



From Glory to Glory

The monthly newsletter of the
Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
August 2022

Assumption Greek
Orthodox Church
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Parish Priest

Christos Tsiaklides
Director of Youth and Family Ministries

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Important Dates

August 1
Dormition Fast Begins

August 6
Transfiguration

August 15
Dormition of
the Theotokos

August 25
Holy Apostles
Bartholomew & Titus

August 29
Beheading of
St. John the Baptist

The Perpetual Catechumen

It should not surprise us to learn that we are often creatures of the culture in which we live. We understand this, particularly when we travel and encounter people whose culture differs profoundly from our own. What seems obvious to us, might seem obscure to them. What we eat, how we shop, what counts as polite, what is rude, all of these are shaped by culture. In truth, this is just the tip of the iceberg. We do not enter the world as a blank slate, nor do we reach the so-called “age of discretion” without already having acquired a wide range of thoughts, beliefs, tendencies, etc. We are constantly being formed and shaped by our environment. At some point in our lives, our will gains strength and begins to play a contributing role in our life. However, we discover, if we pay attention, that the will is always confronting an “uneven playing field.”

This insight traditionally plays a role in the Church’s understanding of the catechumenate, that process by which we initiate persons into the life of the Orthodox faith. In early centuries, that process of preparation lasted as much as three years. Surprisingly, it consisted primarily in “moral instruction” (teachings on how to behave). Instruction in the doctrines of the faith did not take place until after Baptism! The assumption behind this was (and still should be) that catechumens needed spiritual formation before they were ready to receive doctrinal instruction. This assumption has been greatly weakened in our modern culture.

We labor under the myth of being an “information-based” society. We imagine that we are deeply informed, have ready access to massive amounts of information on the basis of which we are able to make free and well-considered decisions. This over-simplification of our human experience is deeply flawed. Among the things we’ve learned in the past year-and-a-half is that “distance education” doesn’t work very well. There’s a good reason for that: education is not merely about the acquisition of information. Interaction with a computer screen is insufficient. We are social beings and require the presence and direct interaction with others in order to learn well and fully. Our mistake about all of this could be compared to imagining that infants merely need milk and not touch, cuddling, cooing, and the human face. We know the result of such mistaken notions: babies die, suffering from “failure to thrive.”

Catechumens, if given only a diet of information, also fail to thrive. Above all else, it is the practice of the faith that makes faith possible.

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (Jn. 8:31-32)

“Abiding in the word” (keeping the commandments, engaging in the practices of the faith) is the necessary pre-condition for “knowing the truth.”

One manifestation of this with which many believers are familiar is the “coin drop.” Any amount of information may have passed our ears and eyes. The Scriptures, the Liturgy, various hymns and writings, all of them bathe us in their wisdom while we remain inert, untouched, and even bored. And yet, there can come a moment when the “coin drops.” A single phrase can catch our attention and understanding takes place – sometimes with wonderful joy and delight. These great moments of grace point towards something that has taken place in the heart. Hours, weeks, even years, standing in the services, fasting and failing, confessing and struggling, all work as a plow on the hardened soil of the heart. So much seed had fallen by the wayside or on

2022 Parish Council

Fr. Joseph Strzelecki, Parish Priest

Greg Simos, President; Amy Kirkou, Vice President;
Soula Marcou, Secretary; James Cawood, Treasurer,
Gus Harris, Assistant Treasurer

Stella Afentoullis, Charlton Dimitriou, James Hoekel,
Maria Afentoullis Humphrey, Eugenia Kardaris, Katia Lappas,
Samia Rabie, Scott Thompson, Nick Tsoubanos,
Tonis Zafiroopoulos

Pastoral Ministries

Acolytes

Steve Sarris &
Jim Sioumcas

Adult Orthodox Christians

(18 years +):

Diane Sieckmann

Bookstore

Presvytera Patricia Roeber

Chanters

Thomas Carroll
Dr. Steve Leon

Choir

Stephanie Saunders

Church Tours

Janice Hazeltine

Greek School

Savas Kyramarios

Greek Dancers

Kyklos & Armonia

Stella Afentoullis

Ta Paidakia, Neo Kyma

Aliki Malek

GOYA (9th -12th Grade)

Alki Lappas Case

HOPE/JOY (Infant- 4th Grade)

Rachel Tsiaklides

Jr. GOYA (5th - 8th Grades)

Stacy Kourinos

Hellenic Events

Dr. Eugenia Kardaris

Kafenio

Art Liyeos

Orthodox Faith & Life:

Dr. Farid & Anna Sadaka

Philotochos

Diane Sieckmann

Prison Ministry

Bill Goranitis

Sunday School

Soula Marcou

Women's Book Study

Presvytera Laura Morton

Committees

Capital Projects

Greg Simos

Eighty-Fifth Anniversary

Flora Dimitriou

Greek Festival

Greg Simos

Phase III

Fr. Joseph Strzelecki

Planned Giving Committee

Amy Johnson

Cemetery

Diane Sieckmann

Call-a-Ride

Jim Hoekel

Insurance

Carol Marshall

IT/Phone/Internet

Steve Sarris

Landscaping

Dr. Nicholas &
Julie Poulos

Maintenance/Facilities

Scott Thompson

Stewardship

Michael Afentoullis

Recycling

Carol Marshall

Safety and Security

Amy Kirkou

Tony Zafiroopoulos

Youth Protection

Soula Marcou

Going on vacation? Won't be here on Sunday?

Consider using the mobile app Give Plus to still contribute with an offering or stewardship. It's safe and secure.

GIVE PLUS⁺
A VANCO COMPANY

the rocks and disappeared. But then, a single seed finds fertile ground and its grace fills the soul.

Such moments are not just worth the wait, they point towards the essence of the faith and the true nature of its work. We are not saved by information. We are saved by the Word working richly in our hearts transforming us. A single such word can save.

This suggests to me that we set our minds to become "perpetual catechumens" in which we give our attention to the softening of our hearts rather than inundation of our minds. It raises the significant question, "What is it that softens my heart?" That goes to the very root of repentance. I think it may vary from heart to heart. I have seen the admonition, for example, that, before prayer, we read something that softens the heart. It is difficult to go directly from the busyness of our lives straight into the Holy of Holies. There is a need to "wash and be clean," and to "clothe ourselves with the garment of salvation." For some, no doubt, singing or listening to holy music can be a preparation. If we pay attention, we will find such things around us. Use them.

