

HERMITAGE

February 2016

The Newsletter of the Hermitage of the Holy Cross

A Message from Archimandrite Seraphim concerning Lenten Prayers for the Departed at Holy Cross Monastery



In the beginning, man walked with God and His angels in Paradise; but when he sinned, he died, and his soul descended into spiritual darkness and sorrow in hades. But God gave the promise of the Savior Christ through His holy law and prophets; and we, mystically experiencing the prophets' longing for Him, have been re-born in Christ by the mercy of His Nativity and over-filled with the light of the Holy Trinity on Holy Theophany.

After Christ's baptism, He went into the wilderness for forty days that He might overcome the temptations of the devil as a Man. Coming forth therefrom, He preached to all about repentance and the virtues thereof: fasting, almsgiving, prayer, self-control, forgiveness, non-possessiveness, humility, love, and the contemplation of God. Finally, offering Himself as a pure sacrifice for all, He was crucified and died, opening Paradise again and resurrecting in power and glory, He has saved us from hell, granting us unending life in His Kingdom.

Christ, the Physician, gathers us—many dead, useless members—uniting us unto His life-giving Body, that we might strive, in gratitude, to somehow “fill up,” as it were, “what is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in our flesh for His Body's sake, which is the Church” (Col. 1:24). The Saints are always found in

Christ-like virtue, and the Forty Days of Great Lent calls us into their holy life. By prayer and fasting we seek from God the gift of repentance, and we also offer our prayers for those who have departed this life, asking pardon for their sins also, deliverance from eternal torments, and entry into Paradise and the Kingdom of God.

The Saints are always marked by their heartfelt prayer for the departed. Great Lent offers us this opportunity: short “Litya” services and Matins services are served for the departed souls of all Orthodox Christians. Likewise, “Universal Pannykhidas” on the Saturday before Last Judgment Sunday (March 5 this year), and on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Saturdays of Great Lent are also served. The Akathist for a departed loved one says: “What shall we add to the great feat of Thy saving love? But as Simon the Cyrenian helped Thee, the All-powerful, to bear Thy Cross, so now it is pleasing to Thy goodness to accomplish the salvation of our close ones with our participation,” for after this life, no one can offer any more repentance, good deeds or prayers for themselves.

St. John of San Francisco says that the greatest help we can give to the souls of the departed is to have them prayerfully commemorated at Liturgies and Pannykhidas. The Church on earth gathers in the Holy Spirit for prayer together with the Most Pure Mother of God and all the Angels and Saints in heaven, who pray with us and offer our prayers unto the Father of all through His Son, Jesus Christ. When we commemorate the departed at the Divine Liturgy, particles of bread are offered for them, mystically uniting them to the Body and Blood of Christ; all Orthodox Christians, living and departed, are united to each other and all of heaven, being made one in the One God Who is Three Persons—a foretaste and the beginning of life eternal.

We invite you to please submit, for prayerful commemoration, the names of Orthodox Christians who have departed this life, along with an offering of alms as much as you are able. They will be commemorated at every

Liturgy, Pannykhida, Litya, and Matins for the Departed during Great and Holy Lent. Asking mercy for ourselves and for all who cannot ask anymore for themselves, may we find the great mercy of divine life this Pascha, and at the General Resurrection, may we all be raised unto life eternal, finding mercy at the Last Judgment. Amen.

Enclosed you will find a commemoration slip and a return envelope. Please write the names of reposed Orthodox Christians and send the slip back to us, together with whatever offering of alms you are able to make on behalf of your loved ones.*

Archimandrite Seraphim

* Please submit formal Orthodox Christian names only for the Pannykhida services.



The Hermitage of the Holy Cross is a Russian Orthodox Men's Monastery under the omophorion of His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York. The Abbot and Confessor of the monastery is Archimandrite Seraphim.

Mailing Address:

**505 Holy Cross Road
Wayne, WV 25570**

Administrative Offices:

304.849.2072

Business Office / Gift Shop:

304.849.4726

www.holycross-hermitage.com

Hieromonk Kallistos' Reburial

The remains of the founder of the Hermitage of the Holy Cross, Hieromonk Kallistos, were left behind in House Springs, Missouri when the monastery moved to West Virginia in 2000. Now, to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the founding of Holy Cross, we plan to have the precious remains of our beloved founder reinterred in the new monastic cemetery at the Hermitage.

The picture to the right is an artistic rendering of the monument which we have commissioned for our founder. The monument will be in the center of the new monastic cemetery, which is located adjacent to the outdoor chapel.

The Hermitage extends special thanks to all who gave generously toward a project to move the remains of our founder from Missouri and erect a monument for him in the new monastic cemetery. With God's help the goal has been reached, and the transfer is planned for a time in February to be determined. There will be a blessing of the new monument later in the spring, the date of which will be announced as soon as it has been decided.

For those who wish to make a pilgrimage to the monastery in honor of this occasion, please plan to attend the blessing of the monument in the spring rather than the transfer of the remains in February.



Send Us Your St. Panteleimon Miracle Stories



Since the founding of our monastic community in 1986, the Holy Great Martyr and Healer Panteleimon has looked after our monastery, as well as all pilgrims and benefactors of the monastery, as our own heavenly patron and protector. To honor him, we plan to compile firsthand accounts of how St. Panteleimon has interceded in the lives of all those who have called upon his aid. Some of these accounts we wish to publish in our upcoming 30th anniversary commemorative book. We ask that you please send in your account of how St. Panteleimon has interceded in your life. You may mail your stories in, or visit our website on which you will find a special online form specifically for this purpose. In sending your story, please include your name, your contact information, and if you will permit your story to be printed. Thank you, and God bless you!

