

**Albanian Orthodox Archdiocese in America ~ <http://www.aoaa.org>**

**SS Peter and Paul Albanian Orthodox Church**

**9230 Old Bustleton Avenue - Philadelphia, PA 19115 - Church Phone: 215-676-3311**

**Pastor: Father Stephen Siniari - Phone: 609-385-3757 - Email: [frsiniari@gmail.com](mailto:frsiniari@gmail.com)**

FATHER STEPHEN'S MESSAGE TO THE FAITHFUL

*Whisper of the Snake*

Second Monthly Installment: **Chapter 1: Propriety**

*It is like a captain having pirates sailing with him on board ship and continually plotting against him and the sailors and the crew. St. John Chrysostom ON THE PRIESTHOOD*

"Unbelievable!" It began with a whisper.

Into the stillness of the darkened church I hurriedly crossed, escaping from beneath the florescent glare of the library lights. I stood, questioningly amazed, whispering to myself again and again, "Unbelievable. Unbelievable!"

Had I not been there in front of the Iconostassis I think I would have laughed out loud at the tyranny of their ignorance. Sardonic would have been too merciful a name to describe the spirit that darkened my soul and disfigured my face as I languished in its shadow shaking my head in disbelief.

Instinctively I made the sign of the blessed Cross, a small and wordless appeal to Christ our God. The flickering light of the one red vigil in front of the Icon of the Theotokos and the lingering fragrance of incense from the Vesper prayers helped me to regain my composure, reminding of where and who I was.

Peace in the soul and stillness of spirit are fragile treasures one is sometimes blessed to momentarily hold. Yet how could I, so inexperienced in prayer, hope to possess these gifts for any length of time against so adept an adversary as the six men and one woman crouched behind the library door?

If only I had some hint as to what stratagem they would employ, but I had no further time to consider. Our Board, our parish elders, our lay-leaders, burst forth from the library like incandescent comets trailing behind

them blurs of white light and halos of meeting-noise chatter.

I wondered and whispered aloud, but to myself, "Had they not just entered the Church? Why are they tramping as if into a kitchen? Quite oblivious they seem to the holiness of Prayer and of Presence and of Being in this Place."

Perfume and cologne overpowered the incense. Puffs of cigarette smoke now rose in its place. I was full of wonder, somewhat wonderfully mesmerized by the vitality of their impudence, by the vigor of their impiety, by the peculiarity of their violence.

Its strangeness often occupied my thinking and confounded my understanding. Who? or What? could make them act this way, and why? It confused me, befuddled me, it was a puzzle, I didn't know how to call the violence of their hand.

Was it like that of the Turk, or the Crusader, who'd rode the bloodied altars of Hagia Sophia placing harlots on the Patriarchal Throne? No! This malignancy of theirs was from within. No prophet, no holy man has inspired them to wield the crescent scimitar. No hammered silver Spanish gauntlet had raised the Papal banner on a cross of wood and iron to spur them forward in their rampage of indifference.

No, their debauchery was gloved in a mindless sort of New World mediocrity which fingered its nose at the idea of something it could not see, and conceived of as worthy, only the most tactile and utilitarian of objects upon which it could closed its soul-corrupting grip. And tonight, no longer just a witness, but having myself been baptised in it, I was finally illumined by this darkness, by this strangely pernicious noetic violence, my catechumenate ended, now knowing as I had been known.

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## Events and Announcements

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE - OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2011

+ ST JOHN CHRYSOSTOM FEAST DAY & HIS GRACE BISHOP NIKON'S VISIT TO OUR SISTER PARISH - **To Be Announced**

### SCHEDULE OF OTHER SERVICES

**BIBLE STUDY - EVERY WEDNESDAY - 7 PM - 8:30 PM** in the Church Hall - Led by **Fr. Dn. Gregory**

### CHURCH NEWS AND REMINDERS

**MEMBERSHIP DUES 2011 - Please note:** THE CHURCH FISCAL YEAR ENDS SEPTEMBER 30; *if at all possible, please have your dues of \$125 per person paid by that time.* Dues can be paid at any time to James Schaeffer, our Treasurer. *Thank you!*

**ICON PLEDGES** Can be paid at any time to our treasurer, James Schaeffer.

**COFFEE HOUR** - The Coffee Hour sign up sheet is located upstairs in the Church Hall by the door to the kitchen. Please write your name, email address and phone number by the date you sign up for. Questions, see Linda Biando.

