

# Magnificat

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News from  
HOLY PROTECTION MONASTERY  
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Society of Saint John  
6559 State Highway M26  
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Autumn  
2020

## Holy Protection Monastery

We were blessed during the busy days of mid-July with a visit from our Bishop, the Most Reverend Benedict Aleksiychuk. His Grace had visited us for a week at about the same time last year and had made use of his solitude while we were busy at the Jampot to relax and to accomplish some writing for which Chancery pressures had not allowed time. When this year, just after the lifting of the major COVID restrictions, he had requested two weeks, we assumed the visit would be of a similar nature, a chance to get away from the Chancery after the long lockdown. As it turned out, much more was afoot.

The Bishop had brought with him an emended copy of the proposed Monastic Typicon we has submitted to him for comment some two years previous. The Typicon is a monastery's foundational document. It outlines the monastic community's internal structure, its offices and procedures, and, in general, details

how the community lives out the monastic tradition in accord with Canon Law. Its acceptance by ecclesiastical authority grants approval to the manner of life outlined and binds the community to continuance in that life. It is the monastery's particular law, and, with its approval, the monastery is recognized as *sui juris*, self-governing.

Today,  
the Virgin stands in the Church,  
and with choirs of Saints  
invisibly prays to God for us.  
Angels and Archangels do homage,  
Apostles and Prophets sing praise,  
because for our sake  
the Mother of God  
prays to the pre-eternal God.

Kontakion of the Feast

After thorough and frank discussion of his proposed emendations, we redrafted the document in conformance with his suggestions. Near the end of his time here, he signed each page of the revised Typicon and presented us with an already prepared Decree of approval. With that, we, the monastic community formerly known as Holy Transfiguration Skete, officially became **The Monastery of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos**. The new name serves to distinguish us from our Eparchy's other monastery, Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Mt. Tabor) in Redwood Valley, California, and fulfills a long-held dream, as well.

We are a Catholic Monastery of the Byzantine Rite, under the jurisdiction of the Eparch of Chicago, and belonging to the Ukrainian Metropoly 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 skete 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.

# Step by Step

We rightly regard that bright day in the late summer of 1983, when the Founders arrived at Jacob's Falls, as the beginning of our monastic pilgrimage. They had come to build a monastery dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, although they had no idea how this could be accomplished. Having little more than a vision, with faith they stepped out into the unknown. But other significant actions had preceded that dramatic first step.

Having determined the suitability of the Keweenaw Peninsula for their endeavor, the Founders had sought the blessing of the Bishop of Marquette, Mark F. Schmitt. His Excellency was affable and was open to hearing out the ideas of these two laymen with no particular theological training. He declared their goals laudable and assured them of the spiritual support of the Diocese. He had, however, no resources or facilities to place at their disposal; monasteries were always totally independent of Diocesan structures, a wise custom for which, he said, all would, no doubt, have occasion to be grateful at some point. The Founders would have to provide for themselves; in order to practice Evangelical poverty, he suggested formation of a non-profit corporation.

Thus, together with a priest friend from the Archdiocese of Detroit, they incorporated as the Society of Saint John in April of 1983, naming the new entity after the Beloved Disciple into whose care the Lord had given His Blessed Mother from the Cross (Jn. 19: 26 -27) – who better to serve as patron and guide of their work? It was as President and Treasurer of the Society of Saint John that the Founders signed the land contract that precariously secured our first property at Jacob's Falls; and the Society of Saint John remains our legal, corporate identity to this day.

Their initial years saw much trial and hardship, and 1985 proved, perhaps, to be, the bleakest of the community's thirty-seven years beside the Great Lake – the weather was cold and wet, the berry harvest exceptionally poor, and economic prospects looked dim; but two events brightened hope for the future. In mid-September the Internal Revenue Service ruled the Society of Saint John exempt from Federal Income Taxes and permitted benefactors to claim their contributions as charitable deductions. At about the same time, a local citizen donated a nearby tract of twenty-three acres. The land was not contiguous with the existing property and was of marginal utility, but it was beautiful, and, owned free and clear, it offered potential refuge should the looming disaster strike.

