

ST. JACOB OF ALASKA ORTHODOX CHURCH

802-485-9121 www.stjacobofalaska.org

December 13, 2009

Fr. Caleb Abetti
Priest (802-485-9615)

Susanna Toolan
President

✠ ✠ ✠ Service Schedule ✠ ✠ ✠

Sunday, December 13th. **27th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 2. Sunday of the Forefathers.** Repose of Ven Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of all America (1837). Martyrs Eustratius, Auxentius, Eugene, Mardarius, and Orestes, at Sebaste (4th c.). Virgin Martyr Lucia (Lucy) of Syracuse (304). Ven Arkady (Arcadius) of Novotorsk. Ven Mardarii (Mardarius), Recluse, of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves – 13th c.). Ven Arsenius of Latros (8th-9th c.). Ven Nicodemus (Romanian). St Dosoftei, Metropolitan of Moldava (Romania).

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: Col. 3:4-11; Gospel: Luke 14:16-24

Wednesday, December 16th.

Daily Vespers, 6:00 pm. Meal and study group to follow: Archimandrite Meletios Webber's

Bread and Water, Wine and Oil: An Orthodox Christian Experience of God.

(There will be no Vespers service next week, Wednesday, December 23rd)

Saturday, December 19th.

Great Vespers of the Resurrection: 5:00 pm.

Sunday, December 20th. **28th Sunday after Pentecost – Tone 3. Forefeast of the Nativity of Christ. SUNDAY**

BEFORE THE NATIVITY. Hieromartyr Ignatius the God-bearer, Bishop of Antioch (107). Ven Ignatii (Ignatius), Archimandrite of the Kiev Caves (Far Caves – 1435). St Philogonius, Bishop of Antioch (323) St Daniel, Archbishop of Serbia (1338). St Anthony Bishop of Voronezh (1846). **Repose of St John of Kronstadt.**

✠ ✠ ✠

Upcoming Services

Thursday, December 24th. **Eve of the Nativity of Christ**

Royal Hours: 10:00 am.

Holy Supper: 4:30 pm.

Vigil – Great Compline and Matins: 6:00 pm.

Friday, December 25th. **Nativity of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**

3rd and 6th Hours: 9:10 am.

Divine Liturgy: 9:30 am.

Epistle: Gal. 4:4-7; Gospel: Matt. 2:1-12

Repose of the Venerable Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America

Commemorated on December 13

(Condensed from oca.org)

Venerable Herman of Alaska, Wonderworker of All America. A spiritual mission was organized in 1793, made up of monks of the Valaam Monastery. They were sent to preach the Word of God to the native inhabitants of northwestern America, who only ten years before had come under the sovereignty of Russia. St Herman was among the members of this mission.

St Herman came from a family of merchants of Serpukhov, a city of the Moscow Diocese. His name before he was tonsured, and his family name, are not known. (The monastic name is given when a monk takes his vows). He had a great zeal for piety from youth, and at sixteen he entered monastic life. (This was in 1772, if we assume that Herman was born in 1756, although sometimes 1760 is given as the date of his birth). First he entered the Trinity-Sergius Hermitage which was located near the Gulf of Finland on the Peterhof Road, about 15 versts (about 10 miles) from St Petersburg...

For five or six years Father Herman continued to live in the St Sergius Hermitage, and then he transferred to the Valaam Monastery, which was widely scattered on the large islands in the waters of the great Lake Ladoga. He came the love the Valaam haven with all his soul, as he came to love its unforgettable Superior, the pious Elder Nazarius, and all the brethren. He wrote to Father Nazarius later from America: "Your fatherly goodness to me, humble one, will be erased out of my heart neither by the terrible, unpassable Siberian lands, nor by the dark forests. Nor will it be wiped out by the swift flow of the great rivers; nor will the awful ocean quench these feelings. In my mind I imagine my beloved Valaam, looking to it beyond the great ocean." He praised the Elder Nazarius in his letters as "the most reverend, and my beloved father" (Batushka) and the brethren of Valaam he called "my beloved and dearest". The place where he lived in America, deserted Spruce Island, he called "New Valaam". And as we can see, he always remained in spiritual contact with his spiritual homeland, for as late as 1823, that is after thirty years of his life within the borders of America, he wrote letters to the successor of Father Nazarius, the Igumen Innocent...

In the second half of the 18th century the borders of Holy Russia expanded to the north. In those years Russian merchants discovered the Aleutian Islands which formed in the Pacific Ocean a chain from the eastern shores of Kamchatka to the western shores of North America. With the opening of these islands there was revealed the sacred necessity to illumine with the light of the Gospel the native inhabitants. With the blessing of the Holy Synod, Metropolitan Gabriel gave to the Elder Nazarius the task of selecting capable persons from the brethren of Valaam for this holy endeavor. Ten men were selected, and among them was Father Herman. The chosen men left Valaam for the place of their great appointment in 1793...

