



The Eagle

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No 2



FRIENDS OF ST. INNOCENT'S ACADEMY

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

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint ... Then shall I in the Lord find power, and with the eagle's features rare, there rise, above this earthly boundary. And soar without becoming weary.

—Isaiah 40, 31

From The Arctic Front of Alaska

A TRIP TO OLD HARBOR

Dear Fr. Herman,

Bless! All is going well on the Arctic front of Alaska. The school is progressing very well with the necessary challenges and temptations. Our boys are really wonderful. They are very needy and yet, they are a great support as well.

We are now finishing up the chapel. The iconostas will be finished next week, Lord willing, in time for the Feast of St. Innocent (October 6) where we hope to have our first official service as a school dedicated to St. Innocent. The painting of the chapel will be finished today.

Right now we are also building our first metal boat. One of our boys who is here for substance abuse is our shop teacher's first student

in welding. This is working well. A sail boat is also being built in our shop by someone local.

Along with finishing the chapel and building boats, we have adventures every day. Lately, we have spent alot of time out on the ocean fishing and exploring, an excellent opportunity to teach lessons in marine biology.

One of our more recent adventures was an airplane trip to Old Harbor. The following is why we went there and what happened there. A well known Alaskan artist found out about the building of the "Three Hierarchs" and offered to paint a portrait of it for us for free as a promotional. He said he would come to Kodiak to get all the plans for the ship, but wanted one thing in return—for us to get him out to Three Saints Bay—the place where the "Three Hierarchs" first landed, and where the very first Russian settlement was begun. We agreed to his proposal.

The day he arrived here four of us quickly went to a little Cesna airplane at the airport. Our expedition consisted of a famous artist, our shipwright (the future builder of the "Three Hierarchs"), one of our "modern" young men, and a monk—a pretty diverse crew.

When we landed in the village of Old Harbor, we quickly made our way down to the docks and comissioned a skiff skipper to take us out to Three Saints Bay. Before we knew it, we were there—in that majestic place where it all began. The mile-long bay was surrounded in tall, jagged cliffs topped with a thick fog. "This is why we needed to come here—to breathe the air and absorb this historical location," said the artist. "In order to paint an ocean scene with a ship you need to go to the location and taste the salty air, and see the deep green ocean," he continued. We then killed the engine of the boat and rocked in the stillness. I then began to sing "O Heavenly King," for it seemed all too appropriate to pray there where the ship once moored over 200 years ago. At that moment we all prayed for the big project ahead of us—the building of the ship. Our skipper, a native of the village, reverently stood there with his head down as he crossed himself.

Afterwards, I turned to our young student, who was a troubled boy just a month ago, and said, "This is how history should be taught." He then looked at me, and with deep conviction agreed.



*Fr. Gerasim with a child parishioner
in the 1950's.*

When we returned to the airport, it started raining and fogged over. We all had a hunch that the plane wouldn't be able to make it, due to zero-zero visibility. Nevertheless, we decided to wait. Now, the airport at Old Harbor has no indoor waiting rooms; it's just a gravel airstrip with a snow plow. So, the idea came to us to wait out of the rain by sitting under the snow plow. There we all sat in the pouring rain in Old Harbor National Airport and entered into a wonderful conversation that was providentially directed towards our new student.

Seeing that the plane wasn't coming, we made our way to the house of a friend of ours to see if we could stay the night there. She was gone but the next door neighbor had a key to her house and let us in.

After we all dried off, we entered into an unforgettable night of soul profiting conversation over a simple halibut dinner. All the while our young student listened attentively and absorbed the whole experience. The artist was an old man who lived in Point Hope with Eskimos, and had stories that were amazing; the shipwright had his stories of being out on the seas between Central America and the Aleutian Islands; and the conversation always ended with what it means to be a God-fearing man in our challenging times.

That night ended with prayers and the giving of thanks to God for this unique school that brings a student from academics to experience—from boyhood to manhood in the Lord.

Well, enough of this story. I am writing you to tell you also about the heirlooms that were given to us. We were given many original photographs of Father Gerasim: a lampada he brought from Russia, a cross and a beautiful diarama made by him—truly treasures that we will

preserve for the edification of generations to come. I will send you copies of the photographs soon.

And now, by the grace of God, the Academy continues day by day to grow into how it was originally envisioned just over a year ago. The academic day with all the required studies is in full swing (homeschooling with volunteer tutors). Although our doors aren't even open as an accredited school, we still have a good crew of young men that have enrolled—seven all told—all from different parts of America. Our volunteer support staff and instructors at this point exceeds the number of students; with a math teacher, English and composition instructors, a theological instructor, a music instructor and both metal and woodshop instructors and stand-by tutors.

Thank you very much for your prayers and support. We all hope to see you. Through the grace of God and through the prayers of all the Saints of America, bless me,

Fr. John
Sept. 17/30, 1998
Sts. Sophia, Faith, Hope
& Love



Greetings on the memory day of our beloved Fr. Gerasim!

On this day we received in the mail a little blessing. We were sent from an elderly native woman living in Portland a little lampada that Fr. Gerasim brought from Russia with him to America. It is now on display in our museum exhibit at Monks' Rock.

Fr. John
Sept. 30/Oct. 13, 1998
Repose of Archimandrite
Gerasim Schmaltz