The heart's learning is the true point of salvation. Information does not save us – but there is such a thing as "saving knowledge." We speak of this, formally, as "holy illumination." It is the consistent teaching of the Church that holy illumination is our desired path to God. It is God's gift (I can't write a book and say, "Here, read this, and you'll be illumined"). It is absolutely the case that God desires for us to be illumined. It calls for us to "purify" our hearts.

And the coins do drop. Bless God, O how they drop!



About Fr. Stephen Freeman

Fr. Stephen is a priest of the Orthodox Church in America, Pastor Emeritus of St. Anne Orthodox Church in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. He is also author of *Everywhere Present* and the Glory to God podcast series.

Internet Orthodoxy

Some Orthodox Apps which may be of interest (these are available from the Apple Store, but they may also be available for Android phones)

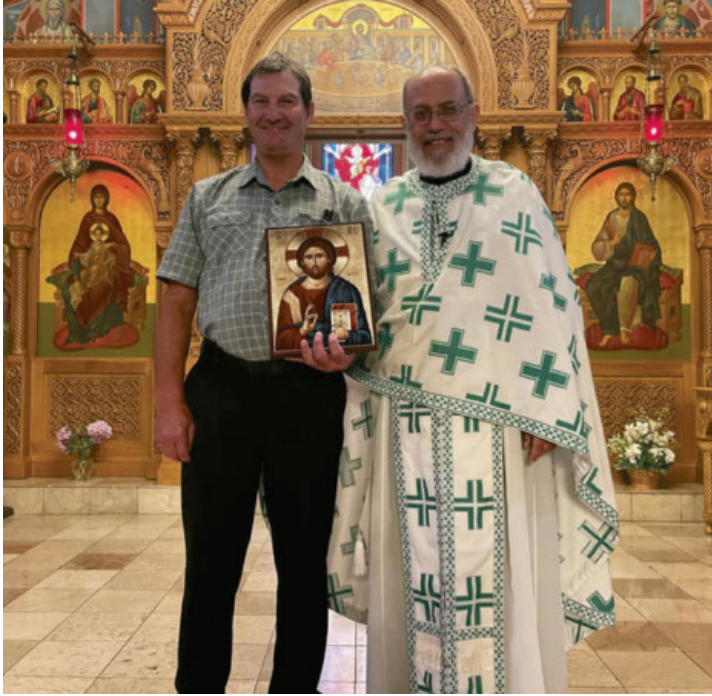
Orthodox Learning uses a wide range of quizzes with feedback questions to teach about Orthodoxy at a number of levels. Constantly being added to, no cost.

OrthodoPrax is a daily devotional app for Orthodox Christians. It contains short lives of many of the saints commemorated each day, morning, midday, and evening prayers, prayers for before and after meals, and Communion and other prayers. Also included are a number of meditations taken from the Prologue of St. Nicolai Velimorovic. It is constantly being added to, but does come with an annual subscription fee to get most of its features.

Catena, another free app, includes the entire old and new testament, indexed with over 50,000 commentaries from the church fathers. You can look up any verse and find out that the fathers said about it. Also includes videos and other materials and has a nice select of ops to customize if for your needs.

2022 Man of the Year - Dan Gantner

We were able to honor our Man of the Year on Sunday, June 26



Good Morning!

Every year on this day, we gather to celebrate The Assumption's Man of the Year... a man meticulously chosen by our Parish Council to be worthy of this title. But as a wise man once said; "It is not titles that honor men, but men that honor titles," a saying especially befitting of this year's Man of the Year, Mr. Dan Gantner. Many of you know Dan who has been active, supportive member of our parish for the past twenty one (21) years. I know many of you are incredibly happy for him today as you can attest to the character of the man and Orthodox Christian he is. Dan is a modest, humble man gifted with remarkable talents that he uses to serve God and others.

Dan has always had a strong relationship with God. Growing up in Ferguson, Missouri, Dan's parents, Beatrice and Norbert Gantner, were devout Roman Catholics and raised Dan, his two (2) brothers and sister with solid Christian values. The family attended church every Sunday, a tradition that Dan continued throughout his adult life and with his own children, Dan Jr. and Melissa and six (6) grandchildren.

Dan enjoyed living in Ferguson and attending McClure North and North County Tech schools. During his high school years, Dan played on a semi-professional, pro-league ice hockey team and travelled throughout the United States and Canada. He was an exceptionally good hockey player and might have made it professionally, but with the untimely deaths of his mother and sister, Dan gave up hockey and stayed home to help his father and brothers.

He completed his education at North County Tech, where he majored in appliance repair, but later joined an apprenticeship program in construction with emphasis on carpentry. Dan worked for major companies such as

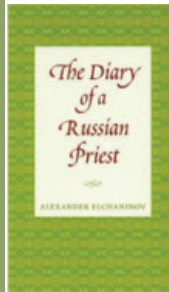
Murphy Company, PARIC, Mayer Homes, Jones Company, etc, and became an excellent union carpenter, well respected in his field. and recognized for his outstanding work ethic and skill set.

To Dan, carpentry has always been more than a profession. It is the artistic platform he uses to express his own creativity, ingenuity and appreciation for beautiful things, things that he diligently creates with his own hands. As a mere teenager, he built an amazing swimming pool for his siblings and later in life, designed and constructed a stunning 6,000 square foot home for himself and his family, a project he single-handedly completed with little outside help. Over the years, Dan has built numerous things ranging from elaborate decks to intricate tree houses to abundant vegetable gardens to inspiring Christmas displays and much more, each done with love and Dan's desire to make someone happy with it.

Dan has also used his multiple talents and visionary attributes to serve both God and this church. Since his conversion to Orthodoxy, Dan realized the needs of our church and wholeheartedly gave of his talents to renew and maintain its beauty. He has worked relentlessly to upkeep the building's physical structure. Whether it was repairing the leaky bell tower, painting or protecting the walls, fixing furniture or anything else he was asked to do, Dan did it lovingly and with profound respect and devotion to his parish. Dan was also a member of the Parish Council for several terms. While on the Parish Council, his input and guidance to maintenance related issues was invaluable and his willingness to serve immeasurable. Dan continues to serve our church including working the festivals, fixing whatever needs to be fixed and being there for us when we need him.

