

# Magnificat

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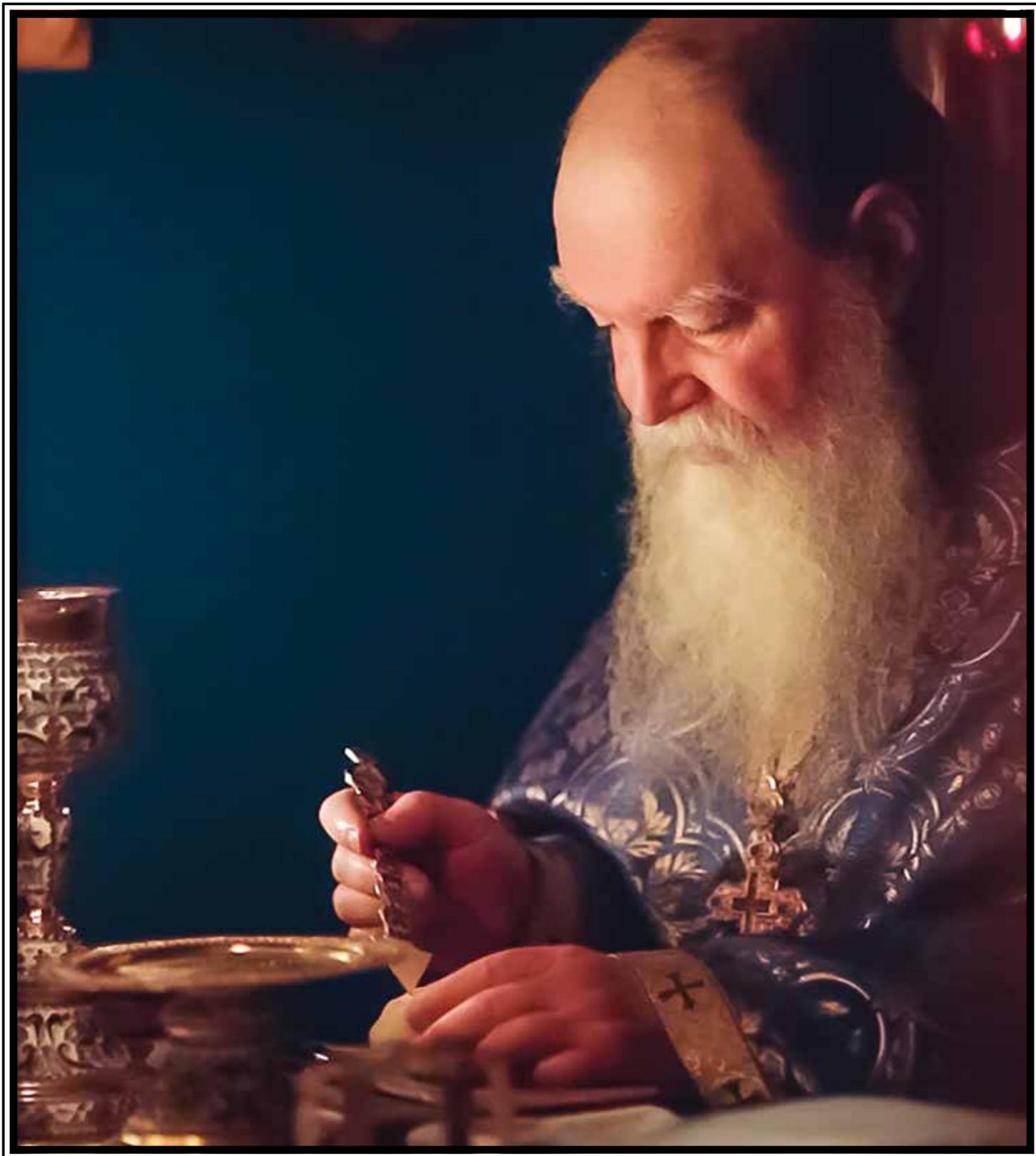
News from  
HOLY PROTECTION MONASTERY  
Courtesy of Poorrock Abbey Publishing  
Society of Saint John  
6559 State Highway M26  
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<https://www.societystjohn.com>

Pentecost  
2022

O You who have authority as God  
over both the living and the dead,  
give rest to Your servant  
the Hieromonk Basil,  
in the dwelling place of the elect,  
for though he has sinned, O Savior,  
yet he did not turn away from You.

