



May 2020

Dear Name,

Christ is Risen! I hope you and your family are healthy and rejoicing in the Lord despite what's been going on in the world.

I'm sending you this letter to let you know **what wonderful things you've been able to bring to life** by donating during the pandemic.

You have prepared the Church for this pandemic with your generosity. May God bless and protect you and grant you many years for your loving heart!

I have great news to share from *some* of our beneficiaries. But I am also anxiously waiting for news from some of our missions... Well, you'll find out in the following pages.

So let me get right to it and tell you about all the wonderful things that have happened thanks to your incredible kindness!

Mexico: Thanks to You, Fr Nektariy is Working to Help Our Church, Not Someone's Place of Business

If you've been *an avid Church-supporter* through FFA for a while, you know that I've been writing to you about Fr Nektariy for years.

Remember the awful situation Fr Nektariy was in: he had to work several jobs, take care of his extensive flock, and deal with numerous health issues... All while getting only 3-4 hours of sleep a night.

I asked you to help him continue his (very successful) mission in Mexico.

Your response to my letter was unbelievable. So far, we've collected \$62K for Fr Nektariy! We're only \$8K short of our ultimate goal, but I hope more gifts for Fr Nektariy are on the way.

But here's the most important thing...

As we were running the campaign, some of you started to ask: **what else can we do?** There was one person especially ***who changed everything for Fr Nektariy.*** Her name is Ann. And she asked this amazing question:

“What can I do to make Fr Nektariy quit one of his jobs?”

So, when Ann asked what can be done to have Fr Nektariy quit, I found out how much money he'd need to do that. Ann immediately sent enough to cover his income from one of his jobs for a year. Why?

So that Fr Nektariy could direct as much as possible of his immense energy to the Church, and not to the monastery's survival.

Ann's check came in just as Fr Nektariy's work hours diminished because of COVID (he now consults his patients by Skype). Ann helped him and the brethren continue working for the glory of God even without having extra secular jobs.

You and Ann are the kind of people I get to work with. You are the kind of people who will *do anything to help a priest in need.* This is the kind of people who make up our Church.

No matter what's going on in the world, our Church is very much alive as long as you are part of Her. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Fr Nektary is praying for each of you who sent him donations. He asked me to say: “Christ is Risen!” to you and to convey his overwhelming gratitude for your unbelievable kindness.

Holy Protection Skete in New Jersey – a near miss...

As you know, because of the pandemic most of our churches are suffering. Most parishes lost *prosfora* and candle sales, as well as income from *treby*.

But thanks to all of you who have signed up to be monthly donors to the Skete, Father Tikhon doesn't have to worry about the lost income.

If it hadn't been for your help before COVID, the pandemic would have destroyed the struggling monastery.

But thanks to you, Fr Tikhon and Metropolitan Hilarion can keep on working there. And – which is very important at this time – keep praying for their Church. By the way, both Vladyka and Fr Tikhon are healthy and doing well, thank God.

Haiti: How Much Worse Can It Get?

Several years ago someone close to the FFA spent a few months working in Haiti. After she got back, she said: “I no longer care what the money I donate to Haiti is spent on. Let them have all of it. It's terrible what goes on there...” This was before the recent political crisis and COVID.

Politically, economically, and environmentally, it's still terrible in Haiti. I recently got an email from one of the priests there saying: “We can no longer live the way we used to...”

It implied that their way of life before COVID (half-built tiny houses, constant hunger, bed sheets instead of front doors despite wide-spread crime) *was something to be nostalgic about...*

At this time and in this place of darkest misery, one ray of hope that comes to Haiti is you.

Your help has always been essential. [Now it's positively lifesaving.](#)

Communications are scarce with Haiti. But one thing they did let me know in the last few emails was how much they appreciate what you've been doing for them... And how much they need you now.

Pakistan: Real Change for the Orthodox – Thanks To You!

Despite the pandemic it seems that the mission is doing relatively well. They are all quarantined, but there's no word of sickness. But I have great news!

Generous people like you are producing real change in this tiny Orthodox community.

Thanks to you, Fr Joseph *found a new way to fight poverty among his parishioners* by providing education and counseling. Before the pandemic started the mission introduced Orthodox Career Counseling. The best example of its effectiveness is the story of Shahbaz, a recent convert to Orthodoxy.

Impressed by his quiet determination to help the mission in any possible way he could, and his thirst for the Truth, Fr Joseph helped Shahbaz on his way to learning a valuable trade. Shahbaz finished trade school with flying colors. Previously a very quiet, shy young man, he now feels much more confident in his own strength. He is now helping his father support their large family.

This would have been impossible without you. Glory to God!

Bali: Surviving Thanks to You

Fr Aleksander Kobesi asked to thank all the wonderful people who have helped the mission continue and develop. Thanks to people like you, even though all churches are closed for the quarantine, Fr Aleksander's family has had no trouble buying vegetables and rice.

You also paid for his matushka's and their daughter's medication. You have saved them from hunger and allowed the mission to keep working. *And now – at the time of this pandemic – Fr Aleksander is praying for you.*

The Ripple Effect: How your Kindness strengthens our Church

In the many years I've been at FFA, I've heard a few people say: "I won't give, because my \$5, \$100, \$1,000, etc. won't change anything..." So this update is especially for those who gave from \$1 to \$100,000, and everything in between. We call it "the ripple effect..."

Your gift becomes so much more than just money. It becomes someone's lifeline... someone's hope... someone's change...

How you perpetuate the prayer cycle – just when the world needs it most

Remember how about 8 years ago you and other kind people saved Holy Cross Monastery in West Virginia? They were at a point where they could either keep growing or shut down. Their survival depended on the kindness of people like you.

Back then we collected over \$200K for them. Most of those donations were between \$5 and \$100...

Look at HCM eight years later. Look at what these monks are doing for you and other kind donors like you – all these years later. They are constantly praying and interceding for the end of this awful sickness that's gripped the world. Tell me now that all those people who sent \$5 didn't make a huge difference!

It's thanks to you that we have these living intercessors like the monastics at Holy Cross Monastery (WV), the Holy Protection Skete (NJ), The Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville and in Mexico City...

Holy Cross is also live streaming all of their services during COVID-19. It's a tangible way for you and other kind donors to benefit from having saved the monastery.

Aren't you glad so many clergy are commemorating you personally at the time of this epidemic? I am thrilled. Because I need all the prayers I can get. And I'm sure you feel the same.

Because you're there for the clergy in their most difficult times.... They are here for YOU in these difficult times for the entire world.

But don't think that they only pray during times of trouble. No. Of course not. It's just that sometimes we don't realize or appreciate how much they pray UNTIL times of trouble begin.

Christ Himself said: "Where two or three of you are gathered in My Name..." These monastics are able to gather together and pray for you and all of us – THANKS to YOU!

God bless you for everything you do to help our Church! Thank you!



Mark Selawry
FFA President

We're still here today thanks to people like Patrick...

Three years ago a wonderfully kind man named Patrick left a legacy for the Fund for Assistance in his Will.

As a dedicated teacher of history for many years, he wanted to leave a lasting impact of good on earth.

He loved the Russian Orthodox Church and wanted to make Her stronger. So he left a gift for the FFA in his Will. It's still helping us today – especially in the COVID crisis.

But his kindness allowed us to nearly double the money he left us. ***All of it will be used for the benefit of our Church.*** But that's not all.

The ripple effect of his generosity will be felt for years as his kindness brings in more and more help for ROCOR. Memory Eternal to Patrick. Christ is Risen!