Please join me in congratulating Mr. Dan Gantner as the 2022 Man of the Year.

Spiritual Reading



The Diary of a Russian Priest is not really a diary at all, but an essentially random collection of short passages on spiritual subjects, written by Father Alexander Elchaninov, a brilliant and spiritually gifted Russian Orthodox priest, who as a young man fled communism and served the Russian emigre community in France until his death in 1934.

Fr. Alexander was especially known for his ability to communicate the real meaning of Orthodoxy to young people, but this book holds appeal for all. Its format makes it easy reading for those who have a few moments of time here and there. But be warned, it can be engrossing. Here is an excerpt:

Pride leads to ambition, to partiality, inability to judge oneself aright, and so to stupidity. Every proud man is stupid in his judgements, even if nature has endowed him with the mind of a genius. Conversely, the humble man is wise even though he may not be clever, for the essence of wisdom, a feeling for truth and humility in its presence, is accessible to him. *Fr. Alexander Elchaninov*

Parish News

Funerals

Kirkou, Katina, wife of Thomas Kirkou, passed away on Saturday, June 25, 2022. The funeral was held on visitation Wednesday, July 6 at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox with a private Interment New St. Marcus Cemetery.

Gabi Shariff Khashram, father of Zaid and Celine and Zaid Khashram, reposed on July 8, 2022. The funeral was held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at The Assumption Greek Orthodox Church with burial at St. Matthew Cemetery.

Memorials/Trisagia

Αιώνια ή μνήμη

July 17

40 days Candace Burdette
69 years Christos Tsevis
40 years Kostantinos Tsevis
29 years Eftihia Halastanis
24 years Afrodite Tsevis
20 years Stella Goulas
19 years Hareklea Tsevis
3 months Fr. John Pilafas,

August 7

10 years Vasiliki Kolivakis

August 14

1 year George Kardon
Departed Members of the Brotherhood of Sopiki

September 4

1 year Larry Karagiannis

October 2

Departed Members of the Brotherhood of Alexander the Great

Visit O Lord, and heal my infirmity and deliver me from pain and long suffering.

Nora (Elaine) Bangert, Seraphima Henderson
Thekla (Rebecca) Kagaris, John Carroll,
Junior (Jay) Plumlee, Sheree Martin

Important

Please inform Fr. Joseph immediately when you or any member of your family is sick or hospitalized, so that appropriate prayer and visitation may be scheduled. Hospitals do not notify clergy of patients even if you list yourself as a Church member.

Flag Donors

We replaced the flags and we are looking for donors. Please call the office if you'd like donate one of these flags.

United States Flag.....\$65
Missouri Flag.....\$99
Greek Flag.....\$105
Ecumenical Patriarchate Flag.....\$195



Congratulations

To Nicki Aslan who graduated from Forest Park Community College from nursing school.



Ministry Needs

Please call the church office if you would like assist with any of the following ministries:

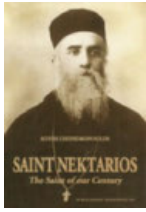
- 1 Sunday School
- 2 Greek School
- 3 Vacation Church Camp
- 4 Welcoming Committee

When the times are fulfilled and the end is at hand, when the world's autumn comes and God sends His angels to reap the harvest - what will they find in the barren fields of our hearts? And yet, the time is nearly accomplished and the end close by for each of us, the end which we shall each face even before the common harvest. But let us not be downhearted. See how the sower goes on sowing among the rocks and thorns and by the roadside. This means that He places some hope even in such fields as these. And we know from the lives of the saints how often a soul which had seemed irreclaimably stifled by sin, blinded by passion, hardened in evil, became good ground, fertile and productive, purified of poisonous mixtures and alien seeds
Father Alexander Elchaninov, from The Dairy of a Russian Priest

The Bookstore Recommends.....

Presvytera Patricia Roeber

New on the shelves.....

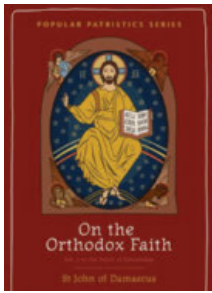


St. Nektarios, The Saint of our Century

by Sotos Chondropoulos

A biography of a truly remarkable man, this book chronicles the life of St Nektarios, the Wonderworker, as he models for us a life of humility, faith and love while enduring poverty, tribulation, trials and exile. An inspiring read, this book comes highly recommended by Fr.

Joseph. (Now a movie titled A Man of God.) \$32.00

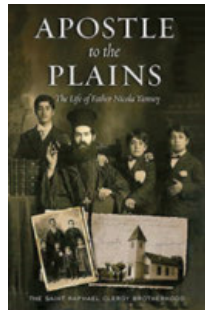


On the Orthodox Faith

by St. John of Damascus, translated by Norman Russell

On the Orthodox touches on all the Church's main teachings: the Trinity, Christ and His saving work, the sacraments, Scripture, the veneration of icons, and the last things. Organized by topic (not chapters) which are numbered and listed as Contents, information is

easy to find. Side-by-side, in Greek and English, this is definitely a "go-to" book for those with questions about Orthodox beliefs, or those wanting help explaining what we, as Orthodox believe, to inquiring friends. \$30.



Apostle to the Plains, The Life of Father Nicola Yanney

by the St. Raphael Clergy Brotherhood

This is a biography of a Lebanese immigrant who settled in Nebraska and faced personal tragedy. Seeing the desperate need of fellow Orthodox Christians and heeding God's call, he spent the rest of his life traversing the Great Plains as a circuit-riding priest during the early 20th century. The

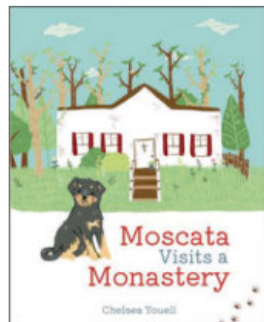
American Orthodox Church is grateful and rightly proud of this dedicated servant of God. \$15.00

New For children.....