Hymn of Light for the Faithful Departed

We are a Catholic Monastery of the Byzantine Rite, under the jurisdiction of the Eparchy of Chicago, and belonging to the Ukrainian Metropolity in the United States of America, which is in union with the Pope of Rome, supreme pastor of the universal Church. We embrace Evangelical poverty, chastity, obedience, and stability of life, according to the Rule of Saint Benedict and the traditions of the Christian East. In our community at Jacob's Falls, on the shore of Lake Superior in Michigan's Keweenaw Peninsula, we devote ourselves to a common life of prayer and work for the praise, love, and service of God and for the upbuilding of His Kingdom through the arts.



Hieromonk Basil Paris

April 19, 1947 - November 30, 2021

Hegumen of Holy Transfiguration Skete | Holy Protection Monastery

2017 - 2021

# Eternal Memory

After surviving a massive increase in tourists to our area beginning in July of 2020 and continuing on in 2021 from May until we closed the Jampot on October 16, Covid finally arrived at our monastery in early November. One by one, monks and employees became sick. The Jampot kitchen was shut down on November 12, and we did very little during that time. Most of us recovered fairly quickly, but our Hegumen, Fr. Basil continued to decline. After four days of showing little to no improvement, we took him to the hospital on Friday, November 26. Upon arrival in the ER, his oxygen saturation was only 78 percent. He was placed on supplemental oxygen, but unfortunately, that was all the hospital was able to do.

A local Roman Catholic priest came by on Saturday, November 27 to hear what turned out to be his last confession and to anoint him. Another priest came by the next day and he was able to receive Holy Communion for the last time. All seemed well on that Sunday afternoon when we left the hospital. However, continued weakness and a lack of proper nutrition were taking their toll. After a consultation with his primary care physician, Fr. Basil felt the Lord calling him home. Being of sound mind, he asked not to be put on a ventilator. One of the monks was able to stay in the room with him on Monday night for a bedside vigil. It was finally determined around 1:00 in the morning that nothing further could be done. The rest of the community was summoned and quickly returned to the hospital. He passed on to eternity on the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, November 30, 2021 at 4:13 am, surrounded by his beloved monks and a longtime friend of the monastery.

Despite the loss and our grief, we feel this has been a time of great grace for our monastery. God has taken our beloved Hegumen Basil from this earthly life, but we continue to put our trust in the Lord and in His mercy. The Lord is at work and we carry on our monastic pilgrimage with renewed resolve. The foundation which has been laid by the founders of this holy monastery is strong and we are filled with joy and hope for the future. We are grateful for your loving providence in assisting the Lord's work of building this holy monastery. Rest assured, we will continue to pray for you and all of your intentions.

Now is life's evil triumph  
of vanities destroyed.  
For the soul has vanished  
from its dwelling place,  
the clay is ashen,  
the vessel is shattered,  
it is voiceless, has no feeling,  
is dead and motionless.  
Committing him to the grave,  
let us pray to the Lord  
that He will give him rest unto the ages.

From Interment Service  
Hymns of Farewell

Fr. Basil was born Peter Joseph Paris on April 19, 1947 to Joseph and Eileen (Yelle) Paris and spent his early years in Gwinn, Michigan. He attended Gwinn Public schools where he graduated with distinction in 1965. He left the UP at 18 to attend the University of Michigan and then worked in various professions in urban areas. He settled in Detroit where he became involved in banking and then the food industry through restaurant management. This path would lead him to his calling.

