



Dear Holy Ascension Family,

Christ is Born! Glorify Him! Greetings from St. Vladimir's Seminary! Our first semester here is over and it has been a whirlwind— or perhaps a more like a tornado at times, but notably without David Payne telling us to take shelter.

The life of an Antiochian seminarian is quite busy with a full load of rigorous classes, twice-daily services in the Chapel, and weekend services spent in New Jersey at an Antiochian parish where I serve in the altar and at the chant-stand. We have worked pretty hard to balance my hectic schedule with taking advantage of the New York area and all that it has to offer in the way of culture and fun. Jordan and I have had a couple of dates into the city, most recently seeing the revival of Oklahoma! on Broadway. Additionally, Timmy was able to spend his fourth birthday amongst the dinosaur bones at the Museum of Natural History.

I have really enjoyed my classes so far, and the benefit of being in a small community is that it allows for you to get to know your professors and fellow seminarians – it allows for an interactive classroom environment full of lively and sometimes provocative discussion. Beyond academics, I have had a couple of opportunities to chant for special services and occasions throughout the area, both in English and in Arabic – and I always say that when you need something chanted in Arabic, you ask a guy named Tom Miller.

The children have all adjusted pretty well to our new living situation. They all miss their back yard, but the readily available playmates and parties make up for living in a more confined space. Eleanor maintains a demanding social schedule while the boys enjoy riding scooters in our parking lot (what we lack in yard-space, we make up for in pavement, which is actually pretty good for bicycling and the like). Jordan has enjoyed our home-school co-op here. It's certainly smaller than what we had in Oklahoma, but she has managed to find a close-knit community with great leadership. It is full of nice families whom we have enjoyed getting to know.

In happy news, we are expecting an addition to the family in late May. Timmy and Eleanor are excited but George is in for a rude awakening as he really seems to relish his role as the baby of the family. Jordan could use your remembrance in your prayers as this has been her most difficult pregnancy so far.

Finally, we thank you for your generous gift over Christmas and we deeply appreciate all of the prayer and support we have received from you thus far. In this joyful season, we have had an opportunity to reflect on our many blessings – as such, please know that our community back in Oklahoma remains at the forefront of our minds.

Love in Christ,  
Tom, Jordan, Eleanor, Timmy, and George