*The monastery is recognized under Civil Law as the Society of Saint John, Inc, an ecclesiastical corporation registered in the State of Michigan. Complying with all applicable rules and regulations of State and Federal law in matters pertaining to property, business, revenues, and taxation, this Corporation exists to serve the monastery and enables it to function as a legal entity under prevailing Civil Law.*

From the Typicon

The Founders has acquired the Society's first piece of property – three acres of bedrock and beach sand, stretched out along 1300 feet of rural highway – on a three-year land contract. The balloon payment was due on October 1, 1986. With six weeks left to go before the deadline, they found themselves \$15,000.00 short of what was needed. They put out an emergency appeal to the thousand or so people who had been receiving their newsletter for the previous year and a half, and the needed money arrived. A local church donated a Sunday collection of several thousand dollars, but mostly it came in small contributions. The Founders had what was needed at the appointed time, with a little left over. They saw the event as nothing short of miraculous, a second founding of their monastery and an assurance of future stability. With the overage they began an addition to the former one room schoolhouse that had been their monastery for the previous three years.

It took an additional three years – working on the project as the availability of funds and the time of friends allowed – to complete the project. The new dormitory and community room allowed for dedication of half the old structure as a chapel. Additional blessings flowed. A guest cabin was refurbished and expanded, and 1990 saw a new kitchen at the Jampot.

In 1989 the Society acquired the property adjacent to its original holdings. The monastery's patrimony now included three parcels of land totaling about sixty-five acres, most of it undeveloped forest and wetland, unsuitable for building. There seemed little likelihood of acquiring more. The 1985 IRS ruling applied only to Federal taxes; the burden of local property taxes was becoming unbearable. The Society was always in arrears and, on one occasion, only a sixty-day stay granted by a sympathetic judge prevented its property from going up for public auction.

In the winter of 1989 the Society restated its Articles of Incorporation, changing from a simple non-profit to an Ecclesiastical Corporation in order to reflect more accurately its goals and purposes. In the spring of 1990 it appealed to the State of Michigan Tax Tribunal for exemption from ad valorem taxation on its real and personal property. The Tribunal granted exemption on all three parcels on November 25, 1992.

Meanwhile, relations with the Diocese of Marquette were souring. Bishop Schmitt had been supportive at first, making personal contributions to the Society and purchasing some of its products. But after seven years without any new members, his enthusiasm had waned. Yielding to the concerns of some of his local clergy – the Society had been actively fundraising – he publicly disavowed any connection between the Society of Saint John and the Diocese, forbade the Founders to identify their community as Catholic, and privately informed them he would be pleased if they went elsewhere.

They were devastated. They had never conceived of their community life as anything other

than Catholic. Now it seemed, after years of struggle and work, that any tie with the Church was impossible. But too much time and effort had been expended and too much had been accomplished to pack up and leave. They had no choice but to stay and pray. Attempting to put a good face on the situation, the Founders held a tenth anniversary celebration in late August of 1993. In his homily the priest predicted an imminent turn in the community's fortunes. Within a week two new members had joined, and, a month later, a way was opened toward the East.

Fr. James Scharinger was a bi-ritual priest of the Archeparchy of Winnipeg who was serving in the Diocese of Marquette. He had been visiting on a regular basis and had often discussed the community's worsening relations with the Diocese, commenting at one point that the Founders would get a sympathetic hearing from an Eastern Hierarch. He called shortly after Labor Day and offered to make an introduction to an acquaintance of long standing who just been appointed Ukrainian Catholic Bishop of the Eparchy of St. Nicholas.

We journeyed to Chicago to meet Bishop Michael Wiwchar in early January of 1994. He welcomed us to his Eparchy and directed us to Abbot Boniface at Holy Transfiguration Monastery (Mt. Tabor) in California, who would know what to do, since he had brought his own community into the Ukrainian Catholic Church some years before. In his response to our request for a visit, Fr. Boniface had commented that we would soon no longer find the Byzantine Tradition strange or foreign, but would come to see it as the home we had always been looking for without knowing it.

