



Hellenic Orthodox Traditionalist Church of America

ΙΕΡΑ ΜΟΝΗ ΑΝΑΛΗΨΕΩΣ
ΤΟΥ
ΑΕΣΠΟΤΟΥ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ

HOLY MONASTERY OF
THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

October 25th / November 7th 2015

Dear children in the Lord,

It is my great pleasure to announce to all the faithful some wonderful news in the life of our Church. As you know, three years ago 14 monks, including myself, fled from heresy in Boston and moved to Holy Ascension Monastery in Bearsville, NY. This move gave us the opportunity to live the monastic life in a place already sanctified to God. But Holy Ascension Monastery was designed for a much smaller brotherhood; and we have struggled, with little success, to adapt the existing facilities to a much larger group of monastics. After much prayer on our part about the best way to proceed, God finally opened to us a way and showed us a large property in Cobleskill, NY, which we have just purchased. This 33-acre property has 24 bedrooms, a large court well adapted for use as a church, and other spacious accommodations which will allow our brotherhood to function in a proper monastic setting. The new monastery is set in a beautiful and strategic location, bordering thousands of acres of state forest. It is near to a hospital, an airport and other useful infrastructure, and is only ten minutes away from Mountain View, the spiritual center of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad with which we are in communion.

The divine hand of providence has been guiding every step of the way in this transition. Having negotiated an excellent price, we drew lots for the name of the new monastery, which resulted in St. John Maximovitch of San Francisco. To have this saint – probably the greatest of the saints who have lived in America – as our patron and heavenly protector is a special blessing. He was a friend of the GOC in America from the beginning, having visited St. Markella’s Cathedral many times and been a strong supporter of my predecessor, Bishop Petros of blessed memory. It can be no coincidence that the day of the closing on the property happened to fall on the commemoration of the transfer of his relics! Moreover, within a day of our agreeing to the purchase, St. John blessed us by allowing us to collect the entire sum needed for the down payment.

Although the brotherhood is moving to the new monastery of St. John, Holy Ascension Monastery remains an important and historic spiritual center for the Metropolis. Unfortunately, the project to build a church based on Hagia Sophia came to a standstill as the result of structural problems; but with the agreement of the primary benefactors the funds that were raised in donations for the church and the surrounding cells will be used for the brotherhood’s new accommodations. Meanwhile, it is our earnest desire, if it be in accordance with God’s will, to allow Holy Ascension Monastery to become a convent for nuns, so that women in this part of the country will also have a spiritual refuge and home.

We are currently in the process of fixing the new property and making the alterations necessary for it to function as a large, coenobitic monastery. Several of the fathers from Holy Ascension have moved there to work on the conversion of the church and other rooms; while the rest of the brotherhood is planning to move in the middle of December. We ask the prayers of all the faithful that these exciting and momentous events continue with success; that God bless every aspect of our endeavor to serve Him with love and devotion in the spirit of true Orthodox monasticism; and that through the intercessions of St. John, the brotherhood flourish in its new and more adequate setting.

We invoke the blessings of our Savior Jesus Christ upon you all.

Your fervent intercessor before the Lord,

† Demetrius of America

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