SVS 2016 Graduation Speech**

Your Beatitude, venerable hierarchs, fathers, brothers and sisters in Christ. Christ is risen!

It is an honor for me to stand before you one last time as, together with this year’s graduating class, I prepare to leave the cocoon that is St. Vladimir’s. For most of you, that has been for the last two or three years; for me, it has been 29 years on the faculty, but 57 years if you count from the time I arrived in New York with my family in 1959, when my father first came from France to teach at the seminary. The seminary at that time was located on Broadway, on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, near Columbia University and across the street from Union Theological Seminary. Students shared tiny, dark apartments, cooked for themselves, and walked across Broadway to classrooms at Union. Only a few of the students were married, and there was no married housing, so married students had to fend for themselves in

the Manhattan housing market. The chapel was the living room of a three-bedroom apartment, and the bedrooms housed the library. It was in that small chapel that my brother and I, then 8 and 9 years old, served as altar boys, with Fr. Schmemmann breaking up our occasional squabbles. The faculty and their families lived in apartments in the same building. St Vladimir’s was a small, fragile institution then, and, despite our more expansive facilities today, it remains small and fragile today. Now speakers at graduation ceremonies usually come from outside the institution. They tell the graduating students how great and smart they all are, how wonderful the institution is, what a great legacy they bear, and challenge them to go out and change the world. I, however, do not come from outside the seminary. I have an intimate knowledge of the institution going back for many decades, and I have come to know most of you quite well over the past two or three years. So perhaps I should end right now and wish you all Godspeed!

As I was pondering what to say to you today, the following passage from St. Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians came to mind: “And to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to harass me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me: ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12.7–10) Biblical scholars continue to speculate about the nature of that thorn in Paul’s side, but for us in the Church the

# A CELEBRATION



meaning is absolutely clear. That thorn in the side, that weakness, affects not just every individual Christian, but also every church institution. One has but to look at recent crises in our various Orthodox churches and jurisdictions, or read any book on church history, to see the truth of this. Yet, as St. Paul affirms, God accomplishes his work not just despite, but through, our weakness. This is not to say that you graduates and continuing students do not stand on very tall shoulders, and not just those of Fr. John Behr and Professor Peter Bouteneff. The legacy of St. Vladimir's has always been connected with the names of a trinity of its deans, Fathers Florovsky, Schmemmann, and Meyendorff, all major figures in 20th-century Orthodoxy. It is they who put the seminary on the map and arguably dragged the Orthodox Church out of its ghettoized existence and into conversation with the modern world. Yet, while these three had much in common in terms of education, culture, and ecclesial vision, their personalities and approaches could not have been more different. Few people today, for example, know that, at the end of the 1954–1955 academic year, Fr. Florovsky, a brilliant scholar, but a man who did not get along well with those he considered his inferiors, fired Fr. Schmemmann, who then left for his summer home in Canada essentially jobless and homeless. In the stormy summer that followed, Florovsky was himself removed as Dean and resigned his faculty position, and Schmemmann was rehired and installed as Acting Dean. It was not until 1962, after the seminary had moved to its present location here in Crestwood, that he was appointed Dean. The clash between them was not surprising: Florovsky was the consummate scholar, not a team player, and had little interest or patience for dealing with pastoral issues, while Schmemmann was, first and foremost, a pastor. And, though his training was primarily in church history, his

interest shifted early in his career to liturgical theology, a discipline in which theology intersects with the day-to-day experience of Orthodox Christians. As is evident in his posthumously published *Journals*, Fr. Alexander was allergic to purely academic pursuits and often said that these were better left to the “Germans” (ironic given his own, Baltic German roots and name, and the fact that the only other “German” on the faculty was Fr. John Meyendorff!). Hence also his allergy to footnotes—they are sparse in his many books, and were typically added for show only after he had completed writing. I have known a few students here who do much the same. Yet the clash between Florovsky and Schmemmann takes nothing away from their accomplishments or significance. While the kind of dramatic clash that happened between Frs. Florovsky and Schmemmann did not occur again, the seminary remained a very diverse place. When I enrolled at St. Vladimir's in the fall of 1972, the three main figures here were Frs. Schmemmann and Meyendorff, together with Serge Verhovskoy, Professor of Dogmatic Theology. Verhovskoy, like Schmemmann and Meyendorff, was educated at St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris, where he also taught until his arrival to America in 1952. From 1955 until his retirement in 1981, he served as the seminary's Provost. His academic interest lay primarily in the fields of philosophy and ethics, and he insisted that all seminary students study dogmatic theology during all six semesters of the MDiv program. In true scholastic fashion, his lectures began with “The Problem of God,” and followed the classical 19th-century Russian manual theology curriculum.

