

**Fund for Assistance to the
Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia**



**Попечительский Фонд о Нуждах
Русской Православной Церкви Заграницей**

January 2020

Dear Matthew and Rachel,

I just wanted to drop a few lines to tell you what's been going on in our Church – thanks to kindhearted people like you.

First of all... let me say thank you.

In 2019, your gift was especially important. Let me tell you what amazing things you have done for these special people:

The Holy Protection Skete

I'm absolutely thrilled that you and other lovely donors allowed us to help our own dear First Hierarch, **Metropolitan Hilarion!** This was the first time in our history that a First Hierarch asked for help – for something that even remotely relates to *himself*.

Usually, he says: “Dear FFA, can you ask your amazing donors to help this person? He really-really needs you...”.

But this time you and I were privileged to help Vladyka himself - by giving to the Holy Protection Skete in Buena, NJ. Vladyka actually spends time there.

So **you helped *him* personally**, even though your donation to the skete will end up benefiting so many other people who will come to pray there!

By the way, did you know that your name is being commemorated there by Abbot Fr Tikhon, and the Metropolitan himself?

But here are some tangible things you've brought about: Fr Tikhon Gayfudinov, Vladyka's cell attendant and the abbot of the Skete, now has a tractor! This means that Fr. Tikhon can dig graves at the skete cemetery.

And that means that the skete now has a new source of income! Which is another step in **making the skete self-sufficient**. That's a huge win!

The tractor is also saving Fr. Tikhon countless hours of work. Small jobs like moving 30 tree stumps used to take him a whole day. Now he can do it in an hour. Before the tractor it would take him a week to plant 30 trees - now he does it one day. Glory to God for all things!

So far, we've collected a good amount for the skete and we have over 45 monthly donors who are being commemorated at every service.

If you haven't signed up yet, and would like to have Fr Tikhon and the Metropolitan (when he's there) pray for you at every service, please become a monthly giver on our website fundforassistance.org. Regular donations will help the skete switch from survival mode to thrival!

There are even more things going on, but I am trying to keep this short, so I'll put more details on our website, I promise!

Oh, and there's a great movie about the skete I'd love for you to see – it's on our YouTube channel. It's called: **Skete: the movie**. Don't miss it!

Rachelle from Haiti

I'm sure you remember Rachelle, a member of the St John of Shanghai parish in Les Cayes, Haiti. A widow with two sons, she had to leave her job as a laundress that supported her family, because her hands constantly hurt and bled... The family went hungry.

But you wouldn't let Rachelle and her children suffer! Thanks to you, today they buy food every day at the market, and Rachelle is happily sharing her good fortune with a neighbor who is even poorer than she was before you helped.

Because of you, Rachelle enlarged her house (it's really a tiny room without a door – I'm not sure if she now has a door... Many people in Haiti just hang a sheet instead of a door), she says she just needs to paint the walls.

The boys can afford books and go to school, so they can get an education and get out of this cycle of poverty... thanks to you and other kind donors!

But best of all, thanks to you, Rachelle no longer does laundry! She now sells charcoal and matches, and is already thinking of other business opportunities. All thanks to you.

Every little prayer, every cent you send Rachelle and others in Haiti, multiplies a hundred-fold. Thank you.

**Rachelle says she will never forget to ask our Lord to
bless you for your kindness!**

Fr John Moses's widow

Your response to my letter about helping with Fr John Moses's funeral costs was overwhelming. In Mat. Alexandra Moses's own words, it was an **“unexpected bountiful gift of love and care for Fr. John and our little family.”**

Not only did your generosity allow Matushka to pay for her husband's funeral costs, she was able to use the surplus to care for her elderly parents while she's at work.

Thank you for giving Mat. Alexandra the **gift of your love** at a most difficult time in her life. I can't imagine the pain she is in now – after losing her husband of many years so suddenly! Please remember her in your prayers. It will be an especially hard time for her.

Bali

Do you remember Fr Alexander from Bali? He's the one who **sold his wedding ring** so he could pay for parish rent. You and other kind people have also helped him pay medical expenses when his daughter Mary Grace suffered a motorcycle accident.

Here's some good news from him:

Because of you and God-loving people like you who care about our Church, Her Missions, and people who serve Her, Fr Alexander has been able to stop worrying about how to feed his family.

Here's what Fr Alexander said about you and other people who gave him real help: **"the donors were good people sent from God, their goodness and LOVE was a channel of God's goodness and love"**.

Strong words. And I agree 100%.

God sent people like you so you can help our Church grow. I'm so glad we were able to help with that! It's always an honor to work with you for the glory of Christ and our Church!

I will have more updates for you later. Thank you for reading and giving, and just being your generous kind Christ-loving self. Sorry if I'm gushing.

I am just so thrilled that you "get" why our Church is so amazing. And it's so wonderful to know people like you who work for the glory of the Church. Thank you.

May God always bless you for your incredible heart!

With love in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Selawry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

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.