

Friday, March 20, 2020

Holy Fathers Martyred at the Monastery of Saint Sabbas

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The Blessing of the Lord, the Physician of our souls and bodies, be with you all!

Some good news: CONGRATULATIONS! and MANY BLESSINGS! to Anne and Elijah Ferbrache on the birth of their daughter, Junia. Congratulations, too, to big brother Elisha!

(The life of Saint Junia: <https://www.oca.org/saints/lives/2009/05/17/101406-saint-junia>)

This morning, I am praying that everyone is finding the necessary strength – and patience – to deal with the current health crisis in our city, nation, and, indeed, throughout the world. Life has become very different in these last few days. Our daily routines and normal activities have been severely impacted by many different forms of restrictions. At the same time, the sense of the unknown, the apparent lack of control over our own lives, and our frustrations and fears continue to grow. In the face of all this, I think it is important for us to acknowledge that the restrictions that are being placed upon us are intended for the health and wellbeing of all of society. Whatever we can do to impede or slow the spread of the coronavirus thus becomes not only a requirement, but also an expression of love for our brothers and sisters. Let us see the sacrifices we are being called to make as a Lenten expression of solidarity and a way of uniting ourselves to everyone within our community and, indeed, throughout the world who are also suffering at the present time.

As I have mentioned before, it is necessary to continue our prayer life, to reach out to those around us, and, above all, to trust in the Lord. The Internet, so often the source of gossip, scandal, and misinformation, has now become a resource and tool which can be used for the good. I refer you again to our parish website (sspeterpaulaz.org) where you can find updated resources during this stressful time. Additionally, our parish Facebook page (Saints Peter and Paul Eastern Orthodox Church – OCA) can be a source of information. Particularly, in addition to updated message, statements, and articles, the website of The Orthodox Church in America (oca.org) provides a wealth of scriptural, liturgical, and spiritual resources for you to use at your convenience.

To help put everything into proper context, I invite you to read and reflect upon the following words of comfort from Elder Zacharias of Essex.

https://sttikhonsmonastery.org/news_200319_1

Also, His Beatitude Metropolitan TIKHON is scheduled to do a livestream interview tomorrow on Ancient Faith Radio. I am sure that His Beatitude will provide spiritual insights and advice and words of comfort and encouragement that will help us all in these

strange times. I will send more information and the link to that as soon as I have more information, most likely later today.

Yesterday I distributed our current parish contact list. Many of you have provided updated information- which is very helpful. If you know of anyone who is not receiving these emails, I ask that you kindly let me know.

As we head into our first weekend without the ability to gather for the Divine Services, I want to acknowledge the sorrow this brings to all of us. I am sure that you are feeling this as deeply and keenly as I am. Although not able to gather for worship, we are not alone. By God's mercy, we remain a community united in faith, hope and in love.

Please pray for me as I pray for you.

With love in the Lord and sending my blessing to you all...

+Bishop Daniel