Since he suspected the orthodoxy of his colleagues, in his lectures he tried to cover every subject, implicitly, and sometimes openly, but always with a certain sense

## WORTHY OF FORTY YEARS!



of humor, correcting perceived deficiencies in the teaching of his colleagues. I admit that I was not always fully awake during his lectures—I would sit in the back of the room, my head resting against the wall, squarely behind a certain Serbian classmate who had played football in college and was therefore sufficiently large to conceal me from the view of the Professor. I learned the very useful skill of taking notes in my sleep: whenever he wanted to emphasize a point, he would lower the pitch of his voice (as is characteristic of Russian speakers), and this would be my signal to wake up and write down what he said, as it would surely show up on the final examination. His students also quickly learned the trick of asking a provocative question during class: this would raise his suspicions about your orthodoxy—and would guarantee that he would question you about exactly that particular point during the oral final examinations he always gave. And while he attended church faithfully, he had little use for either liturgies or liturgical theology, and he would compare church services to a “Kitaiskii tsirk,” a “Chinese circus”—lots of people in fancy costumes running around in circles. And when, shortly after he retired, I told him that I would be pursuing a doctorate in liturgy, he rolled his eyes and never talked to me again. I am sure he thought I was throwing my life away. The diversity of the faculty was not lost on the students, who rarely missed the opportunity, during the socially tumultuous 60s and 70s, to goad professors into criticizing each other. At the regular talent shows at Christmas time or before Great Lent, students would roast faculty members—the most popular were skits dramatizing faculty meetings. Several of these were Oscar-worthy performances. And for several years in that era, students published a satirical journal called “Aha, Aha”—I believe copies may still be found in the library,

probably under lock and key. But this was all in good fun, and it did not usually cross boundaries of mutual respect and decency. The seminary in those days was very much a small, “mom and pop” outfit, and it was a very human institution, operating in a family style that reflected the colorful personalities of its leaders. The personages I have just mentioned were a diverse group indeed. Their personalities and their approaches varied greatly, and at times they clashed, though never as dramatically as in 1955. Each had strengths, and each had flaws. They are long gone from among us, though in various ways they survive, for some of us in our memories, but for most of us through their writings and the work of their successors. I assure you that today’s seminary faculty is every bit as diverse and colorful as it was in those days, in terms of both approach and personality, of strengths and weaknesses. But I will let you younger faculty and graduating students tell that story when I am gone. And the fiscal challenges the seminary faces today, which may endanger its future, certainly reflect the continued fragility of the institution. So what does all this mean for those of us who are now preparing to move on to the next stage of our lives? I will make four brief points—I also took homiletics at seminary and was taught to keep it short and simple. First of all, you are all human, foibles and all. You all have that thorn in your side, be it due to your upbringing, to your various temptations and passions, to your egos, or simply to your own limitations. In this way, you are little different from fallen Adam and Eve, from all the figures in the Old Testament, from the apostles who, as we heard recently during Holy Week, ran away and abandoned Christ in his time of trial. We all fall short, we all have weaknesses—but if we have faith, God works through that weakness and shows his glory—and keeps us from being too arrogant or

