

THE SPIRITUAL WATCH Η Πνευματική Εγρήγορση

“Stand fast on spiritual watch, because you do not know when the Lord will call you to Himself”
 «Παραμείνετε ακλόνητοι εν πνευματική εγρήγορση, γιατί δεν γνωρίζετε πότε ο Κύριος θα σας καλέσει εμπρός Του»

+St. John Maximovitch / +Άγιος Ιωάννης Μαξίμοβιτς



Ordination of Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia



His Beatitude, Archbishop Kallinikos, & His Eminence, Metropolitan Demetrius, at the ordination of Bishop Maximus.
 Ο Μακαριώτατος Αρχιεπίσκοπος Καλλίνικος, & ο Σεβασμιώτατος Μητροπολίτης Δημήτριος, στην χειροτονία του Επισκόπου Μαξίμου

With God's Grace, on the Saturday of Bright Week, April 21/May 4, 2019, His Grace Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia was ordained by His Beatitude Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens and all Greece, at the Sacred Monastery of the Holy Archangels in Athikia, Corinth. Concelebrants were Their Eminences, Metropolitan Gerontios of Piraeus and Salamina, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Attica and Voiotia, Metropolitan Gregory of Thessalonica, Metropolitan Photios of Dimitriadis, Metropolitan Moses of Toronto, Metropolitan Demetrius of America, and their Graces, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni, and Bishop Klimis of Gardikion.

Also, many Priests and Deacons took part in the ceremony, among which was the Proto-presbyter, Reverend Fr. Thomas Marretta from America, who is the father in the flesh of the new Bishop.

The Orthodox Greek-Byzantine Choir chanted, under the direction of chanting instructor Michael Makris. Hymns of the Resurrection were combined with those of the Feast of Holy Pentecost.

Before the beginning of the Divine Liturgy, the Bishop-elect, Fr. Maximus read the Confession of Faith in Greek,

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St. John of Damascus Orthodox Educational Initiative

“...There is a real, full-fledged battle raging against the Church. The prince of this world has always been the devil, but the devil is gaining more and more control on earth as time passes, and we draw closer to the end of the world...Let us take this seriously, beloved faithful. We should come before the Lord and beseech Him for our families, for our children, and for all Orthodox children. The children of the Church are going to be faced with many challenges; likely, worse challenges than the ones with which we were faced...”

-Metropolitan Demetrius, Lenten Message 2019

The Holy Eparchial Synod of the G.O.C. in America has undertaken the patronage of the St. John of Damascus Orthodox Educational Initiative, founded by His Eminence, Metropolitan Moses of Toronto. After exhaustive research and extraordinary effort, the Orthodox Educational Initiative is ready to begin offering key courses, to middle and high school students this fall, for the 2019-20 school year. The Holy Synod is grateful to His Eminence, Metropolitan Moses, and all who have labored and contributed to provide this dynamic educational option for our youth. Whether students are home-schooling, or attending private or public schools, the Orthodox Educational Initiative courses can enrich students' academic growth with a

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“Be Careful! Watch out for your soul! Turn your thoughts away from what will soon pass and turn them towards what is eternal. Thus you will find the happiness that your soul seeks”
 «Πρόσεχε! Φρούρησε την ψυχή σου! Στρέψε τις σκέψεις σου μακριά από αυτά που σύντομα θα περάσουν και στρέψε τις προς τα αιώνια. Έτσι θα βρεις την ευτυχία που λαχταρά η ψυχή σου»

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The *Spiritual Watch* is published with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Demetrius of America.

The *Spiritual Watch* is mailed to the homes of faithful by request only. Please see request information on p. 5

St. John of Damascus Orthodox Educational Initiative Cont'd from front cover

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selection of courses that not only teach content, but teach students *how* to think, express their thoughts, and succeed. These types of courses help students succeed in all other classes they will take, and routinely perform better on standardized tests (more about that in the interview with Fr. John Somers, below). If Orthodox families support this initiative, through God's mercy, it could grow each year to become a powerful educational alternative to prepare Orthodox children for college and life. This is our chance to support a true and vigorous education for our children that is God-pleasing and meaningful. Below is an interview with Fr. John Somers, which provides more details and background about the St. John of Damascus Orthodox Educational Initiative. Glory to God for all things!

An Interview with Fr. John Somers, Administrator

Spiritual Watch: Bless, Fr. John! Before we begin talking about the Orthodox Educational Initiative, I wanted to ask you a general question as a priest, as a father of eight school-age children, and as an accomplished educator and administrator yourself: Would you share some of your general concerns about sending our Orthodox children and youth to public school systems?

Fr. John Somers: As we make decisions about the education of our children, we need to recognize the fundamental premise that there is no such thing as an *ideologically neutral* education. Underlying assumptions always drive the education of children. Increasingly, in public school systems in both Canada and the United States, we see a decidedly anti-Christian approach to education, which denies God and His creation, changes history, politicizes science, and seeks to instill in our children false and perverse ideals. Classic literary works and historical literature are being replaced by reading selections intended to cultivate a cultural Marxist world view—that is, viewing all things in terms of oppression. We can talk more about the history and motives behind this movement, but the bottom line is that this world view tends to distort history, and ultimately to portray Christianity as the “source of oppression.” So, when considering how to educate children, I would apply the “exercise and Cheetos” metaphor: If one were to begin a great exercise program, but then consume Cheetos all day long, how much benefit would he see? Likewise, how does it affect children when we provide them with an Orthodox foundation, but then send them to a school which exposes them to false history and perverse doctrines? Any school environment in which we place our children should be reasonably conducive to the foundation of an Orthodox mindset. Having said that, our pastoral goal for the Orthodox Educational Initiative is to help children wherever they are—be

they in public or private schools, or in a home-school program. We want this to be a reasonable next step to help our kids grow, both as learners and as Orthodox Christians.

SW: Thank you, Fr. John. So, what exactly is the Orthodox Educational Initiative? Can you give us some background?