He was drawn to the religious life at an early age. As a small child he pretended to say mass with his sister and cousins assisting. As he grew older, he developed a love of medieval church manuscripts and would create his own illuminated manuscripts. In his young adult years, when not working with his father in the woods, he spent his time hiking and was in awe of the majesty of God's creation. Even though he enjoyed urban life he was always called back to the woods and had a love for the beauty of Lake Superior.



Prior to founding the monastery, Fr. Basil began working with Fr. Nicholas in the arts in Detroit in the early 1980's. They began praying together and began to discern a calling to found a monastery dedicated to the up building of God's kingdom through the arts. In 1983 he answered God's call when he and Fr. Nicholas Glenn purchased land on the shores of Lake Superior in Keweenaw County and cofounded the Society of St. John, which remains the monastery's corporate identity.

In 1995 the monks joined the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and became known as Holy Transfiguration Skete. In 2020, the monastery was granted full independence and is now known as Holy Protection Monastery.

Upon the death of Fr. Nicholas in 2017, Fr. Basil was elected Hegumen (superior) and guided the monastery until his passing. He always made major decisions in collaboration with his monks. He was known to many outside the monastery as the kindly, gray-bearded monk with a twinkle in his eyes that worked the sales

counter at the Jampot during the summer & fall tourism season.

We have produced a memorial film in honor of Fr. Basil and his life of service in the Lord's vineyard. You can access it from our website:

[www.societystjohn.com](http://www.societystjohn.com)



# Dust and Ashes

After Fr. Basil's passing, we began preparations for his funeral. Our bishop, His Grace Benedict Aleksiychuk let us know that he would travel from Chicago to celebrate the funeral services. Once our bishop was able to confirm a date for the funeral and arrange a flight to the Keweenaw, we published Fr. Basil's obituary in the local newspaper, *The Mining Gazette*, and Fr. Basil's sister arranged to have it published in Marquette's *Mining Journal*. We put notice on our website as well, including a note to stay tuned for possible schedule changes, and then prayed for favorable weather.

Travel to the Keweenaw can be challenging in the wintertime and sometimes flights into the local Houghton County airport can be cancelled for days at a time due to snow storms causing poor visibility. We were praying that the funeral could take place as scheduled. Burials in December in our area are quite rare but are possible. We did not publicize the proposed burial on the day following the funeral as we were not certain that it would be able to take place, and even if it turned out to be possible, a funeral procession



O earth, open wide  
and receive the body formed from  
you by the hand of God,  
returning now to you as to its mother.  
What has been made in His image,  
the Creator has already reclaimed:  
now O earth,  
receive what belongs to you.

Tropar  
Burial Service - Graveside

December 14th with about fifty people in attendance including Fr. Basil's sister Antoinette Greider (KY) and brother Jim Paris and JiPing (NC); Archimandrite Nicholas and Hierodeacon Moses of Holy Resurrection (Romanian Greek-Catholic Monastery) from St. Nazianz, WI; Fr. Richard Janowicz from Nativity of the Mother of God Ukrainian Catholic Church in Springfield, Oregon; Fr. Gracious Pulimoottil, MCBS from Calumet; Fr. Thomas Merkel from Houghton; Fr. Benjamin Naasko of the local Russian Orthodox parish, as well as many other long time friends, some having traveled from as far as Virginia and Toronto.

with numerous cars would not have been possible given the weather conditions.

Despite having over 325 inches of snow last winter, there was a providential window in mid-December with above freezing temperatures and very little snow in the cemetery.

We coordinated with two old friends of the monastery who were able to plow a path to the cemetery and to dig the grave for Fr. Basil.

