

Beloved in Christ, God bless you!

I feel obligated to make a humble suggestion to all my brothers and sisters in Christ. Having spent a number of years teaching in both public and private schools, and the Antiochian House of Studies program, as well as having sat on the Board of Trustees of a couple of educational institutions, and having some experience in educational administration, **I feel that in this challenging time of the coronavirus all of us should be weighing our options in the area of education.** Many of you may be in a situation where sending your children to public or private schools in your geographic area will serve you and your family the best. We pray that you will have a positive experience.

Many of us, however, would be served well to look at other educational options for our children. It is for this reason that I am recommending a couple of educational programs that are an alternative to sending our children to public or private schools. It is important that when looking at these programs that we give ourselves an opportunity to think outside of the box. In as much as we have structured programs available to offer to the faithful, in many parts of the United States we can actually bring a number of our children to the church facility and have them taught in a co-op utilizing the materials offered to us by the Dept of Homeschooling as well as the St. Athanasius Academy. This offers our children an opportunity to learn at the church and also to give them wonderful opportunities of interacting with other children their age. In some cases, it might serve our purposes better to have our children taught at home utilizing these programs. In any event, **I encourage you to look at all options and pray about what will best serve your situation.**

On another note, I'm sure many of us are spending a lot more time at home because of the virus. Many of the outside activities that we normally participate in are not presently functioning. Although it may not be possible for you to enroll this year, it might profit you and your parish to consider encouraging our clergy and lay people to look at the programs that are offered by the **Antiochian House of Studies.** Our program is doing very well. This year, it is my understanding that we are having an excellent response to enrollment. I would encourage you to spread the word about the House of Studies to your friends and church family. Below you will find information about all three programs. Pray about this, and while you are praying I unworthily ask for your prayers for myself and those that I am charged to assist the Metropolitan by overseeing.

1. For those adults who are interested in Orthodox theological education on a number of different levels and for a variety of vocations, please visit the website of the **Antiochian House of Studies:** <https://tahos.org/>

2. Orthodox education for young people, especially during this time of the coronavirus. **Attached** you will find a document with many resources which will help you navigate establishing your own **homeschool.** Additionally, Saint Emmelia Ministries will have homeschool curriculum recommendations available by August 1st on the website. If you would like to communicate with someone directly you can contact the director of the department, Fr. Noah Bushelli (nbushelli@gmail.com or 215-954-9286) or Dn. David Hyatt (saintemmeliaministries@gmail.com or 218-576-8324). Also, you can visit www.saintemmelia.com.

3. **St. Athanasius Academy Orthodox School** (online) - another opportunity for our children: <https://www.saaot.edu/homeschool>. Please note there is tuition involved with this program.