



February 2021

Dear name,

Happy New Year! I've never been more excited to say it☺!

I hope so much that you are well and healthy! May the Holy Theotokos extend Her protection over you and your family, friends, and parish!

I just wanted to drop a few lines to tell you about the good things that have happened in our Church – thanks to kindhearted people like you.

First of all... let me say a huge, enormous, *2020-size* thank you.

In 2020 your gift was especially important. Because, as you know, it's been a very difficult time for everyone.

Your incredible generosity helped our Church survive 2020!!!

Let me tell you what amazing things YOU have done for some very special people in our Church:

Mexico: “We’re Still Here Because of You” – Fr Nektariy

2020 has been a terrible year for the ROCOR mission in Mexico City. But you made it so much brighter by offering your monetary and prayerful support!

Fr Nektariy and the brethren of Holy Trinity Monastery have either lost their secular jobs or have had their hours significantly reduced, so money has been tighter than usual.

The city is quarantined. Only 3-4 people can come to a church service. Funerals are held online. Six out of 1,000 parishioners have died.

As a country, Mexico was not well-prepared for an epidemic. Doctors are either not well-trained, or don't have the necessary medicine, equipment, supplies... Many of them died from COVID.

Locals joke grimly that if you end up in a public hospital, the only way you will come out is feet first.

But Fr Nektariy is fighting for his parishioners and his community during the pandemic – *thanks to your support!*

As you know, Fr Nektariy is a trained doctor. He has been teaching medical subjects at universities and working at different hospitals for many years. So he and other medical professionals around the monastery are now helping anyone who asks for their help.

Especially, now that only COVID patients are allowed to go in for treatment in Mexico. Everyone else has to wait for a Zoom conference with their doctor.

Fr Nektariy and his parishioners in the medical field use their connections to consult, treat, and get the right medicine for anyone who needs it.

To date, they have successfully treated over 30 people who have had COVID. They have not only survived, but are healthy now.

“People from the community and other churches know that ROCOR is helping, and they call in to ask for advice. And normally, they get well,” said Fr Nektariy.

Fr Nektariy gives physical and mental health consultations day and night. He is in such demand, that he can give only 10 minutes to each patient. But his patients are doing very well.

And it's all thanks to you. In Fr Nektariy's own words: “Thanks to FFA, we're holding up. Without you, we wouldn't have survived. There's no money. It's extremely hard.”

Because of your generosity, the ROCOR community in Mexico is surviving. Thank you for being a part of this miracle!

Bali: “*We never forget your kindness and generosity*” – Fr Aleksander

Fr Alexander sent us an email where he talks about all the things you have done for the ROCOR mission in Bali. You have helped them with:

- Food. They are no longer hungry
- Medical treatment for Fr Aleksander’s Matushka Maria Viktoria
- Clothes and personal necessities for Fr Alexander’s children
- Paying for the children’s online education
- Driving parishioners who can’t get to church themselves

“We never forget the kindness and generosity of donors. Every day we offer our holy prayers for them. We always remember all donors and all of Staff of FFA in our prayers. Only God is merciful and can repay all your kindness.

In Christ,

Unworthy priest Fr Aleksander Kobesi”

Holy Protection Skete: You put a new roof over our heads!

Thanks to *you* and other kind-hearted people, the Holy Protection Skete in Buena, NJ, was able to survive some of the worst storms New Jersey had seen in years.

Fr Tikhon was planning to start roof repairs next year. But the winds damaged the worn roof and put all the work they have done into jeopardy.

The skete’s insurance company refused to help, because the roof was so old. And then, so many wonderful people like you responded by becoming monthly donors to the skete. In the end *you* helped put a new sturdy roof on this beautiful historic church!

Fr Tikhon said there are many projects underway as well. But this was the biggest one you’ve helped them achieve.

“Please accept my heartfelt gratitude to all who have helped the Holy Protection Skete! Your kind donation, prayers, and good wishes have been helping us do our prayerful service. I wish you good health and abundant mercies from the Lord,” - Fr Tikhon

Pakistan – How You Helped St Seraphim Perform a Miracle

We often forget that God gave us the *incredible honor* of being His co-creators and co-workers. But sometimes, He shows you that – through His mercy – **you *helped* God.**

Let me show you...

Sophia is a beautiful young woman from a pious Catholic family in Pakistan. She got married young. In the six years of her marriage, she expected to have had at least four children. But she had none.

For many years she cried and prayed to be given a child, but nothing happened. She was desperately sad. Especially when she thought that in the four years that her sister had been married, she'd had three children.

And then her mother-in-law asked her to pray to a very special saint – St Seraphim of Sarov in far-off Russia.

Sophia agreed. Every night she would kiss St Seraphim's icon before she went to sleep and asked him to help her.