Fr. J.S.: For many years, His Eminence, Metropolitan Moses of Toronto, has been concerned about the education of Orthodox youth, and he founded the Educational Initiative in order to begin to build better educational options, rooted in Truth. After a lot of hard work and planning, we are ready to offer multiple classes beginning in September (and following the Orthodox Church calendar). Many of the classes that we are offering are academic powerhouses, fostering not only academic growth in content areas, but more importantly, teaching students to be effective thinkers and communicators.

St. Cosmas of Aitolia, who, during Ottoman rule, traveled around Greece and Albania to encourage the oppressed Christians, asked in each village he visited, “Do you have a school within your church?” He instructed the faithful to create schools within their churches in order to establish the foundation of truth and learning for the Orthodox youth.

²⁴ “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock;²⁵ and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.” (Matt. 7:20-27)

It is time to reclaim Orthodoxy as the foundation of education, the “Light of the world” (John 8:12). Orthodoxy is the good yeast which allows true education and understanding to grow. With

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Family & Youth Conference 2019: St. Nicholas of Myra

The annual Family and Youth Conference will take place at the Holy Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas of Myra, in Maryland, with the blessing of His Eminence, Metropolitan Demetrius. It will be on Saturday to Sunday, October 12th & 13th. Friday, October 11 will be an optional day for registrants, on which a fieldtrip to Washington, DC, will be planned—please register separately for this.

The theme of the Family and Youth Conference this year will be “UNITY”—Unity in the marriage, Unity in the family, Unity in the parish, Unity in

the Church, and Unity in the World. What true unity is will be addressed, as well as what true unity is not.

The Presbyter of St. Nicholas of Myra Orthodox Church, Fr. George Psaromatis, together with Deacon Fr. John Psaromatis, and all the parish, ask for the prayers of the faithful as we plan this event, that the Lord will bless the effort for a soul-profiting and joyous event for all.

Please see the inside back cover for the Conference flyer, or visit the parish website to register, and click on the Conference tab: www.StNicholasMd.com

Ask His Eminence

Q: Why do we say, “O Cross of Christ, save us by Thy might!” Can the Cross hear us? Is It alive?

(Oral response to question posed during Q&A session, transcribed by SW)

A: No. Some of the hymnology of the Church is poetic. For example, in the Matins of the Service of the *Ευαγγελισμός* (Annunciation), there is a dialog between the Archangel Gabriel and the Mother of God, speaking to one another. And one may wonder: Was there a scribe there taking these notes? No, but it is the poetic hymnology of the Church guiding and instructing our souls. When we say, “O Cross of Christ, save us by Thy Might,” basically it is Christ—it is our Lord Jesus Christ Who is



saving us by the power of His Cross. We notice, of course, that the word “Cross” is very similar to “Christ.” We chant, “Behold, through the Cross, joy has come to the whole world...” The power of the Cross has extreme significance in the life of the Christian. **Through the Cross, we are saved.** It is like when we call upon the name of our Lord—and this *does* have great power, that’s for sure! But it is not that the name is the Lord Himself, but it is that through this invocation of His name, we call on Him, and we receive the Energy of God. Energy is another word for Grace. So, we receive the Energy of Christ through the Cross.



Do you have a question for His Eminence, Metropolitan Demetrius of America, that you would like to ask through this column? Questions may be sent to *The Spiritual Watch*, c/o St. John’s Monastery, 151 Heron Road, Cobleskill, NY 12043, or email it to: KeepSpiritualWatch@gmail.com

Ordination of Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia *Cont’d from front cover*

in three parts. Prior to the Apostle reading and the beginning of the Ordination ceremony, His Beatitude Archbishop Kallinikos spoke before the Bishop-elect, reminding everyone that the history of our Church has been one of great struggle, and of the burden of responsibility that is borne by each of Her Bishops. The Bishop-elect then read his ordination speech in Greek.

Afterward, the order of Ordination to Bishop followed. The vesting of His Grace, Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia with the hierarchical vestments took place, as the exclamation of “Axios!” was repeated, for his worthy and distinguished conduct, election, and ordination. During the remainder of the Divine Liturgy, the newly-ordained was given the honor to serve as second bishop, alongside His Beatitude, our preeminent Archbishop.

Before the Communion of the faithful, a sermon was delivered by His Eminence, Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Attika and Voiotia, addressing, among other topics, the position of the Bishop in the Church, as he offered his best wishes for the newly-ordained.

Before the end of the Service, His Grace Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia, received his hierarchical Miter, as well as his Staff, from His Beatitude the Archbishop. His Grace Bishop Maximus then read the Dismissal, and passed out Antidoron to the faithful, while receiving their best wishes.

A celebratory meal followed, which was offered by the Sisterhood of the Holy Mon-



His Grace, Bishop Maximus, at his ordination
Ο Θεοφιλέστατος Επίσκοπος Μάξιμος στη χειροτονία του

astery. This joyous trapeza completed the hope-filled and moving Hierarchical ordination of a new and worthy Member of the Hierarchy of the Holy Synod of our Church.

His Grace Bishop Maximus of Pelagonia, in the world Emanuel Marretta, was born in Tom’s River, New Jersey, on January 17, 1979, to a clergy family. His father in the flesh, Fr. Thomas, was ordained Deacon and then Presbyter by Saint

Philaret, Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. Young Emanuel spent most of his youth in New York, since he moved there at the age of 11. In 1997, he moved to Jordanville, New York, to study Theology at the Seminary of the Sacred Monastery of the Holy Trinity, under the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

In 1999, he became a Novice Monk. In 2001 he completed his studies and moved to the Sacred Monastery of the Ascension of the Savior, of our own Sacred Metropolis of America, where, the following year, 2002, he was tonsured a Rassophore Monk by his Elder, His Eminence Metropolitan Pavlos of America. He was given the name Maximus, in honor of St. Maximus the Confessor. On January 21, 2008, he was ordained Hierodeacon, once again by His Eminence Metropolitan Pavlos. The following year, January 22, 2009, he was ordained Hieromonk by His Eminence Metropolitan Pavlos, at the Church of St. Maximus, of our Metropolis, where Fr. Thomas Marretta serves as Protopresbyter.