Moscata Visits a Monastery

by Chelsea Youell

Join Moscata, a friendly and informative dog, who takes readers on a tour through an Orthodox women's monastery. Enjoy the lovely illustrations as you meet nuns and explore the church, the candle factory, the cemetery, and the grounds. Find out how the nuns work and pray, what they wear, how they serve Christ and why they have chosen the monastic life. Hardcover Ages 4+

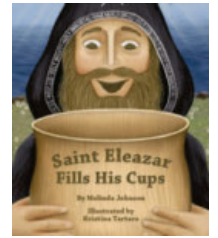


\$20

St. Eleazar Fills his Cups

by Melinda Johnson

Eleazar is a hermit who has to solve a problem: He has run out of food. With the help of God, and some fisherman, he manages to fill his cups. Boardbook Ages 2+ \$10

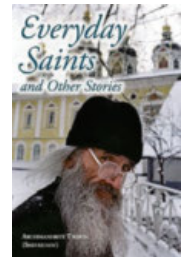


Old Favorites on the Shelves again.....

Everyday Saints and Other Stories

by Archimandrite Tikhon (Shevkunov)

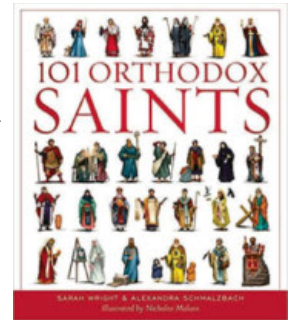
An inspiring read, by an accomplished writer, this book describes the remarkable people encountered by an Orthodox monk and priest in Russia. Easy to read, hard to put down, this book has become a favorite of people all over the world. \$22.00



101 Orthodox Saints

by Sarah Wright

Did you know there was a saint who used a dogsled to travel? Or a saint who turned down a marriage proposal from a Roman Emperor? Discover these stories and more in 101 Saints. Written for children, this book will enhance your family's understanding and celebration of the saints of the church. Hardcover Ages 6+



\$20.00

Please ask if you would like help ordering books, icons or music. And let us know if you have recommendations for books or cds!

[Spiritual] reading is a sublime work, for it is the gate through which the mind finds access to divine mysteries.

Reading is the reserve of strength upon which the mind draws to gain strength for pure prayer and mediation.

*St. Isaac the Syrian
From The Four Books, book 3 #73, 75*

Άγιος Γερμανός της Αλάσκας

Ο ταπεινός άγιος μοναχός Γερμανός (Herman) γεννήθηκε το 1756 στη Ρωσία. Λίγα είναι γνωστά για τα πρώτα χρόνια της ζωής του. Εγινε δόκιμος μοναχός στη Μονη του Σάρωφ και έπειτα εκάρη μοναχός στη μονή του Βαλαάμ το 1782. Ο πνευματικός του πατέρας ήταν ο ηγούμενος Ναζάριος ο οποίος ακολουθούσε την ησυχαστική παράδοση του Αγίου Παϊσίου Βελιτσκόφσκυ. Όταν άρχισε η ρωσική αποίκιση της Αλάσκας και με εντολή της αυτοκράτειρας Αικατερίνης της Μεγάλης, ο μητροπολίτης Γαβριήλ της Αγ. Πετρούπολης έστειλε ως ιεραπόστολους 10 μοναχούς από τη Μονή Βαλαάμ μεταξύ των οποίων ήταν και ο Άγιος Γερμανός. Οι μοναχοί έφτασαν στη νήσο Κόντιακ (Kodiak) στις 24 Σεπτεμβρίου του 1794. Ο Άγιος Γερμανός μένοντας τελικά μόνος από την ιεραποστολική ομάδα του και βρίσκοντας ενάντιά του τον Μπαρνανόφ, το σκληρό νέο διευθυντή της Ρωσοαμερικανικής Εταιρείας (τη «μαύρη σελίδα» της ιστορίας της Εκκλησίας της Αλάσκας), ήθελε να ξεφύγει από το μίσος του και αποσύρθηκε σ' ένα μικρό μοναχικό νησάκι που λέγονταν Ελόβυγ, δηλαδή «νήσος των Ελάτων» (Spruce Island) κοντά στο Κόντιακ που το μετωνόμασε σε «Νέο Βαλαάμ» και ακολούθησε εκεί την «σιωπηλή ιεραποστολή», μιμούμενος τον τρόπο των αρχαίων Πατέρων της ερήμου, ιεραποστολής με την υψηλότερη σημασία του όρου: λύχνος που ακτινοβολεί με το παράδειγμα του, μια εικόνα του τι είναι η Εκκλησία και η Βασιλεία των Ουρανών. Το παράδειγμα της αγίας ζωής του επέδρασε βαθύτατα στους ιθαγενείς.

Εστραμμένος στον εαυτό του και τον Θεόν, ζούσε σε ένα μικρό ξύλινο κελλί, χωρίς καμία άνεση, εκτεθειμένος στα στοιχεία της άγριας φύσεως, φορώντας όλες τις εποχές τα ίδια ρούχα, νηστεύοντας και έχοντας ως μόνη τροφή άγρια μούρα, χορταρικά και μανιτάρια, και φέρνοντας επάνω του σιδερένιες αλυσίδες, πιο βαρείες από οκτώ κιλά. Εργαζόταν