We celebrated Fr. Basil's funeral on



*Left: Hegumen Ambrose and Schemamonk Sergius assist in transporting the casket from the Temple to the cemetery whilst the Trisagion (Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us) is solemnly sung.*

*After the casket is lowered into the grave the Celebrant sprinkles some dirt on top saying:*

*To the Lord belong the earth  
and all it holds, the world  
and all who live in it.*

*Right: Fr. Basil's brother, Jim,  
sprinkles some earth into the grave.*



*Left: Monks at the cemetery chanting the final Eternal Memory before the grave is completely filled with dirt and sealed.*

# An Election

On the fifteenth day of December in the year of our Lord 2021, having celebrated the Divine Liturgy together with our Eparch, the Most Reverend Benedict (Aleksiychuk), the monks gathered in sobor for the election of a hegumen to fill the vacancy resulting from the death, on November 30th of the same year, of our current Hegumen and co-Founder, the Hieromonk Basil.

The election of a new superior is a solemn occasion, typically accompanied with fasting and with prayers to the Holy Spirit for guidance.

After a brief exhortation by Bishop Benedict, and an explanation of procedure by the Econome, the Hierodeacon Ambrose, two tellers were appointed, Hierodeacon Ambrose and Schemamonk John; the three electors then proceeded,

in turn and by rank, to fill out secret ballots and deposit them in a bowl placed in the midst of the Temple.

Scrutiny of the ballots by the tellers, with confirmation by the Eparch, revealed two votes cast for Hierodeacon Ambrose and one vote for Schemamonk Sergius. At Vespers that same evening, to acclamations of Axios from the assembled monks, Bishop Benedict installed the new Hegumen Ambrose in his seat and presented him with a staff and with a pectoral cross as symbol of his lifelong office. Praise God for the many blessings He continues to bestow upon us!

May God grant Hegumen Ambrose many years.

M'nohaya Lita!



# A Lovely Dwelling Place



The mural of the Dormition being safely transported and installed, we were able on the next day, Saturday March 12, to have the image blessed by a local Roman Catholic priest after the celebration of Mass in our monastic temple.

We are greatly pleased to be able to continue adorning our temple with sacred works of art.

Many years in the making, the mural of the Dormition by our local artist in residence was completed in November of 2021, and we were finally able to install it on March 11, 2022.

The conditions this past winter, however, were less than ideal. Much snow had to be removed in order to unearth our cargo trailer which was needed to transport the image from the studio near the Jampot to the monastery. The trailer was then brought into the warehouse. A heater was placed inside overnight, and the mural was transported to the Church the next day.