In 2012, Fr. Maximus was sent on a Missionary visit to Guatemala by His Eminence Metropolitan Demetrius, who by that time, had joined our Church as His Grace Bishop Demetrius of Boston. Bishop Demetrius had become Fr. Maximus’s Elder, after the health condi-

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this in mind, St. Cosmas established schools wherever he went to preach. And this is what we are trying to do with the Orthodox Educational Initiative—to provide meaningful educational alternatives which will establish a strong foundation in knowledge and the ability to evaluate, discern, and defend what is true. If the faithful get behind this effort and support it, we will grow the program each year, adding new courses and levels. This is our chance to ultimately build a powerful Orthodox education for our children.

SW: *Fr. John, what grade levels /age groups will the Orthodox Educational Initiative target in its first year, 2019-20?*

Fr. J.S.: For our first year, our classes will target mostly middle school and high school students; we are offering classes for ages 10 and up. In fact, there is a Classical Composition class offered for 10 to 12-year-olds. We hope to build on our program each year, adding more classes and more levels as we grow. The classes are taught by qualified Orthodox instructors, including myself, Fr. Steven Allen, Fr. Savvas Anastasiou, Dr. Xenia Vangor, Vasilios and Seraphima Asimakos. Complete descriptions of all classes and syllabi are available on our website

OrthodoxLearningGOC.com

SW: *Are these online classes? How will it work, logistically?*

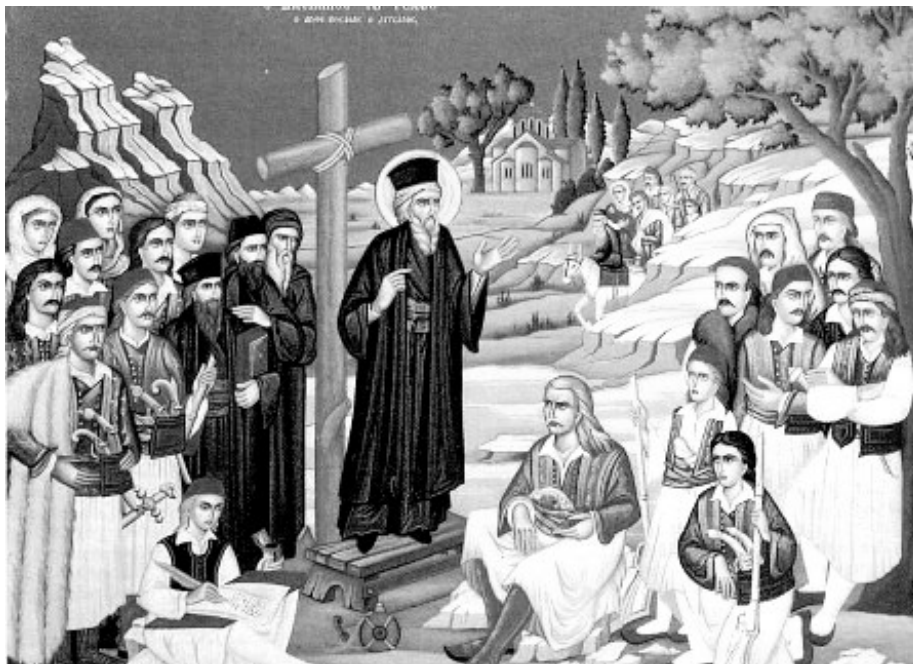
Fr. J.S.: The Initiative is a hybrid program, available to any student in Canada, the United States, or anywhere in the world with internet access, and it will incorporate online education, real-time online meetings, tutorial videos and activities, one-on-one instructional support, and periodic mini conferences in Toronto and potentially in other locations. Class sizes will be limited to 10 students per class, to maximize individualized attention as well as richer discourse. The weekly, one-hour web-conferencing classes will allow interaction with teachers and other students in real time. Tutorial videos with related activities will be available throughout each week on our YouTube channel. The face-to-face mini conferences will be held on location on a quarterly basis. The instructors will also be available each week during office hours, through videoconferencing, and there may be flexibility for the creation of study groups and teacher-directed meetings in parishes or areas which have a high concentration of students participating in the Initiative.

SW: *I know that the syllabi and lots of information is available on the Initiative website, but could you give us an example of the classes that will be offered this fall?*

Fr. J.S.: We are starting off with “a la carte” style educational program, where students and their parents can pick and choose in which classes to enroll, depending on their needs, and what type of schooling they are currently receiving. As I said, we are open for students who are concurrently enrolled in public or private schools, as a powerful supplemental education, or for those currently in a home school program. With the support of the Orthodox community, we hope to grow each year. This fall, we are offering Latin I for middle school students, Latin I for high school students (both taught by Fr. Steven Allen), Ecclesiastical Greek (taught by Fr. Savvas Anastasiou), Logic (taught by me), Apologetics for high school students (taught by me), Introduction to Life Sciences (taught by Dr. Xenia Vangor), Algebra I (taught by Dr. Xenia Vangor), and

Classical Composition for 10-12 year old students (taught by Mrs. Seraphima and Mr. Vasilios Asimakos).

SW: *As a parent of former public school students, I have been persuaded, at some level, to give a disproportionate emphasis to content—i.e., the four “core” subjects: English, math, social studies, and science, even though statistics show that students who have taken classical education courses, such as Latin and Logic, routinely outperform their peers. What do you say to parents who want a bigger focus on the four “core” subjects from the get-go, and what are the benefits of enrolling in OEI classes now?*



“Do you have a school within your church?” asked St. Cosmas of Aitolia, in every village that he visited... He instructed the faithful to create schools within their churches in order to establish the foundation of truth and learning for the Orthodox youth...

Fr. J.S.: This is a good question because it brings to the surface certain important realities when it comes to learning. Before I get into that, I will say that these four subjects are very important; the Orthodox Educational Initiative currently targets most of these subjects, and others overlap with our courses in important ways. This is our first year; God willing, in the future, if the faithful jump on board, our course offerings will expand to form a complete, powerful education program for our Orthodox youth.