**SPECIAL SERVICES** If you are planning to have a special service in the Church, please be considerate and notify either Father Stephen or the Church Committee one week in advance.

When you are planning for a Baptism, Wedding, Funeral, or any other Prayer Service in the Church, please speak with Father Stephen in advance to determine if there is any way you can contribute to help the Church in helping others. Thank you.

**Please note:** *if the services of the Church Choir are required, please notify the Choir Director, Christina Murianka, as soon as possible.*

**NO SMOKING/NO CELL PHONES** Please remember that SS Peter & Paul has a no smoking policy in the building and that ringers on cell phones should be off during the Divine Liturgy.

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING - Monday, October 3, 7 PM.** *All Parishioners are welcome to attend.*

### THE JOY OF GIVING

**COLLECTION SUNDAYS** - *May God bless you for your generosity!*

**1st Sunday** of each month - *Collection for the Poor*

**2nd Sunday** - *IOCC (International Orthodox Christian Charities)*

**3rd Sunday** - *Pastoral Fund*

### OTHER DONATIONS:

Church Library

Pop Tab Collections for Ronald McDonald House

Wine: Altar wine: **Manischewitz Concord Grape** (*please do not donate any other brand of concord grape*)

Oil: **Virgin Olive Oil**

### FUTURE EVENTS AT SS PETER & PAUL

**GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - Sunday, October 2 - After Divine Liturgy.** *Please make every effort to stay for this most important meeting, as we need to elect a new council president.* Topics will include: lift (type of elevator) update and funding propositions; a fundraiser involved with the deregulation of energy.

**LADIES SOCIETY HOT DOG SUNDAY - Sunday, October 9 - After Divine Liturgy**



**SS PETER & PAUL 2ND COMMUNITY FLEA MARKET - Saturday, October 15 - 8 AM to 1 PM** (*Rain date: October 22*) A really fun time was had by all during our 1st flea market in May! Not only did some of us sell items, but the Church made a nice profit. Join us in the Fall for our 2nd flea market. If you don't want to sell, come out and have a great time supporting your Church family!

**WANTED:** Your gently used items to be sold at the flea market. We will have a **communal SS Peter & Paul Table!** Even if you can't come to the flea market, this is a great way to support your church and be a part of this fund-raising event. *All proceeds will benefit the church.* Please bring your items to Church by **October 9.**

**SHRIMP & STEAK DINNER - Tentative: Planned for near future - More information available shortly**

**Events and Announcements** *(Continued)*

FUTURE EVENTS AT OTHER LOCATIONS

**16TH ALL-AMERICAN COUNCIL - October 31 - November 4** in Seattle, Washington.

MISCELLANEOUS

**WEBSITE:** <http://sspeterpaulphila.org>

**E-MAILS:** New Bulletins are available online by Saturday 8 PM. If you would like to be kept up-to-date by e-mail or to be removed from our "paper" mailing list, please send Alicia an e-mail at: [aliciaj17@mac.com](mailto:aliciaj17@mac.com)

**SS PETER & PAUL CHURCH STORE** - Open Sundays at 9:30 AM (1/2 hour before Divine Liturgy) **Items available:** **SS Peter & Paul 90th Year Celebration DVD** (\$15); Divine Liturgy Books, Icons; Crosses (Baptismal, lapel pins, Georgian style, orthodox); Prayerbooks (English); Censors; CDs and cassettes; Religious Books. Also available: **IN THEIR OWN TONGUE**, a documentary chronicling the Albanian Archdiocese in America

**"DAILY BREAD"** - The Church distributes a daily email entitled "Daily Bread" containing scripture readings for the day and the commemorated saints. To add your name (or the name of anyone who would enjoy getting it) please forward the email address to the Church email address: [sspeterpaul2@verizon.net](mailto:sspeterpaul2@verizon.net)

**WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL LIGHTS** - Envelopes are available at the Church Store counter for special prayers to be said during the week in conjunction with the burning of the Seven-Day Votive Light hanging above the Royal Doors. Sug-

gested offering: \$10, which will go towards building up our Pastoral Fund with the ultimate goal of supporting a full time priest.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS/NEWS ABOUT PARISHIONERS** - If you have any items to include in next month's Bulletin, please see **Alicia** or call her at **215-530-0118 (PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS A NEW NUMBER)** or email: [aliciaj17@mac.com](mailto:aliciaj17@mac.com). *The deadline for the next Bulletin is Sunday, October 23. Thank you! Parishioners will be able to pick up the October Bulletin at the Church on Sunday 10/30/11.* Bulletins will be mailed to any Parishioners unable to attend.