And barely a year later... she had a long-awaited baby boy.

Sophia says that she knows without a shadow of a doubt that it was St Seraphim who helped her. And today, Sophia is a catechumen at the St Archangel Michael mission in Pakistan, ready to convert to Orthodoxy.

Why am I telling you this?

Because you helped St Seraphim perform this miracle.

No, I'm not exaggerating. It's thanks to you that:

- The ROCOR mission in Pakistan has a priest...
- Fr Joseph serves liturgies and vespers...
- The mission is growing...
- Sophia's mother-in-law converted to Orthodoxy...
- She had an icon of St Seraphim...
- She taught Sophia to pray to him...
- Sophia is now holding her baby in her arms.

Without your support, this little ROCOR mission would not have survived. And this beautiful miracle would never have happened.

Thank you.

Haiti: Not Forgotten – Thanks To You

Haiti has been overwhelmed with crisis after crisis for most of the 21st century. Our brothers and sisters in Christ have gone through tremendous suffering. The world has given up on them. But you never have.

Throughout every major humanitarian crisis, resources and international experts were rushed to Haiti to assist the country. But not this time.

During COVID, most Haitians are on their own. But a small group of Haitians are in a much better situation – thanks only to amazing people like you.

Because of you, mission members are *thriving* compared to other Haitians.

This is what you've done for the mission:

- Sponsored repairs in three parishes
- Paid rent for six parochial schools

- Built three tiny houses for three families
- Provided health insurance for 12 families
- Gave Christmas gifts to the mission's children
- Fed and clothed the hungry and the naked

And so much more!

In a land where adversity is “normal,” you’ve been a ray of bright hope and help to several hundreds of mission members. May God shine His light on you. Thank you.

Argentina - “We’re able to still serve and avoid starvation only thanks to kind people like you...” – Fr Boris Gladyshev, head of the mission

Argentina has suffered greatly last year: the COVID pandemic and the economic situation have left a lasting mark on our mission in Argentina.

But despite everything that’s happened, Fr Boris writes in good spirits. He is thankful for what the Lord has sent him and his parishioners in 2020.

So far, everyone in Fr Boris’s family and parish are alive and well, and they are very grateful.

Several families have left Argentina to escape the financial crisis, but new converts have replaced them and the number of parishioners stayed the same. Fr Boris says that even native Argentinians who have no connection to Russia, come to the Church to seek for the Truth. May the Lord bless them on their to knowledge!

This is possible only thanks to the gifts of incredibly generous people like you! Don’t believe me?

Just wait till you see what Fr Boris has to say about you below!

But first, let me remind you what you and other God-loving, beautiful, kind-hearted donors have done to save this mission.

It's because of you that Fr Boris is able to serve his parish regularly. (Ok, that doesn't sound earth shattering, but it is, you'll see why.)

This heroic young man (he's in his mid-30s), his wife and their baby son, left a very good life in Russia (their standard of living was much higher back home) to serve in Buenos Aires. Only because they were needed.

They've gone through their savings while Fr Boris tried to get a job that would allow him to have flexible (VERY flexible) hours, so he could serve.

Although Fr Boris is an excellent professional, this meant, that nobody would hire him, unless it was for a few days.

The financial strain caused many health problems for Matushka Ksenia. She had a near-death experience once because they didn't have the money to pay to go to a private emergency room, and she had to wait (and bleed internally) for 5 hours before she was seen at a public hospital.

So you stepped in and saved them – literally.

If you think I'm exaggerating, just take a look at what Fr Boris says:

“You helped us stay and serve this parish. It's so hard to express our feelings, when we found out how many kind people responded to our plea!”

So here's why this is so important on a grand scale. You didn't just save a family from extreme poverty and starvation.

You preserved Holy Orthodoxy in Argentina.

Don't believe me? Here's Fr Boris:

“Looking at the experience of our neighboring countries, you see that as soon as a parish is left without a regular priest, people appear. They turn parishioners against the clergy, try to convince them to become “independent” and not to submit to any official ecclesial leadership...”

The ROCOR mission in Argentina has already suffered tremendously from schismatics. But because you helped Fr Boris, he was able to protect his parish from the sad fate of many other parishes.

By helping Fr Boris you have ensured that our Church continues to exist and spread the Light of the Truth in Argentina.

May God bless you abundantly

Thank you for being a preserver of the Truth around the world!

May God always bless you for your incredible heart!

With love in Christ,



Mark Selawry
FFA President

P.S. If you know anyone who – like you – wants to help our Church, please share this letter with them. And thank you for putting your faith into action by helping the amazing people above.

P.P.S. And thank you SO very much for caring about all these different members of our Church. Please know that I and they love and pray for you because of your kindness.