In its first year, the Orthodox Educational Initiative seeks to fill the most immediate educational needs of our youth—and these are method-based, not subject-based. In other words, the most immediate educational needs of our children, that have been quite deliberately removed from public school systems, is not the learning of content, but the learning of how to learn—logic and thought. You can read hundreds of books, but if you do not have training in logic, then you will be swimming in a morass of information, without having the tools to make use of that information. The internet is an ex-

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ample of such a morass of information. Without search engines and tools to organize and evaluate this data, the internet would just become a vast wasteland of point-less information. In the classical approach to education, students learn how to learn; they develop the tools to think, to evaluate, and to effectively respond to the information and disinformation to which they will be exposed. As the saying goes, if you give a man a fish, he will eat for one day. If you teach a man how to fish, he will eat his whole life. Which has more value? Teaching with content-based priorities is valuable, but method-based courses are greatly more so, and should be prioritized as such, because we are teaching students to “fish,” metaphorically. We are called “rational sheep,” referring to our reason, our logic, our ability to think, and to choose between right and wrong. A fundamental goal of education should be to cultivate these skills. God willing, we will add literature and history courses, but learning how to learn should be the first priority. Our current methods-based courses, such as logic and apologetics for example, open up a higher potential for learning in any other class, in any other school, in which the students may be enrolled. This is why studies consistently show that students with training in classical methods and classical languages outperform their peers on standardized tests and just about all measures of academic success.

“...These skills transcend any content learned in any one class. This is methods-based learning, and it will help students in all the classes they will ever take, be they in public or private schools, and more importantly, it will help them in life.”



Other than their direct attack on Christianity, these cultural Marxist ideologies have had toxic effects on education and learning. If we look around us, we see the results: The development and encouragement of thought has been put aside—all “intellectual” discourse is now consumed by alleged discrimination and oppression. Linguistically, logic and thought used to be developed in grammar courses; Latin and Greek grammar would yield sophisticated logical thought processes. Students who have studied Latin, as we said, consistently score higher on the SATs, partly because they have developed their minds through the study of this orderly grammar. In math, developing geometric proofs was an example of logical thinking development. Science was supposed to be a true study of the physical world, and thus naturally point to the Creator of it; but in schools today we see that perverse political agendas drive science curricula, not the search for truth. Logic itself was valued as a critical class for developing the mind and learning how to learn. Now we see that this invaluable, method-driven classical education, which defined the learning process, has been supplanted by a rhetoric of oppression and discrimination, intended to distract the thinker and disrupt logical discourse. And Christians are portrayed as those who created all that “discrimination.” Using that as a premise, the leaders of this movement have all but convinced an unsuspecting populace to do away with all literature and history coming out of Western civilization—on the grounds that it is influenced by the Christian values of the “oppressors.” Not only the search for truth, but the very concept of truth, has been attacked in public education, which is the ultimate suspension of logic. But then, the agenda of the cultural Marxists does not

want logical thinkers, nor rational sheep.

These methodical and deliberate reforms brought about a continual attack against the Church, and a continual attack on the classical form of education, since the latter teaches think-

ers to search for truth. The byproduct of all this, for our youth, are emotional problems, behavioral issues, drug abuse, etc., which stem from the lack of a proper foundation. The cultural Marxist educational movement did not build

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SW: Fr. John, you say that method-based education, that is, learning how to learn, is being deliberately removed from public education. Why is this happening?

Fr. JS: There is some significant history behind this movement; I will not go into detail, but I will share some of the background concerning educational reforms that took place over the last century. When World War I began, Marxists thought that workers would unite, and that Marxist ideologies would thrive. When that failed to happen, Marxist intellectuals regrouped and decided to rid the world of two things, in order for their agenda to succeed: Classical Education and Christianity. They developed “cultural Marxism” and, after WWI, founded the Frankfurt Institute in order to spread their doctrines. In fact, the ideology of “political correctness” has its origins in the Frankfurt Institute.

“...There is obviously an educational problem confronting our youth—these issues will not go away if we ignore them. We need to come together as the Body of Christ, make the sign of the Cross, and charge forth, trusting God, for the sake of our children’s education...Obviously, the success of the effort is dependent on the participation of the faithful in the Initiative.”

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Questions? KeepSpiritualWatch@gmail.com

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its house on the Rock, so to speak, and the results can be seen in the public schools today.

SW: What is classical education?

Fr. JS: At the heart of classical education is the fundamental goal to successfully teach students to think well, to speak well, to write well—an interdependent progression of skills. All of us, and especially our children, are immersed in a barrage of claims. People claim this to be true, or that to be true, constantly. What must our children be able to do?

If someone asserts something, students must be able to understand what was asserted—to process that claim. The student needs to assess the claim, and evaluate its merit based on logic and evidence.

The next step is that the student must be able to defend the claim, or to refute it. In both cases, the student needs the skills to articulate his or her thoughts. Logic is the science of clear thinking, the means to explain why we are thinking this way, and the cornerstone of successful writing.

Students need to be able to make intellectual claims and defend them. They need to comprehend complex claims that are false and refute them. These skills transcend any content learned in any one class. This is methods-based learning, and it will help students in all the classes

they will ever take, be they in public or private schools, and more importantly, it will help them in life.

Classical education consists of three phases, which roughly correspond to the developmental stages of a child. The first stage is the grammar stage, since it points younger students toward reality. Language uses signs which point to the truth, to the things themselves. I will give you an example of the early stages of language development: when my youngest child was a toddler, he pointed to a goat and said “Ginger!” Ginger is our dog. As the child enters the grammar stage, he begins to use language to differentiate and define reality. As he begins to develop in the grammar stage, when he sees a goat, he will differentiate reality, and he will not identify it as a dog. During the grammar stage, the

effective use of language to identify and categorize reality is developed.

The second stage is logic, developing thinking and learning skills; this stage roughly corresponds to the late elementary and middle school years. And the third stage is rhetoric—learning to defend our thoughts, based on logic and evidence, and to persuade. That is classical education in a nutshell.

SW: Do you think that older students can seamlessly incorporate classical educational principles into their program, through enrolling in Orthodox Educational Initiative classes, even though they are nearing the end of their high school education? Or is it too late to reap the benefits of classical education?

