



Norman Notes



A Publication of the Antiochian Orthodox Chapel and Student Center
Serving Norman, Oklahoma, and the University of Oklahoma

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August, 2002

From Father Justin

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ:

With the coming of August, the end of summer is not far away. Within weeks, our children will be back in school and the Norman residents will be gearing up for the arrival of students for the fall semester at OU. It is a time of new beginnings and commitments. Likewise the Church begins its new ecclesiastical year on the 1st of September. Even though we are in the infancy of our life as a Christian community, this time can encourage us to boldness, enthusiasm and renewed sense of purpose. Even before my official arrival in Norman, I was struck by the determination and positive attitude common to the members of this Mission.

For some time this group has met and prayed together in an effort to bring about a true and lasting Orthodox presence here. The community seems united in a desire to claim and clearly define our identity and vision as Orthodox Christians: the living Body of Christ in this time and in this place. God was asked to grant His blessing and He did. Now, the duty of sharing that blessing belongs to us. We have only just begun and the real work and challenges lie ahead yet. We cannot rest; we dare not

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Bishop BASIL Blesses Camp St. Raphael Fund

From His Grace Bishop BASIL

Metropolitan PHILIP has enthusiastically blessed the establishment of the "Archimandrite John Namie Memorial Building Fund for Camp St. Raphael" which was inaugurated by the Fellowship of St. John the Divine at the recent Southwest Region Parish Life Conference in Oklahoma City, OK. God being our Helper, this fund will allow us to purchase and maintain our own regional facility for the very successful St. Raphael summer camping program which was initiated in 2001 by our Clergy Brotherhood.

The Southwest Fellowship was the first to contribute to the Camp St. Raphael Building Fund with a contribution of \$5,000.00, and by the end of the Conference an additional \$14,000.00 had been received from individuals. While we are not yet ready to announce an all-out fundraising campaign, donations are being accepted from those who wish to contribute at this time. Checks may be made payable to "Camp St. Raphael Building Fund" and mailed to SWR Fellowship treasurer: Mr. Michael Edd - 7015 Blarney - Beaumont, TX 77706.

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From Father Justin *(continued)*

become even the slightest bit complacent. Now is the time for holy fervor. It is crucial that we remember that we are *not* here by *accident*. It is for us to come together, being of one mind, to know and to do His will. As the Body of Christ, we are to have the mind of Christ. Our priorities must be conformed to God's priorities, so that God's will becomes our will, as well.

The Church on earth exists for many reasons. We would do well to contemplate these three essential purposes:

1. *To worship* Almighty God - mystically entering into the Kingdom here and now, glorifying God who is present with us.
2. *To grow in holiness* - being transformed and transfigured into the very image and likeness of Christ, through Theosis, becoming by grace what He is by nature.
3. To be the living Body of Christ, His continuing Incarnational presence in this world, being light in the darkness and ministering to those in need of help and healing.

As the Church, we join with the saints and angels, mystically transported beyond this plain, to worship the Lord, in the beauty of holiness. We enter the Kingdom in order to live the Kingdom life, for the salvation and sanctification of our own souls. By his grace, we are thus empowered to make present the Kingdom to the fallen world. As the Church, we join with Christ, our true God, in the redemption, salvation and restoration of all men and of all creation. By our words, we proclaim and witness to the Truth. By our acts of love, we do the very work of God. This is at the very heart of our being. This is the essence of our purpose and identity, as individual Christians and as a mission church.

The Church is *not* essentially an organization but a living organism. We are not a business, a civic organization nor fraternal club. A parish is not a business with the Council as the Board of Directors and the priest as an employee. We are a family with the priest as father and the faithful as brothers and sisters. The Christian Church is not the Rotary Club, General Motors, a country club,

the P.T.A., a restaurant, a social service organization, the Republican Party, the Masons nor any other type of human organization. The models of the world fail when applied to the Body of Christ. Many worldly models could not be more opposite. We are not about political power, organizational structure and business. We do not and cannot measure success by the same criteria as the world. For us, what we *do* is secondary to *who* we are. We are the Church. We are the living Body of Christ. And, each one of us is a part of that one body and members of one another. We are a holy family.

Christianity is *not* essentially an individual matter. It is corporate. It is all about the group, the community of Faith. It is about the Body. A mentor of mine from Baja Oklahoma once told me, in colloquial Texan, "*The only place you can ever go alone is to hell. If you want to go to heaven, you gotta go in a herd...*" Christ was born into this world. He lived, worked, taught and healed. He was crucified, died and was buried. He rose again and ascended into heaven *not* just for me and *not* just for you, but for *us!*

There is no place in the Church for division, party spirit, self-promotion nor domination. We must forgive, support, care for, heal, love, encourage, help and pray for one another. We must never allow sin to infiltrate, corrupt and damage our oneness in Christ. As the family of God, we must always guard against allowing sin to make us a dysfunctional family.

We are a community of faith bound to each other by baptism into Christ. It has been said, "*blood is thicker than water.*" Well, I submit to you that *the water of baptism is thicker than blood.* You and I are mystically united to one another in a bond far greater, stronger and lasting than any other. The bond is eternal. We are brothers and sisters of Christ and of one another. We belong to one another. We are family. As the spiritual father of this family, I ask you to join with me in making the Norman Orthodox Mission all that God would have us to be.

Pray for me. Forgive me.