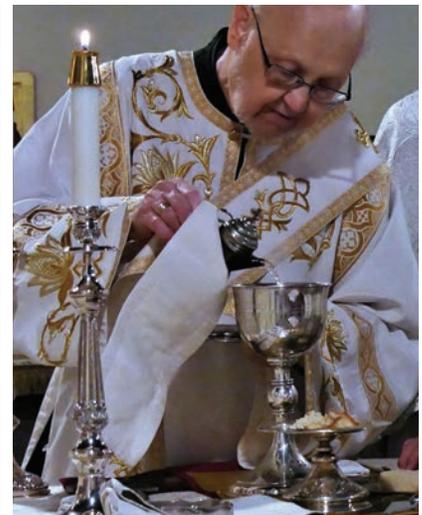


## A CELEBRATION

proud. Second, avoid easy, one-sided answers or solutions. So often we are asked to provide simple answers: what is the Orthodox understanding about this or that? Both Frs. Schmemmann and Meyendorff spoke often about the dangers of reducing Orthodoxy to only one of its aspects, whether to dogma, to the canons, to morality, to liturgy, or to our own notion of what Orthodoxy should be. And how often we Orthodox today seek recourse to what we call “the Fathers,” or “the patristic tradition,” as if the Fathers all spoke with one voice and had immediate answers to all our contemporary questions and challenges. The Fathers were a rowdy group, and if you were able to put them all into one room, sparks would surely fly. It was Fr. Florovsky who coined the phrase about “having the mind of the Fathers,” and he is often credited with inaugurating what has come to be called the “neo-patristic synthesis.” For him, however, this did not mean searching through patristic writings to find suitable proof texts that one could then pull out of a hat to answer any question. No, for him it meant responding faithfully and creatively to the questions that are being posed to us today, using a language and categories that contemporary humanity can receive and grasp. This, I believe, is what St. Vladimir’s Seminary has always stood for, and if we have been able to transmit that ethos to you, then we have done our job. Third, be prepared for difficulties and troubles. As I can testify for my own experience, life will not unfold the way you planned it. You may get fired, as Fathers Schmemmann and Florovsky were. You will inevitably face tragedies, whether in your parishes, in the communities where you will live, or your own family life. As hard as we at the seminary may have tried, we could not have prepared you adequately for the challenges and difficulties you will face. The examinations you have just passed, the theses

you have just completed, were all done in the cocoon of a safe environment. Whether you got an A or a C ultimately matters little. The real test, the one that counts, still lies ahead of you—and failure comes at the cost of real lives, whether your own or those of the people entrusted to your care. Finally, live your lives with joy! The gospel we proclaim is the good news to the whole world, to all of creation. Let that joy we experienced just two weeks ago on Pascha night permeate every moment of your life. In every sermon you preach, in every lesson you teach, proclaim that Christ is risen, that death has been defeated. Yes, there will be the Cross, there will be suffering; and you will be called to stand with those who suffer and to suffer yourself. But if you have deep within yourself the firm conviction that the victory has been won—then, and only then, will you be able to transmit that conviction to others. It is not simply a matter of words, but of how you live every moment of your life. It is not something that can be faked. Then, with St. Paul, you will be able to say: “For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Cor. 12.10) So, as I speak before you one last time as a professor at this small, fragile, but nevertheless glorious, institution, I want to thank you with all my heart. I have learned so much from you, both from my colleagues on the faculty and from the many students I have encountered in the classroom over the past 29 years. Thank you also to the trustees and all the supporters of this school—we live through your prayers, as well as your checkbooks. May God grant all of you, and this seminary, many years! CHRIST IS RISEN!

## WORTHY OF FORTY YEARS!



*First Reformed* and  
*AN ANGUISHED HOPE*  
**Two movie reviews.**

On a sunny, hot Father's Day, as the monastery's representative in the local council of churches I attended the Baccalaureate for the Cambridge Central School's graduating class. It was held in a handsome red brick church dating from the late 1700's and has been lovingly restored and maintained by its congregation just outside the village of Cambridge.

Upstate New York has no shortage of Colonial era churches, calendar perfect and uniform in their creamy white, or atypical in Coila's case, being brick, but surrounded by majestic oaks, maples and ash trees as old as the churches.

One such supplies the title and venue for a new film, *First Reformed* by Paul Schrader, starring Ethan Hawke as the Rev. Ernst Toler. In a web review Jacob Knight captures its complexity: here he's a man hanging by his fingernails over a mournful chasm, counting his numerous failures (a lost son, a failed marriage) as cancer and booze begin to eat away at his insides.

The added dimension is that he's a man of God. *First Reformed*, as in the Dutch who brought their religion up the Hudson. The pastor goes about his chores in the church and the Manse in cassock and collar, and in the village in the long black coating collar which made me think of Ichabod Crane. The story unfolds as he writes his diary each evening, the filming is such that you need to look close to see if he's using a feather quill. His rooms have a Shaker, almost monastic feel. A volume of Thomas Merton sits on his desk. Anyone who has had even the briefest skirmish in the "interior warfare" can identify the atmosphere, the intensity and loneliness.