We first visited Mt. Tabor during Lent of 1994 and were immediately struck with the power and beauty of the Byzantine Services. We worked out an arrangement with the Abbot whereby we would visit Mt. Tabor for an extended time each winter – our shop was open only during the summer and fall, and our mail order business pretty much stopped after Christmas – learn what we

could of Byzantine monastic life and worship, and then return home to put it into practice until our next visit. In parting, Abbot Boniface recounted Mt. Tabor's struggles before entering the Eparchy and concluded by saying that it had been nothing but blessings since.

We began our first long stay at Mt. Tabor shortly after Theophany in 1995. And the blessings began to flow. Toward the end of our planned six weeks the Abbot told us to find suitably sized habits in the storeroom and to prepare for Investiture. We returned to Michigan with ill-fitting clothes, shorn heads, new names, and a new identity as Holy Transfiguration Skete. Bishop Michael visited the Skete that fall and presented us with an Antimension, thereby authorizing celebration of the Divine Liturgy in our chapel. The Antimension was dated October first, nine years after the miraculous retirement of the Land Contract. Twelve years after setting out on the pilgrimage the Church had blessed our community life; a major turning point had been reached. And the blessings continued to flow.

During our 1996 visit, Archimandrite Boniface consecrated the Founders as monks of Mt. Tabor, ordained them Subdeacons, and laid out a course of study to prepare them for priestly ordination. Bishop Michael ordained them Deacons in Chicago in the summer of 1997 and, in the fall of 1998, ordained them to the priesthood at Mt. Tabor. No longer would the community have to depend on the outside for its Divine Services.

The ordinations brought to an end our annual trips to California. Bishop Michael considered us a dependency of Mt. Tabor, hence the name, Holy Transfiguration Skete. We were comfortable with this as an interim status – we were new to the Byzantine Tradition, and there seemed no better teacher and guide than Archimandrite Boniface. When that great man returned to his native Belgium in 2000, having retired as Abbot of Mt. Tabor the previous year, we continued the relationship with Abbot Joseph, his successor, sending annual financial reports and discussing with him matters of mutual interest. In recogni-

tion of the great distance between the two monasteries, Abbot Joseph in October of 2001 delegated to the Hegumen of the Skete the authority to invest Novices and to consecrate Monks, asking only that he be notified in advance. In time, as the two communities lived their own lives and experienced their own struggles, contact grew less frequent.

Meanwhile, we had undertaken a major expansion of the community's living and worship space. Finances dictated a two-fold approach. We occupied the new kitchen and bathing area, as well as the basement for the entire complex, in the spring of 1998. After retiring the debt resulting from the first stage of construction and experiencing some minor difficulty in securing the prerequisite Special Use Permit from Keweenaw County, we addressed the most important part of the project, the monastic church. Bishop Richard Seminack, who had succeeded Bishop Michael as Eparch of St. Nicholas – concelebrating with Bishop James Garland (Bishop Schmitt's successor in Marquette), the Founders, and representatives of the Roman and Ukrainian clergy – consecrated the new church, dedicated to St. John the Theologian, on August 24, 2003, twenty years, almost to the day, after the Founder's arrival at Jacob's Falls.

That great milestone left the Society \$1,500,000.00 in debt. We struggled – and almost foundered – during the next several years of rising interest rates, to service the note. When a generous benefactor retired the debt for us in January of 2007, we resolved never to get into such a situation again – except, perhaps, for land. That prospect reared its head within a few months.

The Founders knew that monasteries fared best when situated upon large tracts of land. (They were not alone in this understanding: Bishop Schmitt would often ask the Founders if they had yet secured the land for building the monastery, and Archimandrite Boniface was adamant in insisting that they move the Skete to the ridge as soon as possible.) Monastic life was

essentially rural and resonated with the rhythms of nature, and an expanse of land ensured the distancing from the noise and chaos of human society that was necessary for the contemplative life. The occasional availability of such acreage had factored largely in the Founders' choice of the Keweenaw Peninsula as a location for their monastic endeavor. Alas, as it turned out, the availability was seldom, and their wherewithal almost never.

