



The Orthodox Church in America  
DIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA AND EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA  
The Most Rev. Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia

January 31, 2017

Appeal to help Fr. John and Matushka Kyra Nightingale

Dear to God,

Christ is in our midst! As we prepare to enter the season of Great Lent, let us remember our dear brother in Christ, Fr. John Nightingale. Last year during Great Lent, after the Presanctified Liturgy, Fr. John was not feeling well and went out to the porch for fresh air. At some point he passed out and fell over the railing injuring his, neck, vertebrae and spinal cord. He has been in the hospital since that time receiving therapy. Initially, he lost all use of his arms and legs. After months of therapy, Fr. John is now able to feed himself, but still unable to walk. Due to the lack of strength in his arms and legs he is unable to transfer himself from his bed to a wheel chair and is due to return home at this time. He will require nursing assistance and a lift to transfer him from the bed to a wheel chair. Medically, he is considered a parapalegic.

Matushka Kyra has driven back and forth to the VA Hospital in the Bronx weekly for almost a year --- in addition to caring for her elderly parents. Additionally, she worked with contractors to construct a doorway and ramp into the house at a cost of \$10,000.00. She has also had a first floor handicapped accessible bathroom installed at a cost of \$14,000.00. The V.A. will cover approximately \$6000.00 of the bathroom renovation. Although Fr. John is unable to drive, he is also in need of a van with a lift, which will cost approximately \$65,000.00.

Fr. John has been an excellent priest for our Diocese. He is a Vietnam Veteran, who served as a paratrooper. After his military service he lived in California and later Alaska, where he worked as Hospice Chaplain for a number of years, prior to beginning his studies at St. Tikhon's Seminary. After his ordination to the priesthood, Fr. John served as a supply priest regularly and turned over the complete stipend to the Diocese without keeping a penny for his time and travel. During his tenure as a supply priest and acting rector he even purchased service books and vestments for the parishes he was serving. He has faithfully tithed to his parish for years. At the V.A., hospital in the Bronx he has provided pastoral care to other patients, while being a patient himself.

As we enter the period of the Triodion in anticipation of Great Lent, let us remember that the Church challenges us to fast, not only from certain foods, but from sin as well. Traditionally, there is also a renewed focus on caring for those in need, especially from the money saved from eating more simply. As Orthodox Christians, I appeal to you to assist the Nightingale family to meet some basic human needs. While we pray for his continued recovery, we also know it is in the Lord's hands. Therefore, let us do what we can. If we live close by, let us visit so that he does not feel forgotten or isolated. If we have nursing skills, let us offer to assist Matushka Kyra, as she cares for her parents and her husband. If we can give sacrificially to assist with the cost of the renovations and the cost of a van, let us do so.

All donations may be sent directly to the Diocesan Office at 144 St. Tikhon's Road, Waymart, PA 18472, earmarked "Fr. John Nightingale". Every donation will be acknowledged individually by our Office, together with an accounting of the total amount collected. Thank you for your consideration of this very worthy cause.

Your unworthy Father in Christ,

*+ Mark*

+ Mark, Archbishop of Philadelphia and the Diocese of Eastern Pennsylvania