



Holy Ghost Orthodox Church

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ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Archbishop Jovan, Metropolitan Savas, Father Paul & Pani Judy Stoll, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynec, Father Lawrence Daniels, Father Joe & Protinica Linda Cervo, Igumen Patrick, Father Jim Orr, Father Rick Seilier, Panimatka Laryssa Charest, Father Vasyl Sendeha, Father George & Dobrodijka Oksana Bazylevsky, Father Angelo Artemas, Father John Haluszczak, Dr. Christina Nellis, Father Joshua [Anna], Father Justin (Todd) Mokhiber, Pani Cathy Danczak, Protopresbyter Gerald Ozlanski, Father James Norton, Monk Andrew, Father Dan & Matushka Myra Kovalak, Pastor Terry & Lisa Polen, Chaplain Rachelle Zazzu, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Yvonne Christy, Father Deacon Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl & Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Gene Blair [Pani Gina's dad], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Stroz [young lady with cerebral palsy], Patricia

Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Margie Sekelsky, Fran Fulton, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaugenhaupt, Louis Berceli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Darcy, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam & Gordon Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, Brianna Stumpf, Stanley Porembka, David & Terry Coyne Hartnett, Mike C., Jennifer Scheirer [Nick Behun's daughter], Catherine Beecham [Father Bob's cousin], JoAnne & Dave Andrews, Rev. Peg Bowman, Pat & Jan Jennings, Mike Ruzzi, Mary Kay Ludovicy, George Dilendorf, Sharon Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye, William Lusherand, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Theresa Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Margaret Sekelsky, Robert Sekelsky, Robert Rodriguez, Rita & Joe Mrvos, Alexandra & Bowen, Katherine Kulik, Eleanor Kitt, Maria Warholak, Christy, Mariruth, Judy Previc, Ben Williams, Tim—surgery, Olivia—girl with a brain tumor, Rick & Sharon Morgan, John Stasko, John, Kris, & Kait, Wendy LaGamba, Melissa Gross [hip replacement], Amy Forbeck, David Salazar, Dr. Paul Riley, David Hess, Serena, Wyatt, Makenzie, Jennifer, Alexandra Roberts, Candace, Dave, Jared, & Beth Irvin, Carol Muschick, Grace Love [knee replacement], Joseph Paul Cervo, Jr., Elizabeth, Susan & Greg Heinen, Paul Simpson [Father Bob's cousin], Sharon Curtis Rivas, Kathy Milcic, Lisa Bolan, David G. [cancer], Donna

[dementia] & Darla, Adam Snow, the McKenna family, David Gazella, Brian & Michele Cannone, the Rodrigues family, Michael Welsh, Nick Solominsky, Samantha & Lisa Houser, Sarah Stepanovich Clark, Julia Baloga, Brett Crosby, Randy Lapuh, Henry Tkacik, Diane & Arthur Chaklis, Denny Mader, Zoe Oswalt—Fr. Bob's cousin, Barbette [cancer] & Scott, Kristin [cancer], Erm Hartmann, Barbara Bookser, Bob Mazzuca, Marko, Taylor, Terri Crosby-Vega, Christine Mohamed & family, Tammy Marsico, Terry & David Hartnett, Jamie Ball, Kay Williams, Hannah Stewart, Jim Wyko—Alex's friend, Dan Losego, Lisa Bruce, Yvette, Barry Bender, Andrew Zelleznick, Byron & Cecilia Scott, Vespina, Michelle Russo, Julie Tripodi, Debbie—HTUCC, Barbara Morvay, David Salsar, N&O, Randy & Adrienne Kuny, Vince Berardinelli, Mason Martin [Karns City HS QB] & family, Martin Mrvos, Jeff McCoy, Lauren & Sloane Valentina Persico, Alexis & Colton Rosati, Jessica Shirley, Mark [kidney cancer], Steve Milcic, Wilbert Wagner, Bob Wojciechowski, Ashley, Beth, Sharon Svitek, Laura, Christopher, & ane Dickson, Luke D, Diane Murphy, Kristin Vaughn [Harry's daughter], George Petronsky, Doug & Darcie Burkholder, Michael, Jeane, and Katie Byerly, Acolyte Photios & family [Joanne, Richard, Heather, Keith, James, Debbie, James, Sophia, Zachary, Tabitha, Arqynios, Barbara, Aristotle, Alexander, Kalev, Nina, Elias, Elijah, Jessica], Richard Scharba [Metropolitan Antony's brother], George Lawrence, Edie McGrath, Samantha Lopez, Bob [cancer], Syble Elliott, Maria Ancevski, Krystyna, John, & Jeffrey, Dottie & family, Bonny Diver & Ashley Smock, Steve, Jill Morocco, Mike Pelino, Maddie Stewart, Hutchinson Family, David Urban, Vicky Moore, Casi [cancer], Ashley & Andy, Marion Mamula, Dominic [cancer], Diane Hughes, Jenny Case, John Chovanes, Edward Poturich, Jeff, Chris, & Mills family, Sarah's son, Rachel, Alex, & little Charlie, Steve & Vonnie Gerson, and Lauren, Dan, & the baby... We pray that God will grant them all a complete and speedy recovery.