Your father in Christ,

Fr. Justin

August 2002 Norman Chapel

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p align="center">Remember in Prayer</p> <p>Health, Welfare and Salvation: Anna Priest Seraphim Kh. Masha Margarite Eddy Judy</p> <p>The Catachumens: Peter George Henry Thelma Lee Frank Nathan</p> <p>The Catachumens: Teresa Brandy Lyle Stephen Catherine</p> <p>Rest of Soul Maha The Hegumen George</p>				<p>1 <i>Dormition Fast Begins</i></p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Blessed Basil Fool For Christ</p>	<p>3 Vespers 5:00 pm</p>
<p>4 Matins 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am Romans 12:6-14 Matthew 9:1-8</p>	<p>5 Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm 1 Cor. 5:9-6:11 Matthew 13:54-58</p>	 <p>The Holy Transfiguration</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>  <p>Venerable Herman of Alaska</p>	<p>10 Vespers 5:00 pm</p>
<p>11 Matins 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am Romans 15:1-7 Matthew 9:27-35</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Mission Council Advisory Meeting 7:00 pm</p>	<p>14 Divine Liturgy 7:00 pm 1 Cor. 10:12-22 Matthew 16:20-24</p>	<p>15</p>  <p>Dormition of Mother of God</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 Altar Servers Meeting 10:00 am Vespers 5:00 pm</p>
<p>18 Matins 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am 1Corin. 1:10-18 Matthew 14:14-22</p>	<p>19</p>	 <p>Prophet Samuel</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Vespers 5:00 pm</p>
<p>25 Matins 9:30 am Divine Liturgy 10:30 am 1Corin. 3:9-17 Matthew 14:22-34</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 <i>Journey to Orthodoxy</i> 7:00 pm</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>  <p>Beheading of Prophet and Baptist John</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 Ecclesiastical Year Begins Sept. 1st Church School Begins Sept. 1st 9:30 am September 28 Frederica Mathewes-Green visits Lawton, OK at Holy Family Roman Catholic Community</p>

Norman Mission Sets A Journey to Orthodoxy

The Antiochian Orthodox Chapel and Student Center will host a general and brief introduction to the Orthodox Christian Faith and Open House on August 27 at 7 pm. The purpose of this evening is to make our presence known to the Norman residents and the University - to the Orthodox Christians living here and to those interested in learning about the Faith of the ancient Church. In part, we hope to gather information from this meeting that will help us determine the type of adult education classes we should offer this Fall and to evaluate possible outreach efforts (including OCF) to OU students. Your help in making this evening is needed and appreciated.

-- Our Mission Community --

Mission Advisory Board meeting: Tuesday, August 13th at 7:00 pm. Anyone wishing to attend is cordially invited.

A General Mission Meeting has been scheduled for Sunday October 6th following the Divine Liturgy. All member of the community are asked to attend to conduct the official business of the Mission for the coming year. More information will be forthcoming.

The Church's New Year and Christian Education: September 1st is the beginning of the Ecclesiastical Year. Church School will begin that day (9:30 am) during Orthros. There will be no nursery provided during the Divine Liturgy. This is an opportunity for our families to worship together from the oldest to the youngest. Contact Lee Webb for information or to offer assistance.

Father Justin begins his secular employment at the University of Oklahoma August 1st and he will be moving to a new residence as well. As soon as telephone numbers are available for him, they will be passed on to the community. The demands of Father's employment are still not clearly defined. His University employment is full time and will involve regular daytime hours and some evenings. Father will endeavor to make himself as available, as possible, for the pastoral needs of the Mission. The regular liturgical cycle will be kept as in the past and all major feast days and special services of the Church will be served if possible.

SOYO (Teens and Pre-teens): There has been interest expressed in beginning a SOYO group(s) for the Mission. It is important that we ascertain the interest and commitment of our children and parents. Please contact Heather Spencer (adult sponsor) as soon as possible to share your interest in this very important ministry.

Altar Servers: Men and boys interested in learning to serve at the Altar should contact Noel Spoonemore. The first training session will be held on Saturday, August 17th at 10:00 am.

The General (Annual) Meeting for the Mission is scheduled for Sunday, November 6, 2002 following the Divine Liturgy. Attendance by every member of the community is extremely important, in order that we may responsibly undertake the business of the Mission. Among the important decisions made at the Annual Meeting is the election of Council Members, the presentation and passing of a budget, state of the Mission reports, solicitation of ideas and opinions regarding the vision and direction of this community and the adoption of a Constitution. Please mark this date on your calendars and allow nothing to interfere with your presence at this most important assembly.

Our Christian Identity: With the employment of Father Justin at the University, it is hoped that he will soon be appointed as Pastor of the Norman Orthodox Mission. At that time, it is also anticipated that His Eminence, Metropolitan PHILIP, may officially grant us Mission status. As part of that process the Archbishop will give us a name, a Christian identity. It is customary that the community submits three possibilities from which His Eminence may select or not. Already several names of saints and feasts have been offered. During Bishop BASIL's visit to the Mission in July, His Grace and Fr. Constantine enthusiastically put forward the name of the Ascension. When considering a choice evaluate the appropriateness of the saint or feast in relationship to this particular Christian community, as well as, our unique circumstances and location. Your prayerful input is requested. From the list of names received, your Council will take the three most suggested and submit them to the Archdiocese for consideration. Please pass along your suggestion to Michael Powers, Council Chairman.

2002 PLEDGE OF FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Name: _____

Annual Archdiocese Dues — \$25 per baptized family member

(These dues are for the work of the Archdiocese. They do not remain in the Mission & should not be understood to be a part of a Pledge to the Mission)

_____ (Number of family members) X \$25 = \$ _____

-- PLEDGE TO THE ORTHODOX MISSION OF NORMAN --

Amount \$ _____ Please check one: Weekly Monthly Yearly Other