σκληρά, αναπαυόταν λίγο, αγρυπνούσε πολύ και η προσευχή γι' αυτόν είχε γίνει αδιάλειπτος, μέρα και νύχτα. Μ' αυτήν απωθούσε τις διαρκείς επιθέσεις των δαιμόνων και τους κακούς λογισμούς. Γέροντα του είχε την τελευταία έκδοση της Φιλοκαλίας, που το 1793 είχε κυκλοφορήσει στα σλαβονικά, σε μετάφραση του αγίου Παϊσίου Βελιτσκόφσκυ. Αντιμέτωπος ακόμα διωγμό, συκοφαντία και ξυλοδαρμό από κάποιους ιθαγενείς. Σ' αυτούς που απορούσαν πως άντεχε σε τόση μοναξιά, απαντούσε: «Δεν είμαι μόνος, ο Θεός είναι παρών εδώ όπως και παντού, παρόντες είναι επίσης οι Άγγελοι. Είναι τίποτε πιο επιθυμητό από μια τέτοια συντροφιά;». «Εγώ ο φτωχός και αμαρτωλός προσπαθώ να αγαπώ τον Θεό εδώ και σαράντα χρόνια», έλεγε προς τα τέλη του βίου του, «και δεν είμαι βέβαιος ότι τον αγαπώ όπως πρέπει. Ν' αγαπάς τον Θεό σημαίνει να Τον σκέπτεσαι συνεχώς και πάντοτε και παντού, να Τον υπηρετείς και να κάνης πάντα το θέλημα Του». Γι' αυτήν τη θεάρεστη ζωή του, ο Χριστός του χάρισε άφθονη θεία Χάρη και πολλή ευλογία, που εκδηλωνόταν ως απέραντη αγάπη για όλους τους ανθρώπους και περισσότερο για τους ιθαγενείς Αλεούτιους, για τους οποίους είχε γίνει ο πατέρας και προστάτης τους. Πρόσφερε σ' αυτούς ό,τι είχε, μα κυρίως τον ίδιο τον εαυτό του, μιμούμενος τον Κύριο Του, ενώ παράλληλα δε σταματούσε να προσεύχεται εσωτερικά, αδιάλειπτα.

Ίδρυσε ορφανοτροφείο και κατασκεύασε με τα χέρια του ένα παρεκκλήσιο και κει κάθε Κυριακή μάζευε τις οικογένειες που σιγά σιγά ήλθαν και εγκαταστάθηκαν γύρω από το Βαλαάμ, έψαλλαν μαζί, λειτουργούσε και κήρυττε το λόγο του Θεού. Όταν κάποτε ξέσπασε μια επιδημία στο Κόντιακ, ο άγιος Γερμανός δεν εγκατέλειψε το χωριό, αλλά παρέμεινε κοντά στους αρρώστους επί ένα μήνα, αφηφώντας τον κίνδυνο να προσβληθή και ο ίδιος. Όταν πέθαιναν, έθαβε και έψαλλε τους νεκρούς, ενίσχυε τους απορφανισθέντες. Δηγούνται ότι πάντοτε ήταν τριγυρισμένος από παιδιά με τα οποία έπαιζε, ενώ συγχρόνως τα edίδασκε τα της Εκκλησίας, και για να τους προσφέρει χαρά, τους έψηνε με τα ίδια του τα χέρια κουλουράκια και τους τα πρόσφερε. Έτσι πέρασαν τα χρόνια και οι χριστιανοί Εσκιμώοι πλήθαιναν στην γύρω περιοχή. Ο άγιος Γερμανός έφθασε σε μεγάλη ηλικία. Γερνώντας, άρχισε σιγά σιγά να χάνη το φως του. Όμως ο Θεός του χάρισε να βλέπη αγγέλους. Ακόμα του εδόθη το χάρισμα να εξουσιάζη τα στοιχεία της φύσεως, το χάρισμα των ιάσεων και το προορατικόν. Εκοιμήθη εν ειρήνη στις 15 Νοεμβρίου τα 1836, την ίδια ημέρα της μνήμης του αγαπημένου του αγίου Παϊσίου Βελιτσκόφσκυ. Τη στιγμή που οι άγγελοι μετέφεραν στον ουρανό την αγία ψυχή του, οι κάτοικοι των γειτονικών νησιών είδαν μια στήλη

φωτός να ανυψούται πάνω από το Νέο Βαλαάμ. Το πρόσωπο του αγίου λειψάνου του έλαμπε από υπερκόσμιο φως. Πολλά θαύματα ακολούθησαν την κοίμησή του και ο άγιος παραμένει ολοζώντανος στη μνήμη των χριστιανών όλης της Αλάσκας. Η μνήμη του εορτάζεται την ημέρα της κοίμησής του, αλλά και στις 9 Αυγούστου (ημέρα της επίσημης αγιοκατάταξής του το 1970) και στις 13 Δεκεμβρίου ημέρα της Συνάξεως όλων των αγίων των εν Αλάσκα. Για την αντιγραφή: Δημήτρης Κάγκκαρης

St. Herman, Wonderworker of Alaska (1836)

St Herman, for many the Patron of North America, was born near Moscow around 1756 to a pious merchant family, and entered monastic life at the age of sixteen, at the Trinity - St Sergius Lavra near St Petersburg. While there he was attacked by a cancer of the face, but the Mother of God appeared to him and healed him completely. He was tonsured a monk in 1783 with the name of Herman (a form of Germanos), and was Received into Valaam Monastery on Lake Ladoga. After some time, he was allowed to withdraw to the life of a hermit in the forest, and only came to the monastery for feast days.

In 1793, in response to a request by the Russian-American Commercial Company for missionaries to Alaska, Valaam Monastery was told to select a company of its best monks to travel to America. Eight were chosen, of whom the hermit Herman was one. The company crossed all of Siberia and, almost a year later, first saw Kodiak Island in September 1794. The missionaries set about their work, and found the native Aleut people so receptive to the Gospel of Christ that in the first year about 7,000 were baptized and 1,500 marriages performed. Despite severe hardships, the missionaries covered huge distances, on foot and in small boats, to reach the scattered fishing settlements of the Aleuts. In general they found a warm reception, but many of the pagan shamans opposed their message and sometimes stirred up the people against them. It was thus that the Priest-monk Juvenaly was killed in 1796, becoming the First Martyr of North America. Despite such opposition, the missionaries' major difficulty was with the Russian traders and settlers, who were in the habit of exploiting the Aleuts as they wished, and who had oppressed and disgusted the native people with their immoral behavior. When the missionaries came to the defense of the natives, they were repaid with the opposition of the Russian-American company, whose leadership put countless obstacles in the path of their work. In time, several of the company died at sea, and several more abandoned the mission in discouragement, leaving the monk Herman alone.

He settled on Spruce Island near Kodiak, and once again took up the hermit's life, dwelling in a small cabin in the forest. He spent his days in prayer and mission work, and denied himself every fleshly comfort: he fasted often and lived on a diet of blackberries, mushrooms and vegetables (in Alaska!!).