Fr. JS: If someone has not exercised at all during his childhood, would it benefit him to start exercising as a young adult? Of course, it would. Likewise, anyone would benefit from our dynamic classical education classes, at any age. Almost all of us have been robbed of our classical education inheritance by the contemporary approach

to education. So, we are all playing catchup. Yet the benefits to starting are immeasurable.

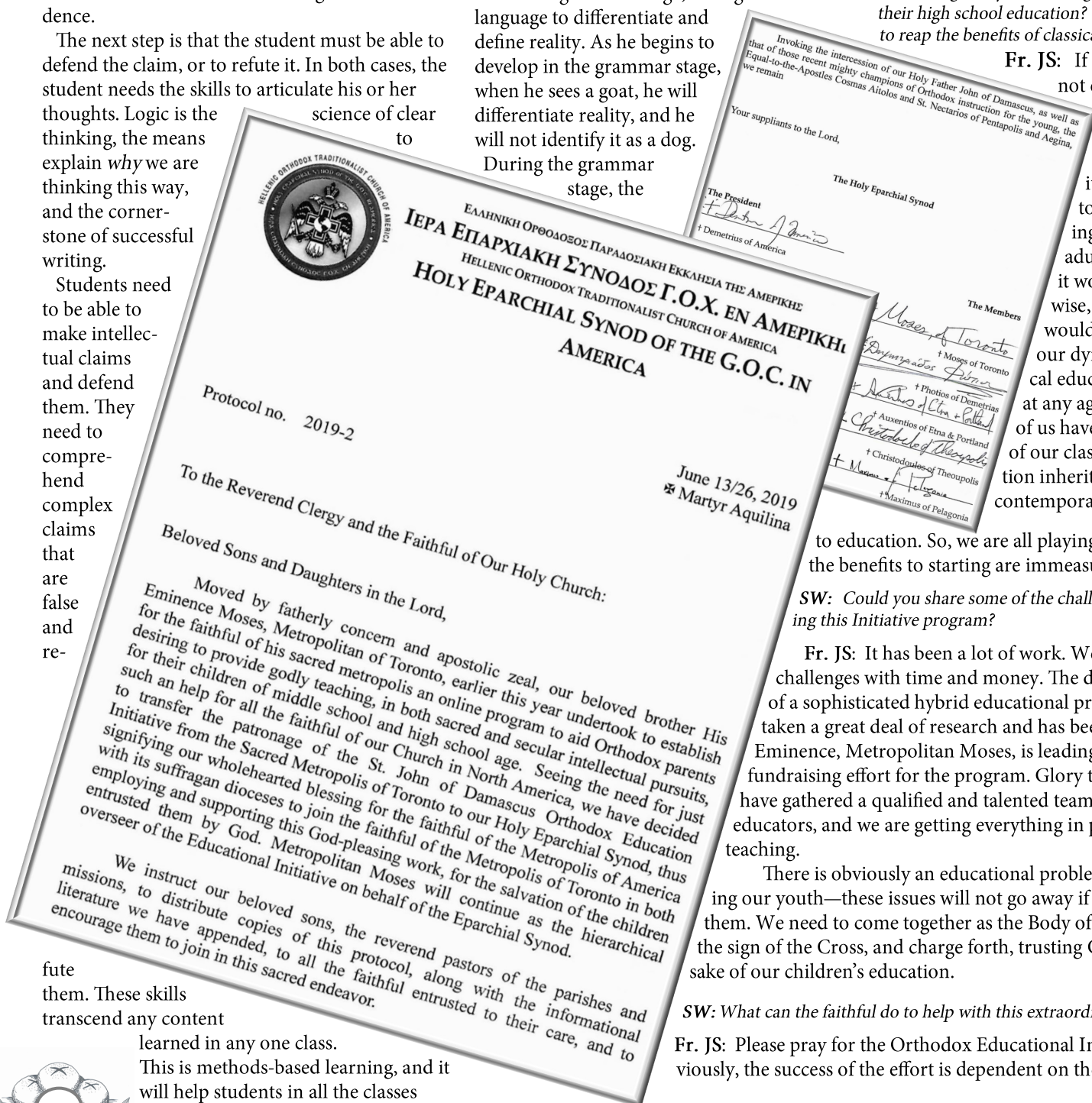
SW: Could you share some of the challenges in creating this Initiative program?

Fr. JS: It has been a lot of work. We have had challenges with time and money. The development of a sophisticated hybrid educational program has taken a great deal of research and has been costly. His Eminence, Metropolitan Moses, is leading a grassroots fundraising effort for the program. Glory to God, we have gathered a qualified and talented team of Orthodox educators, and we are getting everything in place to begin teaching.

There is obviously an educational problem confronting our youth—these issues will not go away if we ignore them. We need to come together as the Body of Christ, make the sign of the Cross, and charge forth, trusting God, for the sake of our children’s education.

SW: What can the faithful do to help with this extraordinary effort?

Fr. JS: Please pray for the Orthodox Educational Initiative. Obviously, the success of the effort is dependent on the participa-



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tion of His Eminence Metropolitan Pavlos, formerly of America, had become worse. In 2015, a Sacred Skete was founded in Guatemala, where Fr. Maximus settled and has lived the last few years, after being appointed Head of the Missionary Communities of our Church in Latin America, by the current Metropolitan His Eminence Demetrius of America.

Besides English, the new Bishop speaks Russian, Spanish, and Greek, and he is distinguished by his monastic spirit and disposition, his missionary zeal, and overall, his love for the Church.

To His Grace Maximus, Bishop of Pelagonia: Many Years!