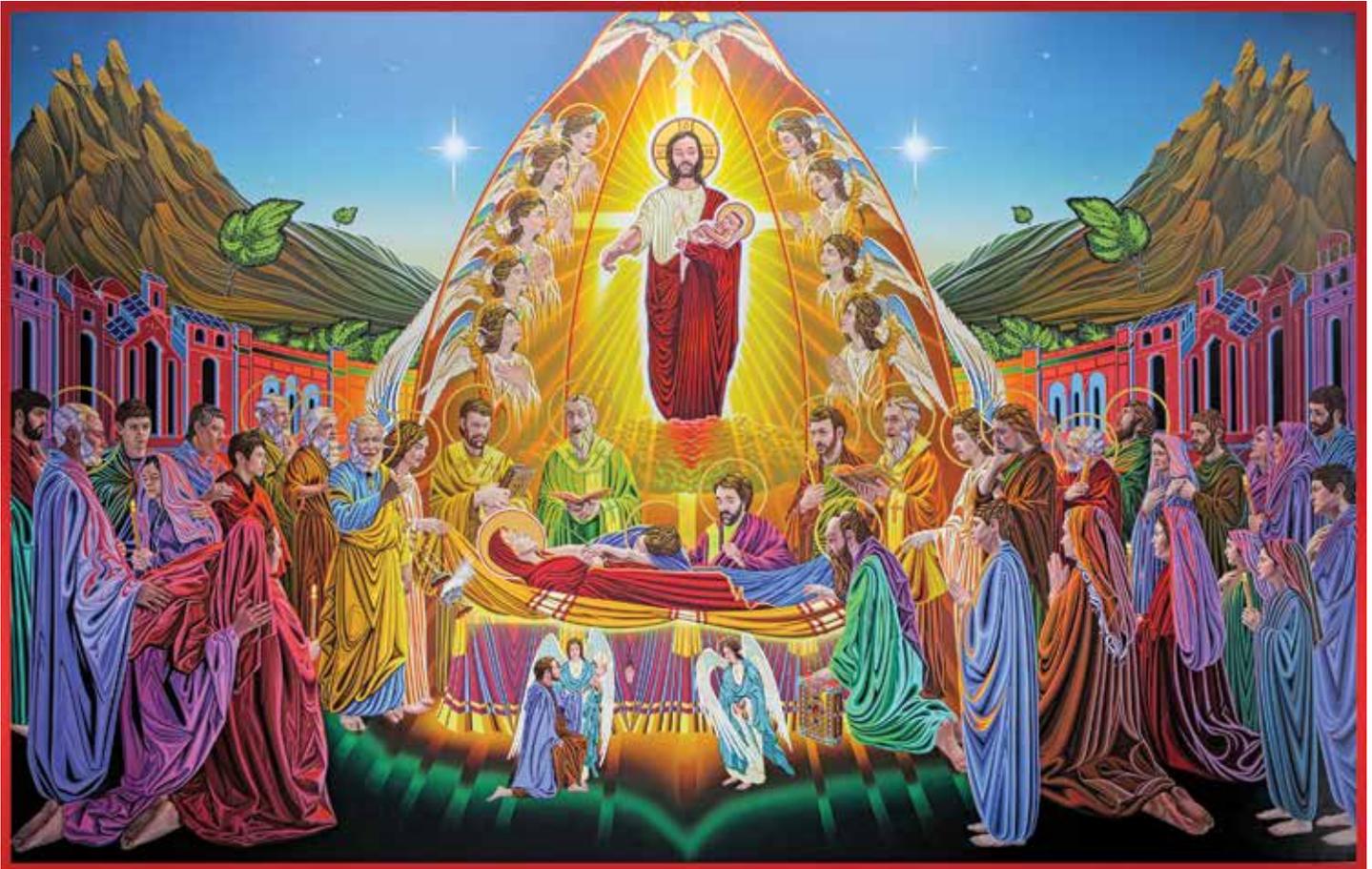
We employed the help of our main contractor to assist us in the transportation and hanging of the mural.

At the same time, we were also able to remove the mural of the Archangels and of Our Lady of the Sign for cleaning and varnishing.

There is still much to do! As God wills, more murals will be completed and installed, as well as a glass chandelier in the center of the nave, and hand written icons for the Iconostasis.

The next projected mural will be of Christ administering communion to the apostles. The images will be hung in the Altar (Sanctuary) of the Temple.





The new mural depicts the dormition (falling asleep) and the assumption of the Blessed Mother into heaven. The mortal remains of Mary are on the bier surrounded by the apostles and other prominent figures of the infant Church. Christ is in the center of the image holding the soul of the Theotokos in the form of an infant child.

According to Holy Tradition, three women, Sts. Sefhoria, Abigal and Jael were taking care of Mary during her last days on earth in Jerusalem.

The archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her to prepare for her upcoming death in three days time. He then gave her a palm branch which the beloved disciple St. John the Theologian carried in the funeral procession.

The remaining apostles, who were preaching throughout the world, were miraculously transported to Jerusalem to pay their homage to the woman who gave birth to the Savior of the world. The funeral procession gained so much attention that some of the unbelievers attempted

to defile her body. As soon as one of the men stretched out his hands to overturn the bier, an angel appeared and cut off his hands. He instantly converted and was healed. He then joyfully continued in the procession and was martyred very soon afterwards.

All of the Apostle were present for the death and burial except one. The Apostle Thomas did not make it in time. He was very distraught that he was unable to pay his last respects to the most Holy One who had given birth to the Savior of the world and had now departed from this world. The tomb was opened for him and it was discovered that the body of Mary was gone.