*Please remember to let Alicia know the names of our members who are ill or in need of prayer so that they can be included in our Bulletins. \*\*\*Please note: You cannot arbitrarily be removed from the Prayer List. You must let Alicia know to remove your name. Thank you.*

**Thank You to all members of the Parish who have helped out or volunteered in any way with their time and efforts, and a very special thank you to anyone whose name was inadvertently omitted from the Bulletin.**

GENERAL INTEREST

**ANCIENT FAITH RADIO** 24 hour a day *internet Orthodox radio station:* <http://ancientfaithradio.com>

**MAKE A PURCHASE THROUGH AMAZON AND HELP ST GEORGE CATHEDRAL IN SOUTH BOSTON** - Go to the Cathedral website: [www.saintgeorgecathedral.com](http://www.saintgeorgecathedral.com) and scroll down to "Shop Amazon" on the left side.

**Special Announcements from Fr. Stephen**

Father Stephen may be reached at **609-385-3757**, Monday - Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM or by email: [frsiniari@gmail.com](mailto:frsiniari@gmail.com). Please remember that all confessions and consultations on Sunday mornings shall take place from 9 AM to 10 AM before the Divine Liturgy. Thank you.

## Parishioner's Corner



A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY is wished to the following parishioners and friends who are celebrating **October Birthdays**: *Helen Arndt, Raisa Belous, Lucille John, Margie Kelly, Ted Muzekari, Jr., Matushka Irene Rachko, Jean Rifkin, Jim Schaeffer, Fr Stephen Siniari, Ann Stephano*

*May God grant them all many, many years!*

**DONATE AN ITEM A MONTH CAMPAIGN** - We are still in need of the following items: **39 gallon lawn & leaf bags (BJ's carries their own brand), paper towels, small sealable/ziplock plastic baggies.** *Your continued help is truly appreciated! A sincere "Thank You" to all parishioners who so kindly donated any requested items.*



**NATIVITY GREETING CARDS ON SALE** - **\$24** per box of 16 or **\$1.50** each. All proceeds benefit our Pastoral Care Fund. Please see **Donna Bacon**, call her at **973-989-1591**, or email her at: **dab0893@optonline.net**. To view the cards online, go to our website's **Announcements** page: <http://sspeterpaulphila.org/announcements.html>

**CHILDRENS NATIVITY CHORAL PROGRAM 2011** - If your child would like to participate, please see **Donna Bacon** or phone her at **973-989-1591** as soon as possible to confirm your child's participation. **Rehearsal is scheduled for Saturday, November 26th.**

**GOOD COMPANY & GOOD FOOD: HELP BUILD UP OUR PASTORAL FUND** - A new tradition has started -- serving a hot meal on most Sundays to build up our Pastoral Fund. If you have any ideas or are interested in participating or sponsoring a particular Sunday, please talk to **Jim Schaeffer** or **Letitia Desloges**. *Your help and support is needed to get this project up and run-*

**GREGORY VRATO, SR.**, is at the *John Neumann Nursing Home*, Room 726, at the intersection of Haldeman & Tomlinson Road (make a right on Tomlinson and the parking lot is immediately on your right). Visitors are welcome anytime from noon to 8 PM

*Please continue to keep Gregory in your prayers. May God grant him good health!*

### *What Kind of Member Are You?*

Are you an active member,  
The kind that would be missed,  
Or are you just contented  
That your name is on the list?