When Sunday comes his homily is earnest, like his name; it takes only a few minutes to distribute communion to the hand-full of worshipers.

I don't intend to capture, much less to give away the plot, but I can comment on some vivid images.

A woman in each congregation, especially Amanda Seyfried, as Mary propel much of the thriller facet. The contrasts, the bleakness of an upstate NY winter, the lushness of the mega-church "Abundant Life Ministries," whose pastor (Cedric Kyles) has adopted *First Reformed* as one would an elderly aunt. It's auditorium seats thousands, it has a cafeteria, the pastor's office is like a boardroom, his IT facility broadcasts his message far and wide. And he is a sympathetic ear for Rev. Ernst. Significantly they do argue over the relevance of Merton. "he was tucked away in a monastery, you need to be in the real world" he warns. [ahem...] And when the two ministers meet with their largest corporate donor, also a world-class polluter, the three of them in a booth at a coffee shop, it could be a scene from the Book of Job.

The state of the environment has a major role as both subtext [the film was made with climate-change deniers and their cabinet and congressional clout acutely in mind] and efficient cause of the hopelessness that stalks the characters.

As the stress intensifies culminating at the 250th anniversary of First Reformed, Toler leans more heavily on the bottle. At one point he pours two inches of liquor into a tumbler, then screws off the top from a Pepto-Bismol bottle [the subtle sound of it is unmistakable] and pours a dollop into the whiskey.

The camera pulls in to watch the clash of colors and competing densities form a malevolent looking, fetal-like curling blob, and icon of the cancer in his bowels and

## A CELEBRATION



the cancer we have inflicted on the earth with incessant compromises of the very land, air and water we live on, a reality that gnaws at its soul more toxically than the cancer in his bowels.

*First Reformed* is a masterpiece of American cinema. An almost timid thriller about a crisis of faith several layers deep, personal, sexual, communal, political and ultimately global. It is about finding hope in times that seem hopeless, where the finding has become a true spiritual ordeal. The *askesis* of both biblical and monastic tradition

In radiant distinction, Pope Francis: *A Man of his Word* left me feeling infused with true hope.

I heard about Wim Wender's documentary on NPR including his own words about what he was looking to accomplish, especially by the interview with Pope Francis that is the core of the film.

I admit to being skeptical about the potential for maudlin spiritual propaganda. Instead I found myself totally disarmed by the power of the film and, of course, by the power of the pope's disarming depth of presence and genuineness.

For the first interview, the pope is sitting in the garden but by the end of the film, for the answer to Wender's final question the camera brings you very close up so that Francis is speaking to you and his parting words should be taken personally.

The passion this pope feels about the environment and how we collectively abuse God's gift and leave our children a much diminished earth and untold suffering for people, chiefly the poor, around the globe, bears a certain kinship with *First Reformed*, but in this film it is writ large. Quite literally, as when the whole facade of St. Peter's Basilica, now that it has been cleaned and returned to its white luster, was used to project a film about the environment.

Seeing it "second hand" was impressive, but for anyone in the square it must have been mid-blowing, 150 feet high and 370 wide, filled with images of mountains of garbage on which hundreds of families live, are baptized, marry and die picking over other people's trash to eek out sustenance. The same is true of floating plastic and other litter choking whole rivers or forming rafts the size of countries in our oceans. That's only two of the images burned into my mind.

Pope Francis's first Encyclical, *Laudate Si*, whose name is taken from the opening words of the hymn in praise of all creation composed by Saint Francis of Assisi made it clear why the pope [no less than the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew] burns with such passion on the accountability of the issue.

Mr. Wender punctuates the *œuvre* with film clips of the life of Assisi's *poverello* saint either from an old B&W movie, or especially produced, but an effective way to link the pope's namesake and the deep roots of environmental passion.

The interview is also laced with films of the pope's exhausting travels. Beginning with prisons in Italy, and in other countries, to slums in his native South America, to hospitals in Africa where he embraces individuals with compassion and tenderness, undeterred by possibility of contagion. Mirroring Francis's encounter with lepers.