Remember that by your own power you will gain nothing. Always call upon the Lord Jesus Christ for help in all temptations. Then your praiseworthy attitude will be aided by God's might, which curtails all sin, all wiles of the demons. Abbot Nikon Vorobiev, Abbot Nikon Letters to Spiritual Children p.148

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ... There is NOTHING to keep us from praying...for each other, for our family and friends, and most of all for the first responders—EMTs, nurses, doctors, firefighters, police officers, and members of our military who keep us safe. Be well and be **SAFE!!! God Bless!**

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and ALL service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. ***If you have a question, please ask Father Bob.***

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 956-6626.

SERVICES IN SLICKVILLE

SUNDAY, July 20

*******NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE*******

**6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; VENERABLE THOMAS OF MOUNT MALEON;
VENERABLE ACACIUS OF SINAI; MARTYR PEREGRINUS, LUCIAN,
POMPEIUS, PAPPAS, SATURNINUS, & GERMANUS; MARTYRS EPICTITUS-
PRESBYTER & ASTION IN SCYTHIA; MARTYR EVANGELUS; MARTYR
CYRIACA**

Tone 5

Romans 12:6-14

Matthew 9:1-8

SUNDAY, July 27

OBEDNITZA—SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM—UPSTAIRS 10:30 AM

**7TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; HOLY FATHERS OF THE FIRST 6 ECUMENICAL
COUNCILS; APOSTLE AQUILA OF THE 70 & SAINT PRISCILLA; MARTYR
JUSTUS AT ROME; VENERABLE ELLIUS OF EGYPT; VENERABLE MONK-
MARTYR ONESIMUS OF MAGNESIA**

Tone 6

Romans 15:1-7; Hebrews 13:7-16

Matthew 9:27-35; John 17:1-13

SUNDAY, August 03

*******NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE*******

**8TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; PROPHET EZEKIEL; SAINT SYMEON OF EMESA-
FOOL FOR CHRIST & FELLOW-FASTER SAINT JOHN; SAINT ONUPHRIUS
THE SILENT & SAINT ONUPHRIUS THE RECLUSE OF PERCHEVSKY LAVRA**

Tone 7

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Matthew 14:14-22

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 20 JULY 2025

6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; VENERABLE THOMAS OF MOUNT
MALEON; VENERABLE ACACIUS OF SINAI; MARTYR PEREGRINUS,
LUCIAN, POMPEIUS, PAPPAS, SATURNINUS, & GERMANUS;
MARTYRS EPICTITUS-PRESBYTER & ASTION IN SCYTHIA; MARTYR
EVANGELUS; MARTYR CYRIACA

*******NO SERVICE IN SLICKVILLE*******

TROPARION—TONE 5

Let the faithful praise and worship the Word,
Coeternal with the Father and the Spirit;
Born for our salvation from the Virgin;
For He willed to be lifted up on the Cross in the flesh,
To endure death, and to raise the dead by His glorious Resurrection!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

KONTAKION—TONE 5

Thou didst descend into Hell, O my Savior, Shattering its gates as almighty;
Resurrecting the dead as Creator, And destroying the sting of death.
Thou hast delivered Adam from the curse, O Lover of Man,
And we all cry to Thee: O Lord, save us!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 5

READER: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this
generation forever.

PEOPLE: **Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this
generation forever.**

READER: Save me, O Lord, for there is no longer any that is godly.

PEOPLE: **Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us from this
generation forever.**

READER: Thou, O Lord, shalt protect us and preserve us...

PEOPLE: **From this generation forever.**

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 5

I will sing of Thy mercies, O Lord, forever; with my mouth I will proclaim
Thy truth from generation to generation.

Thou hast said: Mercy will be established forever, and my truth will be
prepared in the heavens.

