

## *Works of The Order in Action!*

### **Married Seminarians Assistance**

When Metropolitan PHILIP was an impoverished seminarian at the Balamand in the 1940s, he vowed that, one day, if it were up to him, seminarians who were willing to devote their life to service in the Orthodox Church would have the financial support from the Church that they need to complete their studies. By the will of God, he became Metropolitan of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, and he has followed through on that vow. The Archdiocese supports seminarians in the Master of Divinity programs at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Yonkers, New York, St Tikhon's Theological Seminary in South Canaan, Pennsylvania, and Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School in Brookline, Massachusetts who are discerning the call to ordination by providing scholarships for their tuition and a stipend to defray the costs of housing and other costs of living. According to the Annual Financial Report for 2011, 11.3% of the Archdiocese's expenditures that year were for the education of those discerning a call to ordination. No other Orthodox jurisdiction in America supports its seminarians in this way. What a blessing!

The demands of seminary life – morning and evening chapel services, off-campus parish assignments, various assigned chores on and off campus, choir rehearsals, and, of course, class time, homework, and studying – do not leave the seminarian with time to hold down a job. In other jurisdictions, seminarians typically have to incur huge student loan debts that are very difficult to repay after graduation on the salary of a new priest – that is, if the seminarian is even ordained by graduation and is assigned to a parish that can pay him, which are not always the case. Antiochian seminarians typically do not have to go as deep into debt as their classmates from other jurisdictions thanks to the vision of Metropolitan PHILIP.

In addition to their seminary duties, married seminarians also have responsibilities to their wives and, in most cases, children. The cost of housing for married seminarians is higher than for single seminarians, and having more mouths to feed and backs to clothe also add to the financial burden. In addition to the support that Archdiocese provides, the Order of St Ignatius has shown its support for married seminarians by providing a generous financial gift once a year. In 2011, the Order provided \$23,250 in assistance to married seminarians. This help is welcomed and needed by seminary families more than you may be able to imagine. The gift usually arrives before Christmas, and without the support of the Order, there would probably be many seminarians who could provide Christmas gifts for their children. The funds can also help cover the costs of books in the spring semester, medical bills, utilities, food, gas, clothing, vestments, or whatever else the seminarian and his family need. Assistance to married Antiochian seminarians is but one of the many great acts of Christian love carried out by the Order of St Ignatius for people in need here and around the world.



*Seminarian, Burke Vair and his wife Vasi Jankovich*

*Holy Trinity Antiochian Orthodox Church; Linthicum, MD*

On behalf of myself, my wife Danielle, and my daughters Stella and Sofia, I would like to thank the members of the Order of St Ignatius for their generosity, and I hope you will consider joining them in their great work. If no one has asked you to become a member yet, please consider yourself personally invited to do so by someone who knows the great work you can be part of by becoming a member of the Order of St Ignatius. Join today!

Humbly, I ask you to please keep my family, me, and all seminarians and their families in your prayers.

Scott Miller

2<sup>nd</sup> year Seminarian

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