Despite these privations, he founded an orphanage and a school for the natives of the island, cared for the sick in epidemics, and built a chapel where he conducted divine services attended by many. (He was not a priest, but God made up the lack in miraculous ways: at Theophany, Angels descended to bless the waters of the bay, and the Saint would use the holy water to heal the sick). Asked if he was ever lonely or dejected in his solitude, and replied: "I am not alone; God is here as everywhere, and the Angels too. There is no better company."

Saint Herman reposed in peace on Spruce island, at the age of eighty-one, in 1836. At the moment of his departure, his face was radiant with light, and the inhabitants nearby saw a pillar of light rising above his hermitage. His last wish was to be buried on Spruce Island. When some of his well-intended disciples attempted to take his relics back to Kodiak to be buried from the church there, a storm rose up and continued unabated until they had abandoned the plan and buried him as he desired. He was officially glorified in 1970, the first canonized American Saint.

Saint Peter was a young Aleut convert to the Orthodox faith. In 1812 the Russian-American Company set up a post in California, where Russians and Aleuts farmed and traded to supply the needs of the Alaskans; Peter was one of these. The Spanish, who at the time ruled California, suspected the Russians of territorial ambitions, and in 1815 captured about twenty Orthodox Aleuts and took them to San Francisco. Fourteen of these were put to torture in an effort to convert them to the Roman Catholic faith. All refused to compromise their faith, and Peter and a companion were singled out for especially vicious treatment: Peter's fingers, then hands and feet, were severed, and he died from loss of blood, still firm in his confession. The Latins were preparing the same fate for the others when word came that they were to be transferred; eventually they returned to Alaska. When he heard a first-hand account of Peter's martyrdom, Saint Herman crossed himself and said "Holy New Martyr Peter, pray to God for us!" Saint Peter the Aleut is the first recognized Saint of American birth.

St Herman appears several times on the Church's calendar. The Synaxis of St Herman and the American Protomartyrs is celebrated December 12 / December 25. St Herman is commemorated on November 15 / November 28, the day of his repose; but (partly because pilgrimage to Alaska is so difficult in the winter) the day of his glorification, July 27 / August 9 is kept there as his primary feast day.



<https://sthermanorthodox.org/patronsaint>



Philoptochos Corner

The Assumption Ladies Philoptochos Society

My predecessors were much better at submitting monthly articles that kept people apprised of what was happening in Philoptochos. During the Pandemic in 2020, Philoptochos, along with every other organization, had to adapt in order to exist in a shut down world. Our leadership did just that. She kept the board together with monthly meetings doing what we could to maintain our objective of helping others.

Thankfully, the world has learned to adapt and we started meeting again in person, slowly offering more fundraising events that not only allowed us to raise money for our charities but also to socialize. It is our plan in this new ecclesiastical year to offer more opportunities. To that end, here is a look ahead. We hope you will join us and support us in our endeavors to do what are called to do: "...help the poor, the destitute, the hungry, the aged, the sick, the unemployed, the orphaned, the imprisoned, the widowed, those with disabilities and the victims of disasters..." but then isn't that what we are called to do?

We have planned the following events and ask to please support these events, you will have a good time and help us to help others at the same time.

- On Sunday, September 11 our Annual Gyro Luncheon which benefits Evelyn's House BJC Hospice
- On Saturday, September 24 the Metropolis of Chicago Philoptochos will host it's Annual September Luncheon which is its only fundraiser.
- On Saturday, October 22 we are going to host a Trivia Night
- On Sunday, October 29 we will celebrate our Philoptochos Name Day with an Artoclassia
- On Sunday, December 3 is our Philoptochos Christmas Party at Surf and Surloin
- On Saturday, January 21, 2023 we will host Bunco Night

More information to follow on all of these events.

A new initiative from National Philoptochos that we participated in last year, internally, is Operation Classroom. The mission of the Operation Classroom, an initiative started by National Philoptochos, is to assist and offer support to teachers and students in underserved or underfunded schools and provide resources that would not have been available through the local school district. This year we are asking the community to help collect school supplies. (See the flyer in this newsletter). Stacy Kourinos is chairing this event. Please contact her if you have any questions.

We are also planning a joint project with the youth, to raise money for an organization called Kids with Digs which helps elevate the lives of those transitioning from homelessness to a comfortable place to live. More information to follow.

Every 2 years we have our board and officer elections. This is a friendly reminder that it is an election year which means that meeting attendance counts. You must attend at least 4 meetings between May 2022 and April 2023 in order to be eligible to be a board member.

In order for any organization to continue we need membership and people willing and able to hold offices. Please come to our meetings and learn what we do and consider becoming a member We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

2022 Meeting Dates:

Sunday, August 7,

Saturday, September 10,

Sunday, October 9,

Sunday, November 13,

No meeting in December

Assumption Ladies Philoptochos Society

Gyro Luncheon

Sunday, September 11
immediately following Divine Liturgy



**Gyro Sandwich,
Chips , and
a big cookie
\$10.00**

All proceeds from the luncheon will be used in support of Evelyn's House BJC Hospice.

Thank you for your support.



School Supply Drive

Benefitting students in local
school districts

Sponsored by
Ladies Philoptochos Society
for Operation Classroom

DONATIONS ACCEPTED UNTIL AUGUST 28

Needed Supplies

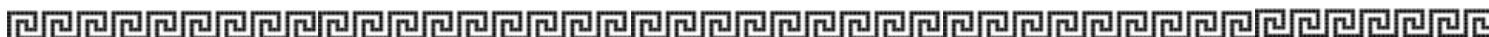
Pencils, Crayons, Markers, Wide Ruled Notebooks,
Folders, Scissors, Gluesticks, Looseleaf Paper, Dry
Erase Markers, Erasers, Pencil Boxes

For More Information

Contact Stacy @ 618-604-0358 stacy.kourinos@gmail.com

September 11
is the first day of
Sunday School!

All Students will leave Sunday School early and
return to Divine Liturgy for the Procession.



Register Now for Greek Language Classes



Classes Offered: Kindergarten to Adult
(Age 5 by September)

T=taf

Classes will start on Tuesday, September 6, 2022.
with Agiasmos at 6:00 pm

Early Registration by August 15 will help with proper class placement

Registration Form in this newsletter.