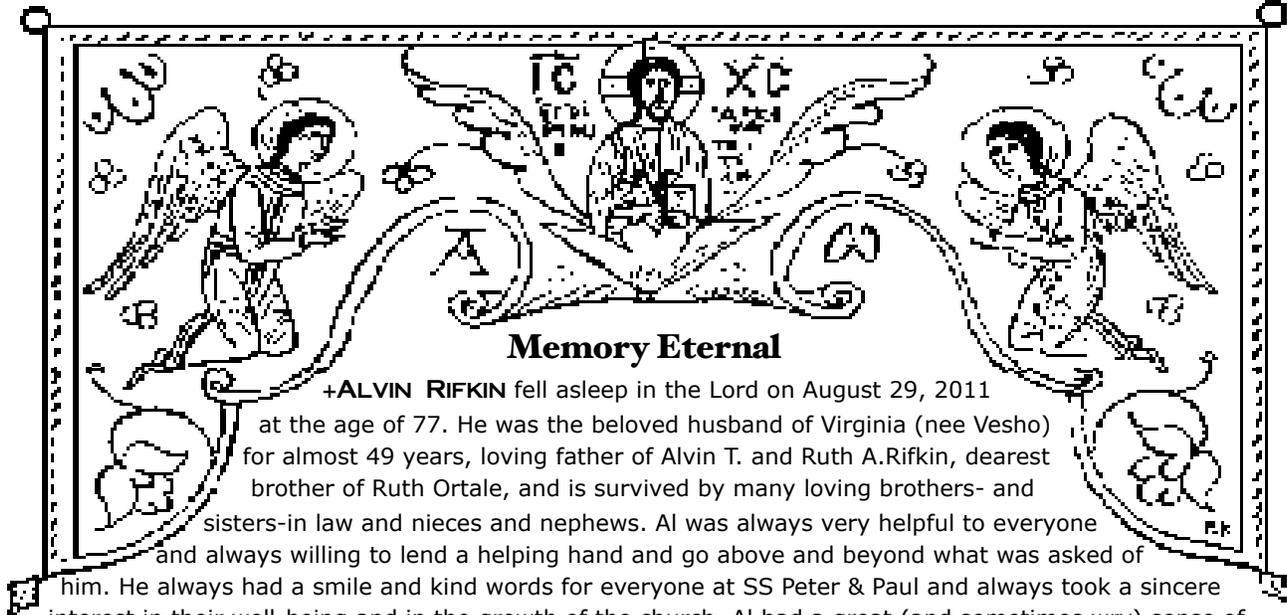
So come to meetings often,  
And help with hand and heart,  
Don't just be a member,  
But take an active part.

Do you attend the meetings  
And mingle with the flock,  
Or do you stay at home,  
And criticize and knock?

Think this over, sister and brother,  
And know what's right from wrong  
Are you an active member,  
Or do you just belong?

Do you take an active part  
To see there is no trick?  
Or leave the work to just a few  
And talk about the clique?

*-- Author Unknown*



**Memory Eternal**

+ALVIN RIFKIN fell asleep in the Lord on August 29, 2011

at the age of 77. He was the beloved husband of Virginia (nee Vesho) for almost 49 years, loving father of Alvin T. and Ruth A. Rifkin, dearest brother of Ruth Ortale, and is survived by many loving brothers- and sisters-in law and nieces and nephews. Al was always very helpful to everyone and always willing to lend a helping hand and go above and beyond what was asked of

him. He always had a smile and kind words for everyone at SS Peter & Paul and always took a sincere interest in their well-being and in the growth of the church. Al had a great (and sometimes wry) sense of

humor which stayed with him even through his last days. He was a perfectionist and meticulous in his work. The stunningly beautiful icon stand in front of our altar, as well as the delicious potato salad at our clam bakes, are only a small part of the legacy that Al leaves SS Peter & Paul. Al left his mark on our church and on our hearts, and he will always be lovingly missed and remembered by family, friends, and parishioners.

*May +Al's memory be eternal!*

**Prayer for the Sick**

O Holy Father, heavenly Physician of our souls and bodies, Who has sent Thine Only-begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to heal all our ailments and deliver us from death: do Thou visit and heal Thy servant \_\_\_\_\_, granting him/her release from pain and restoration to health and vigor, that he/she may give thanks unto Thee and bless Thy Holy Name. of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

**Let Us Keep Them in our Prayers**

Please continue to pray for the full and speedy recovery of: **Gregory Vrato, Sr., Matthew Murianka, Joyce Dorsey, Mary Palmerick, John Palmerick, Thimi Daka, Sophie Bacon, Margot Craig, Eteri Okropiridze, Mary Ann Clark, Alexandra Pana, Nicholas Desloges, Martha Murianka, Anthony Sarris, Jeannie Rifkin, Nick Zeo, His Grace Bishop Nikon, Debbie Krimecz, Christina Murianka, Eurania (Elaine) Quirias, Lester Speero, Lester Paul Speero**

*God knows the names and ages of all who need His love and mercy...*

**FATHER STEPHEN'S MESSAGE TO THE FAITHFUL**

*(Continued from Page 1)*

No, their debauchery was gloved in a mindless sort of New World mediocrity which fingered its nose at the idea of something it could not see, and conceived of as worthy, only the most tactile and utilitarian of objects upon which it could closed its soul-corrupting grip. And tonight, no longer just a witness, but having myself been baptised in it, I was finally illumined by this darkness, by this strangely pernicious noetic violence, my catechumenate ended, now knowing as I had been known.

