

Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church

Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

308 North Page Avenue

Endicott, New York 13760

25/12 November, 2011

Re: Your desire to assist our very small community which currently is able to offer a total compensation of a parish home and only \$400 per month to our Pastor with two children.

Dear Fr. Evangelos and Board members of Share The Faith Orthodox Christian Ministries,
Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory Forever!

We appreciate your expressing interest to help our small community grow again, which is now down to eleven members (five employed). Having been recently assigned a new Rector, Father Stephanos Shagoury, a man enthusiastic to share God's kingdom with our surrounding area, we have potential to grow once more. We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, our most-holy Theotokos Maria, and Saint Nicholas can greatly increase the size of our present community. For Father Stephanos to raise two children, as a single father, on a compensation of \$400 per month (plus our parish home), makes matters extra challenging. For though we are doing all we can to provide even the above, we realize that such remuneration cannot suffice for three people, especially in times like these.

While Father celebrates Vigils on Saturday nights and the Holy Divine Liturgy on the Lord's day (Sunday), as well as serves on many other Feastsdays and offers an Adult Discussion Group, extra time is needed for administrative matters, fund-raising, attending to the needs of his flock, catechizing inquirers, developing youth programs, etc. Unless, as you quote St. Paul* we are made worthy of assistance, Father Stephanos will have to work in secular employment, to the neglect of his true calling (Acts 6:4).

Please know Reverend Fathers and Brothers and Sisters that we are not looking for a handout — just a hand-up. Your work to provide for clergy who, in some cases, receive less than 10% of the compensation that more financially fortunate clergy are given, is to be lauded. Therefore, whatever you can do to help Father Stephanos will help our community grow to enable us to fully provide for our parish.

With love in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

The Parish Council of Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church

[* Referring to "He who gathered much had nothing in excess. He who had little ... experienced no lack" (II Corinthians 8:15). For the first Christians had "everything in common, giving to each as he had need" (Acts 2:44–45).]