α=αλφα

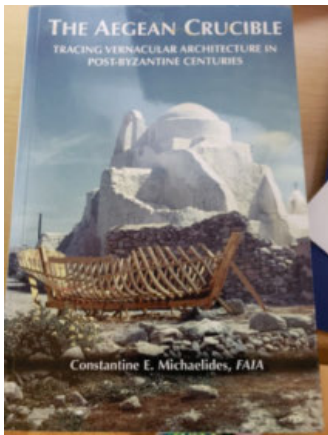
Tuition

Youth: \$150 for both semesters, \$140 for second child.
Adults: \$150 for both semesters.



The Hellenic Society of Greater St. Louis

invites all 21 and older



For an evening of
with

Guest speaker
Prof. Constantine Michaelides
author of *The Aegean Crucible*

We will also enjoy each other's company and
Greek Spirits Libations

at the Assumption Greek
Orthodox Church, 1755 Des Peres Rd.
Town & Country, MO 63131

October 8, 2022
5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Tickets: \$25.00
if purchased by September 20.

For more information or questions, please contact Dr .Eugenia Kardaris
at 636-751-9696

Holy Dormition Romanian Orthodox Monastery, Rives Junction, Michigan

The weekend of July 1 -4, 2022, Christos Tsiaklides, led a group to the Holy Dormition Orthodox Monastery.



“Acquire the spirit of peace, and thousands around you will be saved.” This piece of wisdom from St. Seraphim of Sarov is lived out daily in the lives of the nuns of Holy Dormition Monastery. The moment you step onto the Monastery grounds, you are immediately surrounded by the Lord’s calming peace. This is a sanctity that is only brought about by the dedication and sacrifice of every one of the holy monastics who spend every hour of their day committed to a life full of repentance and hesychasm.

Despite facing the daily challenges of tending their land, cleaning, cooking, running the monastery bookstore and guesthouse, and, most importantly, participating in all the daily services and keeping their individual rules of prayer, the mothers and sisters are able to hold onto peace because of their steadfastness in becoming vessels of the Holy Spirit.

The Monastery of the Holy Dormition of the Theotokos is a Romanian Orthodox Christian Monastery in Rives Junction, Michigan. It was first established in 1987 under the omophorion of His Grace, Bishop Nathaniel of Detroit and the Romanian Episcopate, when Mother Benedicta Braga the Great Schema nun left the Monastery of the Transfiguration in Ellwood City, Pennsylvania, to start a new monastery. She came with Mother Gabriella (the current Abbess Superior), along with Mother Apollonaria, also from the Monastery of the Transfiguration, which had been established by Mother Alexandra, the former Princess Ileana of Romania. To this day, the two establishments operate as sister monasteries.

These church mothers live as though angels on Earth. As St. John Chrysostom points out, “There would be no need for sermons, if our lives were shining. There would be no need for words, if we bore witness with our deeds”. The monastics don’t even need to open their mouths to



teach us about a life in Christ. It is through their actions- their hospitality toward pilgrims and their love for all of God’s creation- that speak straight to our hearts. Yet, their understanding of theology is something to experience first-hand, and the amount of compassion and love they have for the world is so prominent, it is contagious. As one

of the mothers advised us, we must ask ourselves what we have done to glorify God and add oil to our lamp, or what we have done to sin and deplete it. Just as in Christ’s parable of the ten virgins, we have the

responsibility of making sure our lamps are full of oil when Christ the Bridegroom comes. This monastic community serves as a true paradigm of the Lord’s admonition.

Christos Tsiaklides



READY SET GIVE STL

June, 25, 2022
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Visit readysetgivestl.org to sign up

WHERE

START AT ASSUMPTION GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
1755 Des Peres Road • Town & Country, MO 63131 • 314-966-2255

TIME

EVENT STARTS: 8:00 AM
EARLY REGISTRATION/PACKET PICK UP: 6:30 AM (CHURCH PARKING LOT)

PRIZES

FOR AGE BRACKETS WILL BE MADE

REGISTRATION FEES

T-SHIRT PROVIDED WITH REGISTRATION FEE
\$30 (18 and older) • \$20 (17 and younger)

We welcome corporate and small business sponsors to make a donation

Make checks payable to "Assumption Greek Orthodox Church (RSGSTL)"

MANAGED BY FLEET FEET



Ready, Set, Give, STL had a successful walk/run on June 25, 2022 with 90+ participants. The proceeds of the event will benefit FOCUS Gateway City. The great thing about Ready, Set, Give is that is a great event for families to do together. We wish to thank Maria Humphrey and Amy Kirkou and their committee members who worked together to make this event possible. Thank you also to our donors and all the participants. We also send a big thankyou to Fleet Feet who helped manage the race.



Orthodox Faith and Life



Presents
A pilgrimage opportunity
coming this fall

**Holy Archangel
Michael and All Angels Skete**
28650 105th Street
Weatherby, MO 64497



Holy Archangel Michael, located in Northwest Missouri, is a men's monastic community. In addition, the existing women's convent of St. Xenia Sisterhood is relocated on another part of this property. Visit <https://www.archangelmichaelskete.org/> for more information about the skete.

Details to follow. We are compiling a list of people who would to visit this monastery. Please call the church office if you would like to go.