So, when land adjacent to our long held sixty-five acres became available at a time when the Society was debt free and in possession of a quarter million dollar Certificate of Deposit resulting from a generous bequest, we did not hesitate to act. By January 2008, we were back in debt – but only half as much as before – and the monastic patrimony had grown eight-fold.

Soon, however, we faced our first existential threat since the land-contract pay-off some twenty-two years previous. In the spring of 2007 we had applied for a building permit to erect a small storage building at the Jampot. We were denied on zoning grounds; Eagle Harbor Township's Zoning Ordinance classified our land as Resort/Residential; existing businesses were not permitted to expand. We were encouraged to phase out our business – or go elsewhere! Moreover, because of our adherence to a traditional monastic lifestyle, we were classified as “group housing” and subject to a limitation of our numbers. Thus, was our growth at risk, as well as our livelihood. We sued in Federal Court.

In December of 2010, after several years of often acrimonious legal maneuverings, the Township Trustees signed an agreement, guaranteed by the Federal Court, recognizing us as a religious institution, not group housing, and granting us numerous specific uses of our property desirable and necessary for the efficient functioning of a monastery. This fundamental agreement amounted to a charter for our continued existence and growth in this holy and beautiful land.

Final resolution of the contention between Township and Monastery was still some years off. In January of 2014 the Township Board revised the Zoning Ordinance to allow the expansion of existing businesses by means of a Special Use Permit. At the suggestion of Township officials, we applied for a three-phase expansion to be carried out over an indeterminate number of years. The Permit was granted; Phase I was completed in 2015, Phase II in 2018, and we are now approaching Phase III.

The Lord's plan was unfolding in the ecclesial realm, as well. By means of a letter to Bishop Richard Seminack dated January 27, 2010, Abbot Joseph renounced all oversight of the Skete and any connection we may have had to Mt. Tabor, effectively making us directly responsible to the Bishop. We found this not at all distressing; it was the position we had hoped to attain when we first approached Bishop Wiwchar some sixteen years earlier. It did present a canonical challenge, however.

As a dependency of Mt. Tabor, we were supposedly under their Typicon, but the reality was quite different. We had pre-existed our association with Mt. Tabor by a dozen years and had developed our own way of life, drawing on the practical wisdom of the Rule of Saint Benedict, and with a mind toward the necessities of our harsh environment. The connection to Mt. Tabor now severed, the canonical fiction could no longer stand. We needed our own Typicon.

Despite the time and energy consumed by the on-going legal battles, we drafted a document and submitted it to Bishop Seminack for comment in April of 2012. The Bishop was already in poor health, and we heard nothing further on the matter during his remaining four years. Having made a few minor changes for the sake of clarification, we submitted the document to Bishop Benedict for review in the summer of 2018. His approval of the Typicon this summer brings us to the close another stage of our pilgrimage. We step into the future now as the Monastery of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos.

# Under the Veil

The Feast of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos, which we celebrate on October First, now becomes the monastery's Patronal Feast. The celebration has its origin in a time of great distress. The city of Constantinople, capital of the Roman Empire in the East, was under siege, and many of its citizens crowded into the church of the Blessed Virgin in Blachernae, where her veil was enshrined, to beg her intercession. Among them was the holy-man we now know as St. Andrew the Fool.

During the course of the All-Night Vigil he saw the Virgin enter the church and kneel in earnest and tearful prayer; entering the sanctuary, she removed the veil from its golden reliquary and placed it over her head; then, turning, she removed the veil from her head and extended it with her hands over the vast congregation, suffusing it with a golden radiance. By this, the seer came to understand that grace and protection remained with the faithful by virtue of the Virgin's prayers. And the siege was soon lifted.