Non-Fasting Between Pascha and Ascension

Posted on June 30, 2025, by Matthew Namee, Global Orthodoxy



Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch

In all but one of the world's Orthodox Churches today, after a fast-free Bright Week, the Wednesday and Friday fasts resume. This happens even though we continue to exclaim "Christ is risen!" until Ascension, and we don't kneel until Pentecost. The bizarre result of this is that the non-fasting period after Christmas is actually longer than the non-fasting period after Pascha—and while, after Christmas, we don't resume fasting until the eve of Theophany, with Pascha, we fast many weeks before the eve of Ascension. But there's one exception to this practice: the Antiochians, who don't fast at all until after Ascension. Where did this Antiochian exception come from?

According to a page on **the Patriarchate of Antioch's website**, "a decree was issued at the Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch during the Lebanese civil war by his Beatitude Ignatius Hazim to eliminate the fasting period between Pascha and Pentecost." The Lebanese Civil War lasted from 1975 to 1990, and Ignatius became patriarch in 1979, so this must have happened between 1979 and 1990. I haven't been able to find any details about this patriarchal decree. But then, in May of 1997—with Ignatius still patriarch—the Holy Synod of Antioch made this a patriarchate-wide practice, albeit with the fast-free period ending at Ascension rather than Pentecost. Here's an excerpt of the decision, published by the Antiochian Archdiocese of North America in its Word Magazine, September 1997: *The Holy Synod decided that the Orthodox faithful do not have to fast between Pascha (Easter) and Ascension. The Paschal time is a joyful time and all Divine Services should reflect this reality, i.e., the funeral service, and the rest of the liturgical services should follow the pattern of the services during The New Week (Bright Week).*



Rabanus Maurus (left) with Alcuin presents his work to Otgar of Mainz (right). Illustration from a Fulda manuscript, c. 830–840.

Were the Antiochians innovating by abolishing the Wednesday and Friday fasts during the Paschal season? Not exactly. I have heard—but have yet to see specific evidence for this—that there are precedents for this in the Orthodox East.

Also, it turns out that there's precedent in the pre-schism Orthodox West. I'm not aware of any full studies on the topic, and there's no evidence that the Antiochian synod has any of this on their minds in 1997, but **recently on X**, Scriptorium Press posted the following excerpt from the 9th century Frankish Benedictine (and Orthodox) monk Rabanus Maurus in his *On the Formation of Clergy* 2:21. Rabanus Maurus's main focus here is on the Apostles' Fast, but he also explains the Orthodox practice of not fasting until after Pentecost.

The second fast is that which according to the canons begins on another day after Pentecost, following what Moses said: 'From the beginning of the barley month you will count off seven weeks' (cf. Deut 16.9). On the authority of the Gospel, this fast is completed after the Ascension of the Lord by many who hold as historical that witness of the Lord, where He says: 'Can the children of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast' (Mt 9.15).

For they say that for those forty days after the Lord's Resurrection, during which it is later read He kept company with the disciples, it is not required either to fast or to grieve, because we are joyful. Indeed, after that time is completed in which Christ hastening to the heavens withdrew from the tangible present, then a fast ought to be declared so that through humility of heart and abstinence from meat we might merit to receive the Holy Spirit promised from heaven.

But just as we said, rightly and by way of a general rule, it was established by the fathers that this begin after Pentecost, so that in the joy of the promised Holy Spirit we await His coming exulting in the praises of

God, and then, renewed through His grace and inflamed with spiritual zeal, we devote effort to fasting and abstinence. The words of Luke agree on this matter in which he recounted that the Lord, who was about to ascend to the heavens, instructed His disciples: 'But you,' He said, 'stay in the city until you are clothed in power from on high' (Lk 24.49). But if anyone of the monks or clerics desires to fast, they are not to be prohibited, because it is read that both Anthony and Paul and other ancient fathers in those days in the desert abstained and did not relax abstinence, except only on the Lord's day.

Even earlier—and still in the West—St Ambrose of Milan (4th c.) said this in "Sermon 61" (the full text of which I haven't found, but it's quoted by John Sanidopoulos in **a 2013 article**): "The Lord so ordained it," says St. Ambrose (+397), "that as we have participated in his sufferings during the Forty Days, so we should also rejoice in his Resurrection during the season of Pentecost. We do not fast during the season of Pentecost, since our Lord Himself was present amongst us during those days...Christ's presence was like nourishing food for the Christians. So too, during Pentecost, we feed on the Lord who is present among us. On the days following his ascension into heaven, however, we again fast" (Sermon 61).

Thus, while the Antiochian practice is very recent, it has significant precedent in church history. It's also notable that, in every instance, the rationale given for non-fasting is the same.