(Translated from the original article, published on the EcclesiaGOC.gr website)

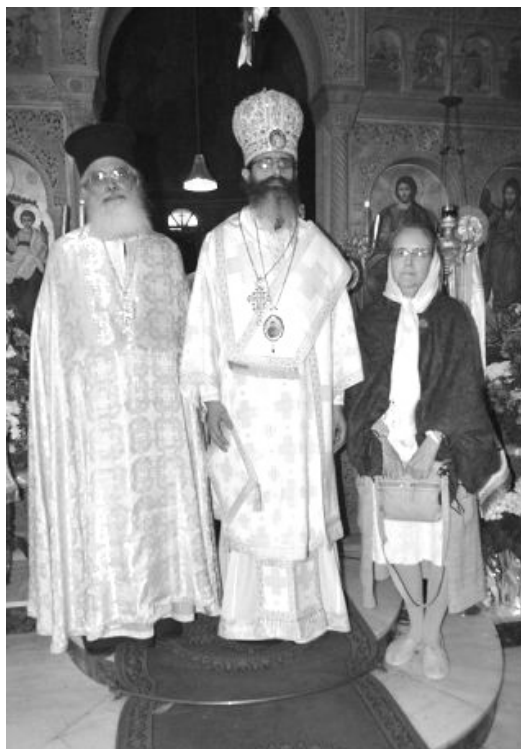
Χειροτονία Θεοφ. Επισκόπου Πελαγονίας Μαξίμου

Τὸ Σάββατο τῆς Διακαινησίμου, 21-4/4-5-2019, τελέσθηκε σὺν Θεῷ ἡ χειροτονία τοῦ Θεοφ. Ἐπισκόπου Πελαγονίας κ. Μαξίμου στὸ Καθολικὸ τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς Ἀγίων Ταξιαρχῶν στὰ Ἀθήκια Κορινθίας, ἀπὸ τὸν Μακαριώτατο Ἀρχιεπίσκοπο Ἀθηνῶν καὶ πάσης Ἑλλάδος κ. Καλλίνικο, μὲ συλλειτουργοὺς τοὺς Σεβ. Μητροπολίτες Πειραιῶς & Σαλαμίνος κ. Γερόντιο, Ἀττικῆς & Βοιωτίας κ. Χρυσόστομο, Θεσσαλονίκης κ. Γρηγόριο, Δημητριάδος κ. Φώτιο, Τορόντο κ. Μωυσῆ, Ἀμερικῆς κ. Δημήτριο, καὶ τοὺς Θεοφ. Ἐπισκόπους Μεθώνης κ. Ἀμβρόσιο καὶ Γαρδικίου κ. Κλήμη.

Εἰσὶν ἔλαβαν μέρος πολλοὶ Ἱερεῖς, μεταξὺ τῶν ὁποίων καὶ ὁ ἐξ Ἀμερικῆς κατὰ σάρκα πατέρας τοῦ νέου Ἐπισκόπου Αἰδ. π. Θωμᾶς Μαρέτα, καὶ Διάκονοι.

Εψαλε ἡ Ὁρθόδοξη Ἑλληνικὴ Βυζαντινὴ Χορωδία ὑπὸ τὴν διεύθυνση τοῦ Μουσικοδιδασκάλου κ. Μιχαὴλ Μακρῆ. Μαζὶ δὲ μὲ τὰ ἀναστάσιμα γράμματα συνδυσάσθηκαν καὶ αὐτὰ τῆς Ἑορτῆς τῆς Ἀγίας Πεντηκοστῆς.

Πρὸ τῆς ἐνάρξεως τῆς Θ. Λειτουργίας, ὁ ἐψηφισμένος Ἐπίσκοπος π. Μάξιμος ἀνέγνωσε ἑλληνιστὶ τὴν καθιερωμένη Ὁμολογία Πίστεως σὲ τρία μέρη. Πρὸ τοῦ Ἀποστολικοῦ ἀναγνώσματος, καὶ τῆς ἐνάρξεως τῆς τελετῆς τῆς Χειροτονίας, ὁ Μακαριώτατος Ἀρχιεπίσκοπος κ. Καλλίνικος προσεφώνησε τὸν ἐψηφισμένο ὑπενθυμίσας



His Grace, Bishop Maximus, with his parents in the flesh, at his ordination in Greece

Ο Θεοφιλέστατος Ἐπίσκοπος Μάξιμος με τοὺς κατὰ σάρκα γονεῖς του, στὴν χειροτονία του στὴν Ἑλλάδα

τὴν μαρτυρικὴ ἱστορία τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας καὶ τὸ βάρος τῆς εὐθύνης, τὸ ὁποῖο ἐπωμίζεται ὁ κάθε Ἐπίσκοπος Αὐτῆς. Ὁ δὲ ἐψηφισμένος,

ἀνέγνωσε ἑλληνιστὶ τὸν χειροτονητήριο λόγο του, ὁ ὁποῖος δημοσιεύεται.

Κατόπιν, ἀκολούθησε ἡ τάξις τῆς Χειροτονίας εἰς Ἐπίσκοπον καὶ ἡ ἐνδυσίς τοῦ ἁγίου Πελαγονίας κ. Μαξίμου διὰ τῶν ἀρχιερατικῶν ἀμφίων, μὲ τὴν ἀναφώνηση τοῦ «ἅγιος» γιὰ τὴν ἅγια καὶ ἀδιάβλητη διαγωγή, ἐκλογή καὶ χειροτονία του. Στὸ ὑπόλοιπο τῆς Θ. Λειτουργίας, ὁ νεοχειροτονηθεὶς κατήχη τιμητικῶς τὴν δευτέρα θέση μετὰ τὸν προεξάρχοντα Μακαριώτατο Ἀρχιεπίσκοπό μας. Κατὰ τὸ Κοινωνικόν, Ὁμιλία ἐκφώνησε ὁ Σεβ. Ἀττικῆς καὶ Βοιωτίας κ. Χρυσόστομος, ἀναφερθεὶς σὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις καὶ στὴν θέση τοῦ Ἐπισκόπου στὴν Ἐκκλησία, εὐχηθεὶς τὰ δέοντα στὸν νεοχειροτονηθέντα. Πρὸ τῆς Ἀπολύσεως, ὁ Θεοφ. Πελαγονίας κ. Μάξιμος ἔλαβε τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴ Μίτρα, ὅπως καὶ τὴν Ράβδο ἀπὸ τὸν Μακαριώτατο Ἀρχιεπίσκοπο, καὶ ἔκανε τὴν Ἀπόλυση, διανείμοντας τὸ Ἀντίδωρον καὶ δεχθεὶς τὶς εὐχὲς τῶν πιστῶν.