Again I paused in the midst of my wonderment, painfully viewing them with saddened eyes as they passed me by. How could they even realize their part? Many priests,

better than I, had cried out to them and remained invisible and unheard. Somehow they couldn't hear us. Perhaps the devil used them, and us, so subtly, so skillfully, achieving even graver destruction to the Vineyard then could have been hoped for with armies or with fire.

I was like an unseen spectre as they filed by. "It is, isn't it?" I thought... "Brilliant in its littleness... And its emptiness... There's nothing to it... It is the little foxes... The petty, vicious little foxes that spoil the vine..." **Song of Solomon 2:15**

**Next Month:** Chapter I **Propriety** continues

HOLY DAYS AND NAME DAYS IN OCTOBER

- October 1** - Protection (Pokrov of the Most-Holy Theotokos)
- October 6** - Holy Apostle Thomas; St Innocent, Metropolitan of Moscow
- October 8** - Venerable Pelagia, the Penitent; Venerable Taisia of Egypt
- October 9** - Holy Apostle James, Son of Alphaeus; St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow
- October 10** - Martyrs Eulampius & Eulampia; Venerable Ambrose of Optina
- October 16** - Martyr Longinus the Centurian
- October 17** - Prophet Hosea
- October 18** - Holy Apostle & Evangelist Luke
- October 19** - Prophet Joel
- October 23** - Holy Apostle James, Brother of the Lord
- October 24** - Blessed Elesbaan, King of Ethiopia
- October 25** - St Tabitha
- October 26** - Great Martyr & Myrrhusher Demetrius
- October 28** - Venerable Job of Pochaev
- October 29** - Martyr Anastasia of Rome

PROPHET JOEL

(Commemorated on October 19)

The Prophet Joel (800 B.C.) predicted the desolation of Jerusalem. He also prophesied that the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon all people, through the Savior of the world (Joel 2:28-32).

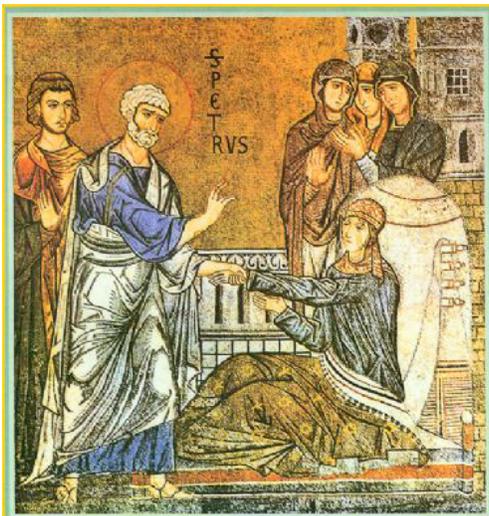
The hymnographer Anatolius links Joel's prophecy to the Nativity of the Lord. In the Praises at Matins on the Sunday following the Nativity, he refers to Joel 2:30, saying that the blood refers to the Incarnation, the fire to the Divinity, and the pillars of smoke to the Holy Spirit.



Reading & Icon Courtesy of OCA Website

ST TABITHA THE WIDOW RAISED FROM THE DEAD BY THE APOSTLE PETER

(Commemorated on October 25)



Saint Tabitha, the widow raised from the dead by the Apostle Peter, was a virtuous and kindly woman, belonged to the Christian community in Joppa. Being grievously ill, she suddenly died. At the time, the Apostle Peter was preaching at Lydda, not far from Joppa. Messengers were sent to him with an urgent request for help. When the Apostle arrived at Joppa, Tabitha was already dead. On bended knee, St Peter made a fervent prayer to the Lord. Then he went to the bed and called

out, "Tabitha, get up!" She arose, completely healed (Acts 9:36).

St Tabitha is considered the patron saint of tailors and seamstresses, since she was known for sewing coats and other garments (Acts 9:39).

Reading & Icon Courtesy of OCA Website