The account is shrouded with the dimness of ages past. The City of Constantine endured many sieges during its 1100 years as the bastion of Christianity in the east; the sources provide insufficient detail to determine which – or when – it might have been. Nor is it possible to date the visionary, himself. The many manuscript editions of the *Life of Saint Andrew the Fool for Christ*, written during the first half of the tenth century by the Priest Nicephoros of the City's Great Church of Holy Wisdom, say only that he lived during the reign of the "pious Emperor Leo". Some scholars maintain that this refers to the fifth century Emperor Leo I, who was greatly devoted to the Blessed Virgin and had donated

to her church at Blachernae the golden reliquary for her veil. Others incline toward Leo VI who reigned from 870 to 912, almost contemporary with the writing of the *Life*. Although internal textual evidence would suggest the earlier date, the matter remains unsettled among academics.

But the significance of the feast does not lie in the historical details. What is celebrated in recalling the vision is not so much a particular mystical experience in the life of an ancient holy man, but, rather, the unfailing reality of the Holy Protection of the Mother of God – her intercession for those who cry out to her in faith – throughout the ages.

Spread out upon your most pure  
and immaculate hands,  
and spiritually shining more brilliantly  
than the golden Ark of old,  
your glorious mantle, O Lady,  
mercifully preserves from all danger  
those who honor the feast  
of your Holy Protection,  
which we fervently celebrate today.

From Matins of the Feast

Freely accepting the divine will and making it her own, without a human father she conceived and gave birth in time to the Son of God, who was born of the Father, without a mother, before all ages. As a special and unique vessel of grace poured out for the salvation of the world, she retains her virginity in perpetuity; it is fitting that the door through which

God entered His creation should remain forever closed (cf. Ezk. 44:2). She also remains forever the mother of her Son, Christ our God; with a mother's confidence she ever supplicates Him on behalf of those who implore her intercession.

The Great City endured its final siege some four centuries after the Priest Nicephoros wrote down his account of the events that underlie the current celebration. On May 29, 1453, the Turks breached its walls, the Emperor perished in the battle, and the last vestiges of Roman political power were swept away. But the Eastern Empire had already passed its faith and much of its culture to the north, where the Feast remains a major celebration.

ПОКРОВ ПРЭСВ.

БОГОРОДИЦЕ



From the very beginning of their nationhood, the people of Rus-Ukraine have been surrounded by powerful enemies; their leaders have often felt the need of the intercession of the Holy Mother of God. One of the greatest of these, Jaroslav the Wise, Grand Prince of Kiev, placed the whole nation under her Holy Protection following an important victory in 1037. Many victories and narrow escapes since have been credited to her intercession. Indeed, many see the existence of an independent Ukraine today, after centuries of subjection and absorption by neighboring countries, as evidence of her loving concern. Certainly, the emergence of our own Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church from its forty years of suppression in the homeland attests to it, as well.

We, too, have often begged Mary's intercession in time of trial; against all odds, the monastery has survived and grown. At first the trials were mostly financial. On several occasions we were near default on our Land Contract payments, only to be saved at the last moment by unsolicited generosity. Though solicited, the generosity that allowed retirement of the Land Contract on October 1, 1986, seemed truly miraculous at the time (we learned only later that the date coincides with the Byzantine feast celebrating the Virgin's Holy Protection). Bishop Michael chose that date in 1995 to sign the Antimension, authorizing celebration of the Divine Liturgy in our chapel, and Fr. James Scharinger, who had first directed us to him some two years earlier, provided further testimony.

Several years later, on a visit just prior to his return to the Archeparchy of Winnipeg, where he served the remaining years of his life, Father confided to us that he had requested to serve in the Diocese of Marquette because he had felt that

the Blessed Mother had some special task for him there. This had not been anything as direct as a vision or a locution, but the inspiration had been strong enough for him to take the necessary steps to make it possible. His several years in Marquette parishes as associate and pastor had not revealed what the task might be. But now he understood. To his testimony we can add our own.