Ἀκολούθησε ἑόρτια τράπεζα, ἡ ὁποία παρετέθη ἀπὸ τὴν Ἀδελφότητα τῆς Ἱερᾶς Μονῆς, ὁλοκληρωθείσης οὕτω τῆς ἐλπιδοφόρου καὶ συγκινητικῆς Ἀρχιερατικῆς χειροτονίας ἐνὸς νέου ἀξίου Μέλους τῆς Ἱεραρχίας τῆς Ἱερᾶς Συνόδου τῆς Ἐκκλησίας μας.

Ὁ Θεοφ. Ἐπίσκοπος Πελαγονίας κ. Μάξιμος, κατὰ κόσμον Ἐμμανουὴλ Μαρέτα

Συνέχεια στὴ σελ. 8

An Interview with Fr. John Somers, Administrator *Cont'd from previ-*

tion of the faithful in the Initiative. We are hoping that Orthodox families will “take a leap” and try it. Course descriptions and syllabi are available on our website. We encourage Orthodox families, whether in public schools, private schools, or home schooling, to supplement their children’s education with this wonderful Orthodox alternative. The participation of the Orthodox will allow us to grow each year, God willing, into a wonderful Orthodox educational institution that produces truly educated thinkers.

Finally, anyone who is able, please consider supporting the OEI financially, as we are facing great technological and other expenses in this effort. We are also hoping to establish a scholarship fund for Orthodox youth who are facing financial challenges. Please let us know if you would like to help. Please take a look at our website, <https://orthodoxlearninggoc.com/> where you will find the donate button that allows you to make a tax-deductible donation in either Canadian or U.S. funds. On our website, you can make a donation via PayPal or via check.

You can also mail donations in U.S. funds made out to “Joy of All Who Sorrow Mission” earmarked “Orthodox Educational Initiative”.

Fr. John Somers
c/o Joy of All Who Sorrow Mission
357 N. Rolling Road
Springfield, PA 19064.

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Lastly, thank you very much to the *Spiritual Watch* for having me, and may the Lord bless you!

Desperate Orthodox Christians: My Journey to Haiti

by Kassiani Gehring



Dr. Gehring treats Haitian patients (Ed.Note: Dr. Gehring is Kassiani Gehring's father)

Jacmel is a town nestled into the southern coast of Haiti, bordered by a wreath of mountains on its inland front. On our weekend visiting the Orthodox parish and school of St. Augustine, we rode down through those mountains on a road pocketed by erosion and trafficked by plenty of motorcycles and occasional goats. We were bringing the priest, Father Ambrose, to visit from

to walk from our lodgings to the compound within which the school and the church coexisted. To me, the church seemed spacious, but the open air walls and doorless entry ways granted to that illusion and the bare concrete floor, spattered occasionally by rain brushing through, was clear of rugs or benches. A few folding chairs hugged the low half-walls, and when we arrived, they were occupied by children. They continued to sit, watching the service begin with wide, dark eyes. The service was in French, with an occasional *Kyrie Eleison*, but the two chanters sang with a melody that reminded me of Russian chant without the harmonization. It was a mix that resounded with the atmosphere, a cobbling together of traditions. There were three children that were baptized that afternoon, two baby boys named Lazar and John and a toddler girl named Kassia. They all seemed too big for the oversized cooking pot

Cont'd on next page

Port au Prince and conduct the services at this parish which, at the moment, only has a reader. He sat between my father and I in the back of the van, all of us knocking our knees together as the van jumped over the broken road. On the outskirts of the town, where the dense foliage began to be interspersed by concrete brick buildings and roadside vendors, our van took a sharp turn off the main road and onto a thin dirt lane that snaked its way through a banana tree grove. The place we were to stay that weekend was at the end, but just past a bend in the lane, the school rose its heavy gray concrete walls amidst the greenery. The location was stunning, the walls were wrapped about in a wide green field where occasionally a cow or donkey wandered, the mountains cast their looming shadow from above, and from the second floor of the school, there could be seen the glimmer of blue from the sea.

We had barely a moment to unload our suitcases from the van before we were told that the baptisms would begin at the top of the hour. I was never sure afterwards if the service had been planned ahead at that exact time, or if things happened in Haiti on a whim. It seemed as if as soon as the priest arrived, word got out and the families of the children gathered expectantly. However, it didn't take long



Χειροτονία Θεοφ. Επισκόπου Πελαγονίας Μαξίμου

Συνεχίζεται από την σελίδα 7

(Marretta), γεννήθηκε στο Tom's River της Νέας Υερσέης των Η.Π.Α. στις 17 -1-1979 σε ιερατική οικογένεια. Τόν κατά σάρκα πατέρα του π. Θωμά χειροτόνησε Διάκονο και Πρεσβύτερο ο Άγιος Μητροπολίτης Φιλάρετος της Έκκλησίας της Ρωσικής Διασποράς. Από την ηλικία των 11 ετών ζούσε στην Νέα Υόρκη. Τό 1997 μετέβη για Θεολογικές Σπουδές στην Θεολογική Σχολή της Ίερας Μονής Αγίας Τριάδος στο Τζόρντανβιλ της Νέας Υόρκης των Η.Π.Α. της Ρωσικής Διασποράς. Τό 1999 θεωρήθηκε ως Δόκιμος Μοναχός. Τό 2001 αποπεράτωσε τις σπουδές του και μετέβη στην Ίερά Μονή Αναλήψεως του Σωτήρος της ημετέρας Ίερας Μητροπόλεως Αμερικής, όπου και τό επόμενο έτος 2002 έγινε Ρασοφόρος Μοναχός με τό όνομα Μάξιμος, προς τιμήν του Αγίου Μαξίμου του Όμολογητού, από τόν Γέροντά του Σεβ. Μητροπολίτη Αμερικής κ. Παύλο. Από αὐτόν χειροτονήθη Ιεροδιάκονος τήν 21-1-2008 και Ιερομόναχος τήν 22-1-2009, στόν Ναό του Αγίου Μαξίμου της