If anyone knows of other examples of this practice in church history, please let me know!

US Civil War Veteran Baptized by St Sebastian Dabovich

Posted on February 28, 2025 by Matthew Namee, Early Converts



Saint Tikhon in 1900 (from the San Francisco Call, 4/22/1900)

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the number of Orthodox in America had not reached 50,000, but it already had several distinguished converts to the Orthodox Faith from Protestantism and Roman Catholicism: ***William Hoskins, an eighty-nine-year-old Civil War veteran who was***

a Baptist from Los Angeles, who traveled to San Francisco to meet a living Orthodox Bishop (Tikhon) and to become acquainted with the True Faith he had discovered in books; Father Nathaniel Ingram Irvine (a convert from the Protestant Episcopal Church) and Father Nicholas Bjerring, a Roman Catholic theologian, ordained a priest in Russia (May 17, 1870), the first Orthodox priest of the first parish in New York City (1870-1883).

That brief, tantalizing mention comes from an undated essay on early Russian Orthodoxy in America, written by Father Vladimir Borichevsky (who died in 1990). I've wondered for years what the story is—because there must be an amazing story here, a 89-year-old Civil War veteran who converted to Orthodoxy!—but I've never tracked down any details. Until now—and it wasn't me who did the tracking down.

Last week, I posted a note about this on X/Twitter, asking for help from my audience in uncovering the rest of the William Hoskins story. The next day, I was rather dumbfounded to receive an email from Kelly Johanna Carter, full of details about Hoskins's life. Here's what Kelly sent me: William A. Hoskins, also Hoskin, was born on July 1, 1812, in Sheffield, Massachusetts. He was the oldest son of Noah Hoskins and Olive Hickock. When William was an infant, the family (along with his maternal grandparents) moved to Jefferson, Ashtabula County, Ohio. Olive's brother Ezra wrote of the move: "It was exceedingly gloomy when we moved into Jefferson. Not a bushel of grain could be had in the township. A few bushels of potatoes were all that could be purchased. In the winter of 1812-13, my father went to Vernon, Hartford, and Brookfield to buy provisions and other necessities. The first inhabitants suffered severely from a lack of food and clothing; sheep would die, and it seemed useless to try to raise them. Entire flocks would run out in three years. Wolves took off many, but the greatest destruction is supposed to have been occasioned by their drinking muddy water from deer-licks. The early settlers suffered not a little from apprehensions of another sort. They feared the aggressions of the British, and even in 1813, they supposed that if Perry should be conquered, the frontier would be left to the mercy of the enemy. However, when he proved conqueror, as the Yankees always do, there was a general time of rejoicing among us. Then we could pass the winter quite comfortably in linen pants, which many of us were glad to wear in lieu of something warmer." [[History of Ashtabula County](#)]

William married Sophronia/Sofrona Young in Geauga County, Ohio, on September 27, 1837. They had six children: Ozro, Carlos, Alida, Cortez, Julius, and Alice, and lived in Perry, Lake County, Ohio. Their youngest daughter Alice was born in Madison, Lake County, Ohio, in or around December 1855. Around this time, or shortly thereafter, William left his

family. For what reason, I don't know; there are no news articles, family recollections, historical sketches, etc. that shed any light on this. Perhaps he intended to send for his family once he reached his new destination, or they refused to come with him, or they thought he was dead. Both William and Sofrona listed themselves as widowed on subsequent censuses that asked for marital status, although surely William, at least, knew his wife was still living, as he lists his son Ozro as a contact on one of his military records. His name is engraved on a joint monument with Sofrona in Madison; based on the Find a Grave photos, it looks to be on the opposite side of his daughter and son-in-law's monument [\[x\]](#). Maybe they held out hope he would return?

At any rate, by 1857, William was living in Newaygo County, Michigan. He built the first home, a log cabin, in what is now Hesperia. In January 1858, he helped found the First Baptist Church of Hesperia, and was its first pastor. [\[x\]](#) He was the county surveyor from 1859 to 1862. [\[x\]](#) On July 13, 1863, he enlisted in the Army and was assigned to Company A, 10th Michigan Cavalry. (A regiment history can be found [here](#); though it does not mention William by name, he is possibly pictured on page 45.) He was discharged on November 1, 1865, at Memphis, due to "senile debility." At this point he returned to Michigan, and in 1866 he and Thaddeus L. Waters laid out the village of Hesperia. William lived in Newaygo/Oceana Counties through 1880, and possibly as late as 1889.