In November of 2010, we found ourselves, thanks to the generosity of a longtime benefactor, in Rome for celebrations surrounding the elevation of our friend Archbishop Raymond Leo Burke to the Sacred College of Cardinals. During a visit between events to the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere we stood

before the ancient icon (art historians place its origin somewhere between the sixth and ninth centuries) known as the *Madonna della Clemenza* and begged Our Lady's intercession in our zoning dispute with Eagle Harbor Township, which had been dragging on for several years with no sign of resolution. We returned on Thanksgiving Day and a few days later

made the same prayer before the miraculous Kursk Root Icon of the Virgin, which was visiting the local parish of the Russian Orthodox Church outside of Russia. A week or so later, the Township trustees signed the fundamental agreement we have come to see as a charter for our continued existence and growth in this beautiful land.

Now, some ten years later, the Church has approved our own particular fundamental law, and we are poised to take the next step. How or when it will come to pass we do not know. But with confidence in the power of her maternal prayer to her Son, our God, we joyfully place our monastery and our lives under her Holy Protection.

With all the hosts of heaven,  
the all-glorious Apostles and Prophets,  
with the Martyrs  
and all the holy Hierarchs,  
pray to God, O Holy Virgin,  
for us sinners who gloriously celebrate  
the Feast of your Holy Protection  
in this land.

From Matins of the Feast



# An Investiture

At Vespers on September 25, 2020, the eve of the Feast of the Passing of Saint John the Theologian, Beloved Disciple of Christ and patron of our monastic church as well as of our corporate entity, we celebrated an occasion of great joy for our monastic community, clothing a young man in the habit of our monastery.

Brother Thomas had first visited us with a friend at the end of 2018. He returned for a week's private retreat in late September the following year and then spent the month of November with us as a Candidate. We received him as a Postulant this year, two days before Theophany.

Having lived, worked, and prayed with us during the intervening eight and a half months, his Investiture sets him out upon the first canonical stage of monastic life. Family and friends from Indiana and North Dakota joined the monks, friends of the monastery, and its staff – who had come to know him at the Jampot during the busy summer months – in celebrating the joy of the occasion. The Service followed the order set forth in the Euchologian published in 1902 at the Kiev Caves Lavra, the earliest and greatest of the monasteries of Ukraine.

The Euchologian prescribes no Scripture readings beyond those normally appointed for the day's celebration, adding only Psalms 26 (27) and 15 (16), which express a longing to live in the house of the Lord and the conviction that happiness is to be found only in Him. Along with a special Troparion and Theotokion, the presentation of the new Novice to the community, and a short exhortation, these texts extend Vespers by perhaps fifteen or twenty minutes. Enshrined amidst the texts, two simple rites of venerable antiquity convey the essence of the occasion.



First, invoking the Name of the Holy Trinity, the Hegumen cuts the Postulant's hair in the form of a cross, and then, as the monks sing Psalm 15, he shears it off completely. The new Novice then puts off the clothes he has worn as a Postulant and receives from the hands of the Hegumen the tunic and belt of the monastic habit. After donning the habit in silence, he learns the name by which he is to be known in monastic life.

These rites have long marked entrance into monastic life. Tonsure, the cutting of the hair, was known prior to the seventh century, and distinctive clothing marked the monastic state as early as the fourth. Like the bestowal of the new name, they are analogous to Baptism. Tonsure, which is symbolic of setting aside all earthly cares, desires, and attachments, and of a renunciation of pride and human vanity, corresponds to the renunciations that precede the Sacramental bath and anointing. And, as the white garment bestowed at Baptism symbolizes newness of life in Christ Jesus, the black habit represents the life of penance undertaken to restore the baptismal purity we all lose so quickly. Even those who receive the habit in their youth usually already have much of which to mourn and repent.

УКРАЇНСЬКА КАТОЛИЦЬКА ЄПАРХІЯ  
СВЯТОГО МИКОЛАЯ



UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF  
SAINT NICHOLAS

2245 WEST RICE STREET • CHICAGO, IL 60622 • TEL.: 773.276.5080 • FAX: 773.276.6799 • CHICAGOUGCC.ORG

To the Glory of the Holy, Consubstantial, Life-giving and Undivided Trinity, Father, Son the Holy Spirit!

Peace be with you!