Εκκλησίας μας, όπου έφημερεύει ό π. Θωμάς Μαρέτα. Έστάλη για Ιεραποστολική επίκεψη στην Γουατεμάλα τό έτος 2012, από τόν προσχωρήσαντα στην Εκκλησία μας Θεοφ. Έπίσκοπο Βοστώνης κ. Δημήτριο, τόν και Γέροντά του μετά τήν επιδείνωση της ασθένειας του Σεβ. πρώην Αμερικής κ. Παύλου. Τό 2015 έγινε στην Γουατεμάλα ή ίδρυση Ιερού Ήσυχαστηρίου, όπου και ό π. Μάξιμος εγκαταστάθηκε πλέον μονίμως κατά τά τελευταία έτη, διότι ήδη από του 2017 είχε όρισθει από τόν νυν Σεβ. Αμερικής κ. Δημήτριο ως υπεύθυνος τών Ιεραποστολικών Κοινοτήτων της Εκκλησίας μας

στην Λατινική Αμερική. Ό νέος Έπίσκοπος όμιλει έκτός από τήν Αγγλική, τήν Ρωσική, Ισπανική και Έλληνική γλώσσα, διακρινόμενος για τό μοναχικό πνεύμα και φρόνημά του, για τόν ιεραποστολικό του ζήλο, και γενικά τήν αγάπη του για τήν Έκκλησία.

Μαξίμου του Θεοφιλεστάτου Έπισκόπου Πελαγονίας, πολλά τά έτη!

(Originally published on the EcclesiaGOC.gr website)

στην Λατινική Αμερική. Ό νέος Έπίσκοπος όμιλει έκτός από τήν Αγγλική, τήν Ρωσική, Ισπανική και Έλληνική γλώσσα, διακρινόμενος για τό μοναχικό πνεύμα και φρόνημά του, για τόν ιεραποστολικό του ζήλο, και γενικά τήν αγάπη του για τήν Έκκλησία.

Desperate Orthodox Christians: My Journey to Haiti

Cont'd from previous page

that was their baptismal font, but Father Ambrose found creative ways to submerge the important bits like their heads and torsos. At the end, when traditionally the priest walks the newly baptized three times around the church, the Haitians wove their arms together and circled the font in a manner that reminded me of Greek dancing.

The liturgy Sunday morning brought flocks of children in their neat pressed green and white school uniforms. They congregated against the back wall and a dull undertone of whispers flooded the church. When it was time for communion, the line of children wound its way out the door and into

the dirt courtyard that also served as the courtyard of the school. Many of the smallest children wore pure white, and it was difficult at first to pick out the newly baptized amidst all the little starched suits and downy white dresses. For someone who didn't understand French, I could make out the structure of the service relatively well. The litanies were very easy to distinguish, the whole church would sing *Kyrie Eleison* and the old woman on the chair

in front of me sang loudest of all in a cracked and toneless voice. After the service was over, the children dragged their desks out of the classrooms and arranged them in a giant circle about the dirt courtyard. They waited quietly while the woman served the clergy and guests the meal and then worked their way around to them. I was struck by how well-mannered they were. For a people so steeped in poverty, where the meal of fish, rice, fried plantains and coleslaw would seem sumptuous, the children had been taught respect and patience and were able to harness their energy and their hunger.

We saw many of them again later that day after the desks had been cleared off the grounds and in turn tables arranged in the back of the church for the clinic. The children overall seemed healthy, rambunctious even, like the two boys playing hide and seek between the wooden pillars in the nave. My cousin Kali, an ED nurse,

took patients vitals and sent them to my father, Dr. Gehring, who had a table beside hers and was seeing patients and administering prescriptions. Constantine and I taped an eye chart with a Band-Aid to a wooden pillar and had a table full of eyeglasses for our optometry clinic. We all saw patients until there were no more patients to see and the last of the stragglers had wandered across the doorstep and then wandered off with a grateful smile. The whole clinic took about two and a half hours, significantly less than the first one that my father held which lasted about six.



We took that as a good sign.

The last morning of our weekend in Jacmel, we visited the classrooms and I was able to see their education in action. The school itself is a long building, open mostly on one side with the same low half-wall that the church had, separating the rooms from the courtyard. The children in their uniforms could be heard reciting their lessons, and the combination of classes created a cacophony of voices that echoed throughout the courtyard. We entered a few of the classrooms, visiting the first year students and the highest year students on the second floor. They all stopped their lessons respectfully to greet us and my father spoke to them briefly in Creole before we moved on to the next. The last room we visited was to me the most heartbreaking. Their library was on the second

floor with a magnificent view of palm trees and the sea, but the shelves were next to bare, with a few books draped limply about them. I can only imagine what kind of treasure a library filled to the brim with books would be to the children. There seemed to be much that the school was lacking physically, but from the math equations on the board and the grammar they were learning, they seemed to be receiving a good education. As we walked between the classes, I could feel their eyes watching from

the open doorways and I wondered if we seemed just as curious to them as they were fascinating to us.

It's easy to be overwhelmed by a country like Haiti. There is so much corruption and poverty, so much to fix, that as one person, I felt like I could be toppled over by the wave of misery that the people were living in. Where do you start? The volume in which these people need help is staggering. Whole

countries have donated millions of dollars to Haiti and the money disappears inexplicably, usually into the pockets of the thin crust of upper class that rule the country. How can one person put a dent in this place if whole nations couldn't do it? Yet after seeing the parish and the school and feeling the link to these people that Orthodoxy provides, I realized that I had been looking at Haiti too broadly. We were truly there for this one group, for our fellow Orthodox. It seems that no one can save all of Haiti, but we can help our brothers and sisters in Christ, living amidst the banana trees and singing *Kyrie Eleison* in their open air church. It's a place to start, and a beacon of hope for our suffering Haitian Orthodox.

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In Memoriam

"...And on those in the graves hath He bestowed life!"



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-Proverbs 3:9-10

9 Τίμα τον Κύριο από τα υπάρχοντά σου, και με τους πρώτο-καρπούς όλων των γεννημάτων σου· 10 και θα γεμίσουν οι σитаποθήκες σου από αφθονία, και οι ληνοί σου θα ξεχειλίζουν από νέο κρασί.

-Παροιμία Σολομώντος

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