



# The Eagle

SEPT., 1998

No 1

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FRIENDS OF ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY

c/o ST. PAISIUS ABBEY, P.O. BOX 130  
FORESTVILLE, CALIFORNIA 95436

*May God bless the beginning of a serious "house of industry and learning" for young people who are finding the living, Orthodox Christ. The world with its allurements that entangle one's free will and prevent us from serving the Lord, has now almost conquered all aspects of the arts and sciences. Life is given by God to bring forth fruit in His vineyard. We have a job to do: to till the earth, to sow the seed, to water it with sweat and tears, and then to labor harvesting the fruit, offering it to God. This must be born in each individual heart as a reminder of the ideal for which we labor. May this monthly "Eagle" fly into the hearts of all those who care for Christ's reflection in young souls.*

*—Abbot Herman*

## The Lord Calls a Soul

FROM THE HARBOR INTO WHICH ORTHODOXY  
LANDED IN AMERICA

Dear Fr. Herman,

Bless! The following letter is a report about our adventures yesterday in interviewing our first official student for St. Innocent's Academy.

Just a month ago I received a call from the local public school district, head of the villages, Lydia Abbott. She asked if we would consider accepting a 14-year-old boy from one of the villages into our

After about a half an hour we came upon the village of Old Harbor, our remote destination. It was at this village over 200 years ago (1784), up in Three Saints Bay, that the first Russian settlers landed in Alaska on the faithful ship “The Three Hierarchs.”

When we landed on the gravel airstrip our pilot told us that we only had an hour and then we would have to leave. This concerned us since we might be embarking on a long wild goose chase in search of the boy’s home. Then just as he got out of the airplane, a truck pulled up. We asked them if they knew where this young man lived and if they could take us to him. The driver then told us to hop in the back of the truck.

We then proceeded to barrel down the dusty village roads in this old rusty, unregistered, unlicensed truck. In just moments we came to a small house with two dogs and children playing. Then we entered the house and met the foster mother of the boy and the boy himself. As we talked about the school and its life of education combined with theology, craftsmanship, boatbuilding, and a subsistence life of fishing, the young man tried to retain his shyness but we could see that inside he was jumping with excitement.

While we were talking, an elderly native woman showed up at the front door. To our surprise, it was our dear friend Emily who comes into Monks’ Rock whenever she visits Kodiak. She came into the room and said, “You have to come and see the village church.” Knowing that the pilot was waiting for us we ended up the meeting and we all climbed into the foster parents’ old truck with Emily and once again barrelled down the dusty roads of the small village. They took us on a quick, guided tour of the town which ended at the 100-year-old Orthodox Church of the Three Hierarchs—St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian, and St. John Chrysostom. We then entered the church and approached the main analogion, which displayed a beautiful hand-painted icon of the Three Hierarchs that had little relics of the Saints.

There before the icon we prayed to the Three Hierarchs that they would bless our new project, the building of a replica of the sailing ship that bears their name. Then at that point it dawned on us that this boy, our very first student, is a descendent of the natives that were here when the ship, “The Three Hierarchs” landed so long ago. After contemplating the Providence of God we then reverently walked out of the church with our hearts filled with inspiration.

school. She explained how this boy was suicidal and getting into trouble in his village. She mentioned how he was living with foster parents because his parents were always drunk and were no longer taking responsibility for the raising of their son. In all, the boy was lost in life without any direction.

We ended the conversation by telling her that we were interested in him and would like to meet him. The conversation then ended since we didn't have any way to get out to the remote village where he lives.

Then just a few weeks ago the father of the girl that attempted suicide by jumping off of the bridge several months ago came into Monk's Rock [our bookstore/coffeehouse in Kodiak which was opened to help the native youth] to thank us for counseling her after she got out of the hospital. He mentioned to us that he has an airplane and told us that if ever we need to go anywhere he would be glad to take us.

Later on with the thought of asking the pilot to fly us out to the boy's village we called him and asked him if he would be interested in going on a mission. Could he fly us to the village where the troubled boy lives? With excitement he said that the airplane would be leaving the first thing in the morning.

That next morning when Father Paisius got off of work after the graveyard shift, we set out for the airport. When we arrived, the pilot realized that he had lost the key to his airplane hanger. As the pilot was fiddling with the door we began losing hope of going. Then all of a sudden the door cracked open enough for the pilot to squeeze through.

When the door fully opened we beheld before us the sight of a beautiful little purple airplane that had a painting of an Indian on its tail. The sight was marvelous. The pilot then took all of the necessary precautions. He made sure the wings were still attached to the plane, made sure the steering wheel still worked, and checked to see if there was any gas in the fuel tanks. When she passed the test we all pulled the light plane out of the safety of its hanger and climbed in.

It was a beautiful day to fly. As we left the view of the small town of Kodiak and proceeded off into the uninhabited wilderness of the Island we realized that we were venturing into wild regions of Alaska's bush. We flew through the craggy snowcapped mountains over glacier blue lakes and under the infinitely beautiful heavens.

We then quickly made our way back to the gravel airstrip hoping that we weren't too late. As we were driving, Emily asked us if we could stop by her house so that she could give us some freshly caught fish. After picking up the fish we boarded the little plane and took off for Kodiak. We had to return in order to prepare a dinner that we were putting on for all of the people that have been a support to us in the beginning of the Academy.

That night, which was originally going to be a dinner for our close supporters and friends, turned out to be an interesting event. By the end of the night we had two retired judges, a boat builder, an English professor, and a movie producer. We all ate the best Italian dinner that was ever made, had *chai* out of two Russian samovars, and one of the judges (Roy Madsen) ended the meal by singing "Many Years" to the Academy in English, Russian and Aleut.

Thus ended another day in the formative time of St. Innocent's Academy.

All is going well thanks to your prayers to our merciful Lord.

Sincerely,  
Father John  
August 7, 1998



*As of today, September 1/14, 1998, this young man is now enrolling in the Academy. Another boy is given a chance in life.*