SAVE THE DATE! **EVENING OF FELLOWSHIP**



What "fruits" do people see in our lives? When someone listens to our conversations, sees the way we treat others, observes how we respond to strangers or people who are different than ourselves, and looks at the way we live our lives, what do they see? Will they see clear evidence of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in us - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, humility, faithfulness, and self-control? Or will they see aspects of the deadly vices - pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, anger, and laziness? In today's Gospel reading, Jesus says, *"the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom."* As followers of Jesus Christ, He expects us to bear fruit, abundant fruit in our lives. When people see us, listen to our words, watch the way we interact with others, and observe how we live, be careful to share an abundance of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. *Fr. Luke Veronis*

ASSUMPTION CHURCH GREEK SCHOOL REGISTRATION FORM
2022/2023 SCHOOL YEAR

Student Information

Student's Name: _____

Student's Baptismal Name: _____

I am a: Returning Student New Student Adult Student [18 yr old+]
ADULT LEVEL: Beginning Advanced

Home Address: _____ Tel: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Adult Student Contact Email Address: _____

Adult Student Contact Cell#: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Current School Grade: _____

Has the student had any Greek lessons? Yes ___ No ___
 If yes, please indicate when and for how long: _____

Please describe student's ability to understand, speak, read and write Greek: _____

Please list any food allergies, learning restrictions, etc: _____

Parent/Guardian Information

Mother: Full Name: _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Father: Full Name: _____
 E-mail Address: _____
 Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____
 Name: _____ Phone: _____ Relationship: _____

REGISTRATION FEE STRUCTURE:
 [Book fees not included]
 \$150 for 1st Registration
 \$140 for 2nd Registration
 \$130 for 3rd Registration or more

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: Aug 15, 2022
After Aug 15: Additional \$25 fee per Registration

Please make check payable to: Assumption Church Greek School & attach registration for each student
 Mail to: Assumption Greek Orthodox Church | 1755 Des Peres Rd | Town & Country, MO 63131
 ATTN: Greek School

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:
 Registration Fee Paid: Amount _____ Cash/Check _____ Check Number: _____
 Payment Received By: _____ Date Received: _____



Join us in celebrating the
Feast Day
of our beloved
Assumption Church



Sunday, August 14

Great Vespers at 6:30 pm
with the annual Artoklasia
sponsored by the Assumption Philoptochos Ladies' Society
followed by a reception with refreshments
in the church hall

Monday, August 15,

Orthros at 9:00 am
Divine Liturgy at 10:00 am,
followed by a festal luncheon reception in the Church hall.
*We wish to thank Michail Samaras and Lazaros and Eleftheria Makridies
for donating the meal in memory of Mari Makridis.*



Sunday August 19

Panayia's Panegyri

8:30 am Orthros
10:00 am Divine Liturgy
Paniyiri immediately following

\$15 for adults
12 and under \$5

MISSIONS BENEFIT DINNER

Sunday, September 18, 2022

Holy Trinity Church and Hall
1910 Serbian Drive, St. Louis, MO

"When a Girl is Taught, Everyone Learns"

Guest speaker: Mother Johanna Oakes



Master of ceremonies: Dan Christopulos
OCMC Director of Development

5 pm Vespers, 6 pm Social with cash bar
6:30 pm Dinner, 7 pm Presentation & Prizes

Proceeds to help

St. Anthony Orthodox Girls Secondary School in Kenya

\$40 Adults / \$20 Students

To register or to donate to the school , go to:
<https://www.ocmc.org/MissionTeamStLouis>

Registration deadline for this event is September 8!

To get more information, contact us at
missionteamstl@gmail.com

314-994-9096

Event sponsored by Mission Team St. Louis

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August 2022

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church



| | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|
| | | 1 Dormition Fast Begins | 2 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:30 pm Great Paraklesis | 3 6:30 pm Small Paraklesis | 4 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:30 pm Great Paraklesis | 5 6:30 pm Great Vespers | 6 Transfiguration <i>Fish Allowed</i> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy and Blessing of Grapes 5:00 pm Great Vespers |
| 7 8:30 am Orthros 9:45 am Divine Liturgy 12:00 Philoptochos Meeting 6:30 pm Great Paraklesis | 8 6:30 pm Great Paraklesis | 9 <u>Apostle Matthias</u> 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:30 pm Great Paraklesis | 10 6:30 pm Small Paraklesis | 11 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy 6:30 pm Great Paraklesis | 12 6:30 pm Small Paraklesis | 13 5:00 pm Great Vespers | |
| 14 8:30 am Orthros 9:45 am Divine Liturgy 6:30 pm Great Vespers and Reception | 15 <u>Dormition of the Theotokos</u> 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy and Luncheon | 16 6:30 pm Vespers | 17 6:30 pm Vespers | 18 8:45 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy | 19 5:00 pm Great Vespers | 20 5:00 pm Great Vespers 6:00 pm Pot Luck and Discussion | |
| 21 8:30 am Orthros 9:45 am Divine Liturgy 12:00 pm Panegyri | 22 6:30 pm Vespers | 23 6:30 pm Vespers | 24 6:30 pm Vespers | 25 <u>Holy Apostles Bartholomew & Titus</u> 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy | 26 5:00 pm Great Vespers | 27 5:00 pm Great Vespers | |
| 28 8:30 am Orthros 9:45 am Divine Liturgy 6:30 pm Great Vespers | 29 <u>Beheading of St. John the Baptist</u> 9:00 am Orthros 10:00 am Divine Liturgy | 30 6:30 pm Vespers | 31 6:30 pm Great Vespers | Divine Liturgy Times are Approximate Fast Days are Shaded Feast Days are Boxed | | | |

Assumption Greek Orthodox Church
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**From the Orthodox Study Bible
Romans 13:11-14**

¹¹And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it* is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. ¹²The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill* its lusts.

13:12 The night is life in this world, and especially life under the influence of sin and evil. **The day** refers to the presence of Christ's Kingdom, both in the Church now **at hand** and fulfilled completely in the age to come

Reflection

Each one of the faithful can learn much--indeed, very much--from the life of the Virgin Theotokos. I would like to mention only two things. First, she frequently went to Golgotha, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, Bethlehem, and other places redolent [reminiscent] of her Son. She prayed on bended knees at all of these places--especially at Golgotha. Thus she gave the first example and impetus to the faithful of visiting holy places out of love toward Him Who by His presence, His passion and His glory made these places holy and significant. Second, we learn how she prayed for a quick departure from this life, so that, when separated from her body, her soul would not encounter the prince of darkness and his horrors, and hidden from the dark regions would not see the punishment of those darkened by sin. Do you see how terrible it is for the soul to pass through the toll-houses [mitarstva]? When she--who gave birth to the Destroyer of hades, and who herself has tremendous power over demons--prayed thus, what then is left for us? Out of extreme humility, she commended herself to God, and did not trust in her own deeds. So much less should we trust in our deeds, and even more we should commend ourselves into the hands of God, crying out for His mercy, especially at the time of the departure of the soul from the body.