As a result of the holy zeal of the preachers the light of the evangelic sermon quickly poured out among the sons of Russia, and several thousand pagans accepted Christianity. A school for the education of newly-baptized children was organized, and a church was built at the place where the missionaries lived. But by the inscrutable providence of God the general progress of the mission was unsatisfactory. After five years of very productive labor, Archimandrite Joasaph, who had just been elevated to the rank of bishop, was drowned with his party...Before this the zealous Hieromonk Juvenal was granted the martyr's crown. The others died one after another until in the end only Father Herman remained. The Lord permitted him to labor longer than any of his brethren in the apostolic task of enlightening the Aleutians...

In America Father Herman chose as his place of habitation Spruce Island, which he called New Valaam. This island is separated by a strait about a mile and a quarter wide from Kodiak Island on which had been built a wooden monastery for the residence of the members of the mission, and a wooden church dedicated to the Resurrection of the Savior...

Spruce Island is not large, and is almost completely covered by a forest. Almost through its middle a small brook flows to the sea. Herman selected this picturesque island for the location of his hermitage. He dug a cave out of the ground with his own hands, and in it he lived his first full summer. For winter there was built for him a cell near the cave, in which he lived

(Continued on insert)

until his death. The cave was converted by him into a place for his burial. A wooden chapel, and a wooden house to be used as a schoolhouse and a guest house were built not too distant from his cell. A garden was laid out in front of his cell. For more than forty years Father Herman lived here...

The way in which Father Herman looked upon the natives of America, how he understood his own relations with them, and how he was concerned for their needs he expressed himself in one of his letters to the former administrator of the colony, Simeon Yanovsky. He wrote: "Our creator granted to our beloved homeland this land which like a newly-born babe does not yet have the strength for knowledge or understanding. It requires not only protection, because of its infantile weakness and impotence, but also his sustenance. Even for this it does not yet have the ability to make an appeal on its own behalf. And since the welfare of this nation by the Providence of God, it is not known for how long, is dependent on and has been entrusted into the hands of the Russian government which has now been given into your own power, therefore I, the most humble servant of these people, and their nurse (nyanka) stand before you in their behalf, write this petition with tears of blood. Be our Father and our Protector. Certainly we do not know how to be eloquent, so with an inarticulate infant's tongue we say: Wipe away the tears of the defenseless orphans, cools the hearts melting away in the fire of sorrow. Help us to know what consolation means."

The Elder was concerned in particular for the moral growth of the Aleuts. With this end in mind a school was built for children – the orphans of the Aleuts. He himself taught them the Law of God and church music. For this same purpose he gathered the Aleuts on Sundays and Holy Days for prayer in the chapel near his cell. Here his disciple read the Hours and the various prayers while the Elder himself read the Epistle and Gospel. He also preached to them. His students sang, and they sang very well. The Aleuts loved to hear his sermons, gathered around him in large numbers. The Elder's talks were captivating, and his listeners were moved by their wondrous power...

In order to express the spirit of Father Herman's teaching, we present here a quotation from a letter that was written by his own hand. "The empty years of these desires separate us from our heavenly homeland, and our Love for these desires and our habits clothe us, as it were, in an odious dress; it is called by the Apostle 'the external (earthly) man.' (I Cor. 15:47) We who are wanderers in the journey of this life call to God for aid. We must divest ourselves of this repulsiveness, and put on new desires, and a new love for the coming age. Thus, through this we will know either an attraction or a repulsion for the heavenly homeland. It is possible to do this quickly, but we must follow the example of the sick, who wishing for desired health, do not stop searching for means of curing themselves..."



Troparian – Tone 7

Joyful North Star of the Church of Christ,
Guiding all people to the Heavenly Kingdom;
Teacher and apostle of the True Faith;
Intercessor and defender of the oppressed;
Adornment of the Orthodox Church in America:
Blessed Father Herman of Alaska,
Pray to our Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of our souls!

Troparian – Tone 4

O blessed Father Herman of Alaska,
North star of Christ's holy Church,
The light of your holy life and great deeds
Guides those who follow the Orthodox way.
Together we life high the Holy Cross
You planted firmly in America.
Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ,
Singing His holy Resurrection.

Kontakion – Tone 3

The eternal light of Christ our Savior
Guided you, O blessed Father Herman,
On your evangelical journey to America,
Proclaiming the Gospel of peace.
Now you stand before the throne of Glory;
Intercede for your land and its people
Peace for the world and salvation for our souls!



Sunday of the Forefathers

Commemorated on December 13th
(from oca.org)

The Sunday that falls between December 11-17 is known as the Sunday of the Holy Forefathers. These are the ancestors of Christ according to the flesh, who lived before the Law and under the Law, especially the Patriarch Abraham, to whom God said, "In the seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:3, 22:18)

Troparian – Tone 2

Through faith You justified the Forefathers,
Betrothing through them the Church of the gentiles.
These saints exult in glory,
For from their seed came forth a glorious fruit:
She who bore You without seed.
So by their prayers, O Christ God, have mercy on us!

Kontakion – Tone 6

You did not worship the graven image,
O thrice-blessed ones,
But armed with the immaterial Essence of God,
You were glorified in a trial by fire.
From the midst of the unbearable flames you called on God, crying:
Hasten, O compassionate One!
Speedily come to our aid,
For You are merciful and able to do as You will.