On the Greek island of Lesbos he was joined by Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople [the pope's senior in the crusade to respect creation] and the Archbishop of Athens to comfort the flood of refugees from the bloody war in Syrian. [Unfortunately they were not identified.]

But what I found most dramatic was the Pontiff's speech before the joint session of our Congress. He reminded our legislators to examine the attraction of the billions

# WORTHY OF FORTY YEARS!



of dollars our government makes by selling arms which are then used to wreak death and suffering on so many in the world's crisis zones which affects primarily the poor and marginalized.

I saw both these films in a little arts theater in a college town about 45 minutes away, a beautiful drive to Williamstown in the NW corner of Massachusetts. The woman minding the concession stand [with elegant pastries and many kinds of coffee] told me an area R.C. priest bought fifty tickets so his parish could see Pope Francis and discuss the issues. I would like my brothers and sisters to see them both. I urge our Companions to look for them, and to all our readers, don't miss the chance. After all, an *Anguished Hope* is still HOPE.

—Brother Stavros, New Skete  
21 June 2018



# A CELEBRATION





# WORTHY OF FORTY YEARS!



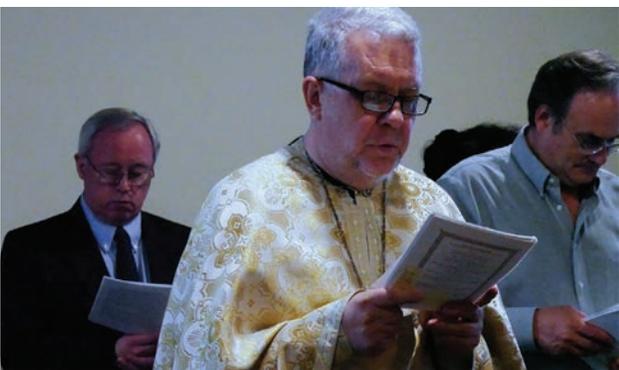


# A CELEBRATION





# WORTHY OF FORTY YEARS!



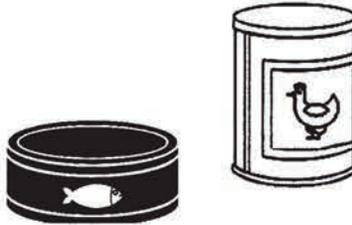


# FOOD PANTRY MOST NEEDED ITEMS

## Canned Fruits & Veggies



## Canned Meat



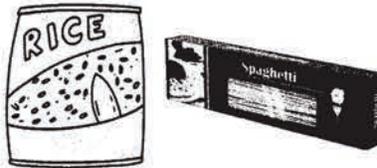
## Canned Beans & Soup



## Cereal



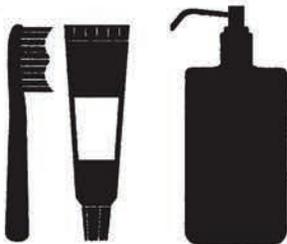
## Whole Grain Pasta & Rice



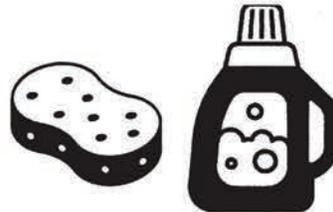
## Peanut Butter



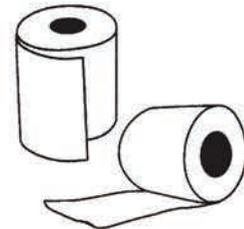
## Hygiene Items



## Household Items



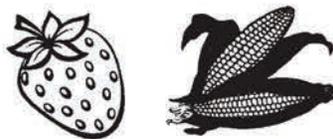
## Paper Products



## Cooking Oil



## Fresh Fruits & Vegetables



## Other

Diapers      Fruit Cups  
Wipes      Granola Bars  
Formula      Popcorn  
Infant Cereal  
Nutritional Shakes  
and Drinks

**PopTop Cans and Microwavable Cups Preferred**  
**Low Sodium • Low Trans Fat • Sugar Free**

750 Miller Drive, Suite A-1 • Leesburg, Virginia 20175 • Phone: (703) 777-5911 • Fax: (703) 777-5531