Miraculous was the life of the All-Pure Virgin, and wondrous was Her Repose, as the Holy Church sings: "The Divine King of all bestowed upon you gifts that are beyond nature. Just as He preserved your virginity in childbirth, He saved your body from suffering corruption in the tomb." (Canon 1, Ode 6, Troparion 1).

# At the Jampot



Jampot closed for the door sale season on October 16, 2021. There was an abundance of visitors to our area, and a visit to the Jampot was high on everyone's list. As with the summer of 2020, a lack of personnel along with the high demand kept us extremely busy. We ended the season with the supply of jams and fruitcakes almost completely decimated. After having taken a five day's silent retreat, we began working to rebuild inventory for the Christmas mail order season the week of October 25th. However, we were only able to get about 2.5 weeks of production in before we had to cease because of positive Covid tests, illness, and quarantine.

Although Fr. Basil was the only member of our community not to survive the illness, two of our other three monks had relatively severe cases and were not well enough to work until the week of December 6th. The majority of our small crew of employees were also quarantining at home

with Covid at that time – with one not able to return until the week of December 20th.

Our Autumn 2021 Magnificat, which for many is a reminder to place their Christmas orders, was significantly delayed at the printer because of supply chain issues and the national labor shortage. Many people on our mailing list had yet to receive their copy by Thanksgiving. Fr. Basil passed away on November 30, just a few days after Thanksgiving, and we had already missed nearly three weeks of critical production. At that point we had received a small percentage of our normal Christmas orders, but they were steadily

increasing. Funeral arrangements and all of the details surrounding the death of a beloved member of the monastery demanded much of our focus and attention. We knew we had to make the hard decision to shut down online sales on the Jampot website.



*Jampot circa Winter 1990*

On December 2nd, we put a notice up on our website that we would strive to fill the orders that had already come in as soon as we could, but that we would not be accepting any more orders for Christmas gifts. We shipped out what we could the week of December 6th and what free time we had the following week.

Our bishop was scheduled to be at the monastery from December 13th until December 17th for the funeral, burial, and Hegumenal election. We knew that with these major events there would be no time for any production that week.

We finally re-opened the website December 21st with a notice that any orders placed would be received after the first day of Christmas. We thank all of our patrons and friends for their kind words, support, and understanding during that challenging time for our monastic community.

While there were not too many major storms, this past winter was bitterly cold with a great abundance of snowfall - over 325 inches, so far! In late March and early April, we were blessed with a fair amount of wet, heavy snow, which proved almost impossible to clear. Huge piles of white nastiness remained for the remainder of April and into May.

We resumed production shortly after Easter. In order to open for the season, we had to clear snow from the front entrance for the first time in history. We were able to open the shop in time for Michigan Tech's graduation on April 29th. The current plan is to be open for door sales with limited hours in May and June. We will then open full time starting in July. Here is the proposed schedule:

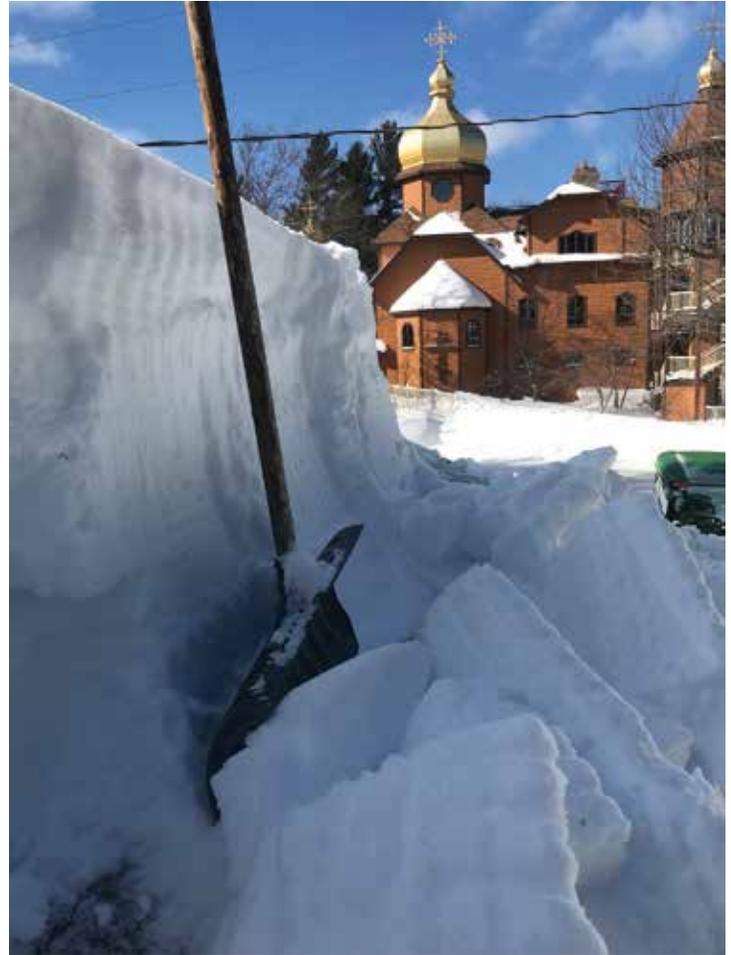
**Sunday:** Closed in Christian observance.

**Monday:** Closed

May | June

**Fri, Sat:** 10am - 5pm

**Tues, Wed, Thurs:** by appointment



*Monks shoveling garage roof across from Monastery,  
February 25, 2022*

July - Oct 15:

Tentative Schedule

**Tues - Sat:** 10am - 5pm

The schedule may need to change or be updated depending on how the season progresses. Any changes will be posted on the official monastery websites:

[www.poorrockabbey.com](http://www.poorrockabbey.com)

[www.societystjohn.com](http://www.societystjohn.com)

Because of limited time, product, and personnel, online sales will be suspended from July through October. We will reopen the website for the Christmas mail order season beginning on November 1. We appreciate your patronage and understanding.

HOLY PROTECTION MONASTERY  
Society of St. John  
6559 State Highway M26  
Eagle Harbor, Michigan 49950

Non-Profit  
Bulk Rate  
Permit No. 36  
Calumet, MI  
49913

# Going Forward

With the passing of the remaining founding member of our community, this holy monastery has come to a new stage in its journey. Despite being past seventy years of age, Fr. Basil was an extremely hard worker. In addition to his five hours a day of nonstop work selling our wares at the Jampot, he was also the sole Priest, sacristan, main cook and the writer of this publication. He was the spokesman and face of the community both at the shop and for our monastery. His presence has been greatly missed and will be for some time.

We started 2021 with six members in the community. Now, we number three. Life, however, continues to move forward. Regardless of our small number and the lack of a priestmonk at this time, the foundation which has been laid by our founders is strong, and we are confident the Lord will provide what is needed at the proper time.

Father Nicholas and Father Basil started this monastery almost forty years ago now with limited resources but with a strong faith and a deep trust and love for God. The monastery has grown and flourished under their tutelage and leadership. The monks who remain are grate-

ful for their life of commitment and witness in a time where both of these virtues seem to be lacking in our world.

As with any loss and time of transition, some change is inevitable. We pray for the Lord's direction knowing He is the one building this monastery. We are but His unworthy instruments.

We continue to pray for peace in the world, particularly for the war in Ukraine and for other countries where persecution and unrest are prevalent.

We beg you to remember us also in your prayers: for an increase in faithful young men seeking to flee this vain world and to dedicate their lives and talent to God; for the continuing education of the monks and eventual ordination to major orders; and that we may find a better balance between the busyness of the Jampot and our Liturgical life.

May our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, also look after all of our friends, patrons and benefactors. May He answer your prayers and supply all that is lacking in your life according to His will.