William applied to live at the Washington Soldiers Home in Orting, Washington, in December 1891, stating he had been living in Gilman (now Issaquah) since May 1889, though it's possible he had been living in Seattle as early as 1883 (see newspaper clipping attached on FS). It's unclear if he lived in King County through 1900; on March 23, 1900, he was admitted to the Sawtelle Veterans Home in Los Angeles. His religion was listed P for Protestant. He died on April 9 or 10, 1902, at Providence Hospital in Washington, DC. He had been a patient at the hospital for two months and had been living in DC for seven. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on April 12.

The one thing Kelly didn't find was information on Hoskins's conversion to Orthodoxy. But shortly after this email, I got a message from OSI's Director of Operations, Maggie Wissink, who had uncovered a January 1901 article from the *Russian Orthodox American Messenger*, the periodical of the old Russian diocese in North America. No author is credited, but I strongly suspect that it was written by Saint Sebastian Dabovich, who was serving as dean of the San Francisco cathedral at the time. The article is in Russian, but Google Translate gives us the gist:



St Sebastian Dabovich preaching in San Francisco, 1900.

From San Francisco.

On December 12, 1900, in the Cathedral, Hieromonk Sebastian received William A. Hoskins, a veteran of the American Civil War, from the Baptist sect. He was baptized as John. The newly consecrated member of the Church is nearly the oldest member of our young American Church: he is 89 years old. More than 20 years ago, he began to become familiar with the truth of Orthodox doctrine. He read a lot on this subject. He read about the history of the Russian state and the Russian Orthodox Church, which is inextricably linked with it, and of its significance for Russia. He read the history of religions, various newspaper articles about the Russian Church and special publications about this. The elderly Hoskins was looking for information about the Orthodox faith, and by the grace of God, he found it.

"I felt its truth and purity immediately," he says, "and, inexplicably to me, I burned with the desire to become a member of the Orthodox Church, for I saw salvation only in belonging to it."

"The dry, contradictory teaching of the Baptist religion always evoked in me a feeling of regret for the errors of people," Hoskins says.

With such thoughts and feelings, Hoskins lived in a home for elderly soldiers near Los Angeles for more than 20 years, until he learned (by chance) that there was a Russian Orthodox church in San Francisco. Despite the long distance (more than 600 miles from Los Angeles to San Francisco), the almost 90-year-old Hoskins asked for a 2-week vacation and safely arrived in San Francisco. The elderly Hoskins's desire to receive holy baptism was reported to His Grace Tikhon, and the bishop entrusted Hieromonk Sebastian with the preliminary instruction of Hoskins in the truths of the Orthodox Faith. It turned out that the old man was almost ready to receive holy baptism, and therefore he was baptized three days later. One had to see his joy when the Holy Sacrament was performed over him to understand how happy he was to have found the truth. He himself

read the Symbol of Faith [the Creed] and clearly and firmly gave answers to the questions put to him.

"I am unspeakably glad," he said, "that the Lord has enabled me to know the truth and to be a member of the Holy Apostolic Church. If I had not gone to church here, I would have gone to Moscow."

His Grace, the Right Reverend Tikhon, deigned to be present during the performance of the Sacrament of Baptism and presented [sponsored?] the newly illumined. The neophyte received a cross and the book *Explanation of God—10 Ministries of the Orthodox Church* in English. The next day, the newly baptized was honored to receive the Holy Mysteries of Christ and after two days he went back, carrying with him the light of history to the dark corner of elderly soldiers.

May this be a sign of the bright future of our Orthodox Church in America in the coming century!

I haven't been able to find the book that Hoskins received at his baptism. Saint Sebastian himself published some books in English during this period, but I can't find one that matches the title given. It could be a lost-in-translation issue.

Although the article says that Hoskins had been in the old soldiers' home in Los Angeles for twenty years, we know from Kelly Carter's research that he actually was only admitted to the home in Los Angeles in March of 1900, so about nine months before his baptism in December 1900.

Also from Kelly's research, we know that Hoskins moved from Los Angeles to Washington, DC in roughly September 1901, and he died on April 9 or 10, 1902. It seems likely that Hoskins only received the Eucharist once in his life, the day after his baptism.

[UPDATE: Thanks to Fr Kirill Sokolov, we now have the baptismal record for Hoskins, written by St Sebastian.]

We haven't been able to find a picture of Hoskins himself, but here are pictures of his estranged wife Sofronia and his eldest son Ozro (who lived from 1837 to 1901):



LEFT: Sofronia Hoskins, the estranged wife of William Hoskins
RIGHT: Ozro Hoskins, eldest son of William Hoskins