## DECREE

**I, THE MOST REVEREND BENEDICT (ALEKSIYCHUK),  
Bishop of Saint Nicholas Eparchy**

**According to Canon 414 §1, 1, 434 CCEO**

**do hereby approve**

**THE MONASTIC TYPICON**

**of the**

**Monastery of the Holy Protection of the Theotokos**

**Eagle Harbor, Michigan**

**The decree comes into force from the moment of intimation.**

**Duration of decree: 3 years.**

**Given in Chicago, on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of July, in the Year of Our Lord 2020,  
In the Curia of Saint Nicholas Eparchy.**



*Benedict*

**MOST REVEREND BENEDICT (ALEKSIYCHUK)  
Bishop of St. Nicholas Eparchy**

*V. Rev. Kovalchuk*

**VERY REV. SERHIY KOVALCHUK  
Chancellor of St. Nicholas Eparchy**

OUT-2020-195

# MONASTIC TYPICON

MONASTERY OF THE HOLY PROTECTION  
OF THE THEOTOKOS

EAGLE HARBOR, MICHIGAN

*In the name of the Father,  
And of the Son,  
And of the Holy Spirit!  
Glory to the holy, consubstantial, life-giving, and undivided Trinity!*

God bless you!  
Please pray for  
me! + Benedict  
7/21/20



The repentance and conversion required of a monk are not, of course, so easy as a haircut and a change of clothes.

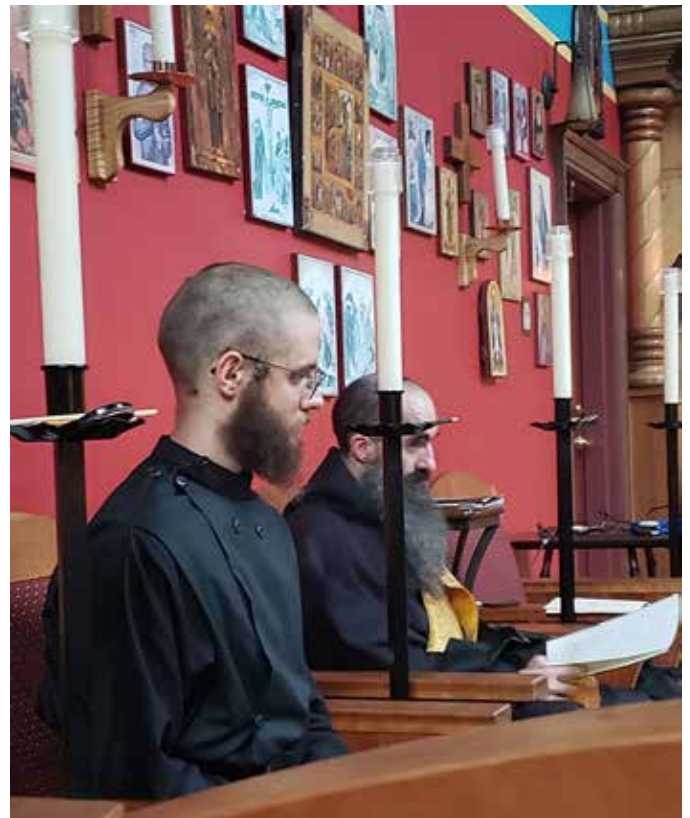
After having been formally introduced to the community and hearing the Hegumen's exhortation to zeal and obedience, the new Novice takes his place with his brothers in the monastic choir. The coming years will entail much effort on his part and more than a few moments of loneliness and hardship. Divine Grace and the prayerful and loving support of his brothers will carry him forward when he finds his own strength failing.

In accord with Eastern Canon Law, our Typicon prescribes he spend three years as a Novice prior to Monastic Consecration. Although no vows have yet been spoken or promises made, and it is possible for the Novice to withdraw or be dismissed for grave reasons, the Novitiate is not seen as a time of discernment. Such deliberations

are to be made during the months of Candidacy and Postulancy; Novitiate is undertaken only when the monastic vocation is reasonably certain. It is a time, rather, of learning and spiritual preparation for the coming permanent commitment of Monastic Consecration.

Soon after the joyful serenity of his Investiture the new Novice begins to receive additional responsibilities and duties. He is given a greater role in the Services and assumes a larger share in the many burdens of the monastery's life and work. Some he may find difficult, distasteful, or annoying, but through them he continues to learn and grow, and with the help and guidance of his brothers, he attains in due course to full stature in monastic life.

A monastery is more than the buildings that provide it shelter or the rules that shape its life. Like the Church it a temple built of living stones; the men who commit their lives there constitute its essence and provide its strength. We thank God for Brother Thomas and his commitment to our life and work. We pray the Lord soon raise up others to join in the holy endeavor.





The 2020 season has been like none other!

At first we were uncertain as to whether it was even going to happen. Having ascertained that, as a food processor, **Jampot** qualified as an essential business, we began production immediately after Pascha. Normally we would have had three weeks to build an inventory of preserves and fruitcake before opening the sales room in time for Michigan Tech's graduation, which always brings an influx of visitors to our area. But the year was not normal. Because of COVID gathering restrictions, Tech held no graduation exercises; we delayed opening the shop until Memorial Day weekend.

Sales were weak, less than half of last year's holiday weekend. Patrons were mostly local people, out for rides in the fresh – and still rather wintery – air. The pattern continued through the final week of the month, and we finished May some seventy-two percent behind last year in revenue. Meanwhile, production had continued apace, and we were running out of storage room; one employee quipped that we would not have to bake any more fruitcakes for Christmas. We

were beginning to doubt the wisdom of having taken out a loan to keep production going during the shop's downtime.

But spring – after a slow, cold beginning – was finally coming on strong. The blossoming was intense, and, by the last day of the month, Pentecost Sunday, the foliage was almost fully out, matching the green vestments we wear only during that celebration of the Life-creating Holy Spirit. At least with respect to nature, we were heading into a normal June.

As the weather warmed and COVID restriction began to ease, business picked up and we started to see more visitors from outside of the area. A week into the month the days began to equal those of the previous year; by mid-month they had far surpassed them. We finished the month with sales thirty percent ahead of the previous June. By July 10 we had made up the deficit caused by the late and slow start of the season.

And so it went. From the Fourth of July on, we had lines of people waiting to get into the shop. Social distancing made them appear

HOLY PROTECTION MONASTERY  
Society of St. John  
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Eagle Harbor, Michigan 49950

# A Change of Name

2020 will be long remembered as the year of COVID. The hardship and heartache wrought by the various quarantines and lockdowns, the disruption of commerce, the failed businesses, all will have their consequences for years to come. We continue to do what we can as monks, offering special prayers and petitions for the lifting of the chastisement, the healing of the sick, and the repose of the departed.

We in this holy monastery, however, will remember 2020 as the year our Typicon was approved and we came to be known as *Holy Protection Monastery*. The change is similar to that accepted by our new Novice when he exchanged the name he had had for twenty-one years for that given him by the Father of the monastery. He remains the person he was, and the formation he received growing up will always remain with him; it forms the base on which he will build his new life as a monk. But his view is not now to the past, but to the future; his monastic name represents not a reward, a sign of accomplishment, but, rather, a promise and a challenge.

So, too, is our new status as a monastery *sui juris*. The way of life outlined in our Typicon

is not new to us; we have lived it all along, or, rather, we have grown into it these past thirty-seven years. And our first twenty-five in the Ukrainian Catholic Church have been particularly formative. So now we step into the future and build upon what has gone before. Significantly, the approval of the Typicon is granted, as is customary, for an initial period of three years. The Bishop referred to this as but another step in our growth.

A pilgrimage proceeds step by step. Some may be more memorable than others, but none would occur without the one before. All serve to move us closer to our goal; in many respects the journey is as important as the destination.

We have been on this pilgrimage for thirty-seven years. Whether you joined us early or late, we are pleased to have your company along the way. With your generosity, patronage, and prayerful support, you have greatly helped us stay the course. Approaching our national day of Thanksgiving and the holy season of our Savior's birth, we hold you in our hearts. May the Lord bless you and preserve you from all harm through the intercession and Holy Protection of His most holy mother.