

HEROES OF FAITH OF THE 20TH CENTURY



LIFE OF AND AKATHIST
HYMN TO SAINT BLESSED
MATRONA
OF MOSCOW



HEROES OF FAITH OF THE 20TH CENTURY

LIFE OF AND AKATHIST
HYMN TO SAINT BLESSED
MATRONA
OF MOSCOW



SAINT BLESSED
ELDERESS MATRONA,
PRAY GOD FOR US!



Stauropegic Intercession Convent
Moscow



With the blessing of Patriarch
of Moscow and all Rus KIRILL

THE LIFE OF BLESSED MATRONA



The text of the akathist has been reviewed by the Worship
Synodical Commission and approved for all-church use by the
Holy Synod. Journal 40 of Apr. 20, 2000, under No. 1911



Blessed Elderess
MATRONA

BLESSED Matrona (Matrona Dimitrievna Nikonova) was born in 1881 in the village of Sebino, Epifan Uyezd (today Kimovsk District), Tula Governorate. The village is around twenty kilometers away from the well-known Kulikovo Field. Her parents – peasants Dimitry and Natalia – were pious and hard-working people living in poverty. There were four children in the family: two brothers – Ivan and Mikhail, and two sisters – Maria and Matrona. Matrona was the youngest. She was born when her parents were no longer young.

Given the poverty the Nikonovs lived in, a fourth child could only have become one of too many eaters. Due to the poverty, the mother decided to get rid of the child before it was born. Killing an infant in mother's womb was unacceptable in a patriarchal peasant family. Yet there were multiple orphanages where illegitimate and disadvantaged children were raised at the expense of government or benefactors.

Matrona's mother decided to give the unborn child to Prince Golitsyn Orphanage in the neighboring village of Buchalki but had a prophetic dream. The yet-unborn daughter appeared to Natalia in her dream as a white bird with a human face with closed eyes and sat on Natalia's right hand. The pious woman believed the dream was a sign and was afraid to give the child away to the orphanage. The daughter was born blind but mother loved her "hapless child."

The Holy Scriptures testify that there are times when

the Omniscient God pre-elects His servants before they are born. Thus, the Lord says to saint prophet Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thee came out of the womb I sanctified thee" (Jer. 1:5). Having chosen Matrona for a special ministry, the Lord from the very beginning put a heavy cross on her, which she bore meekly and patiently throughout her life.

At her baptism, the girl was named Matrona after venerable Matrona of Constantinople, a Greek ascetic of the 5th century, whose memory is celebrated on November 9 (22).

The fact that the girl was chosen by God was testified during her baptism, as the priest immersed the child into the Baptismal font, a pillar of fragrant thin smoke appeared above the baby. This story was told by a relative of the blessed woman, Pavel Ivanovich Prokhorov, who was present at the baptism. The priest, Father Vasily, a righteous and blessed man according to the laymen, was literally amazed, "I have baptized many of people, but I have never seen anything like that. This child will be holy." And he said to Natalia, "If the girl asks for anything, please make sure you come directly to me and tell me what she needs."

He also added that Matrona would take up his place and would even predict his time of death. And it did happen so. One night, Matrona suddenly told her mother that Father Vasily had died. Shocked and scared, the parents rushed to the priest's house. When they came, they found out that he had just passed away.

People also talk about an external, bodily sign that the child was chosen by God – the girl had a little cross-shaped swelling on her chest, a baptismal acheiropoietos cross. Once when she was six, her mother scolded

her, "Why are you taking off your body cross?" "Mommy, I've got a cross of my own on my chest," replied the girl. "Oh, dear daughter – apologized Natalia – please forgive me! I'm so sorry for blaming you."

Natalia's friend once said that when Matrona was still a baby, her mother was complaining, "What should I do? The girl refuses to take the breast on Wednesdays and Fridays. She sleeps day and night and won't wake up."

Matrona was not just blind, she had no eyes. The eye pits were closed with tightly shut eyelids, just like those of the white bird the mother saw in her dream. But the Lord gave her spiritual vision. When still an infant, she would get into the holy corner while her parents were sleeping, bring down icons off the shelves in some unimaginable way, and put them on the table and play with them in the still of the night.

Other children would often call her names and even abused her – lashed her with nettle leaves knowing that she would never guess who was doing it. They would put her in a ditch and curiously watch as she felt her way out and strolled back home. That is why she stopped playing with children pretty early and stayed at home most of the time.

At the age of seven or eight Matrona displayed her gifts of prophecy and healing.

The Nikonovs' house was close to the Dormition Church – a beautiful temple, the only church in the neighborhood of seven or eight villages. Matrona's parents were very pious and loved attending liturgy together. Matrona literally grew up in church. First, she attended church with her mother, and later on – by herself using every opportunity. When the mother lost sight of the girl, she nearly always found her in the church. She even had her own place – on the left from the entrance,

at the west wall, where she would stand motionless and quiet during religious service. She knew church chanting quite well and would often chant along. She must have acquired the gift of ceaseless prayer when she was little.

Her mother, feeling pity for her, would sometimes say to Matrona, "You are my miserable child!" Matryona would answer with surprise, "I'm not miserable! It is my brothers, Vanya and Misha, who are miserable." She knew that God had given her much more than to other people.

From her early childhood, God endowed Matrona with a gift of spiritual reasoning, insightfulness, miracle-making and healing. Her relatives started to notice that she knew not only people's sins or iniquities, but also thoughts. She saw the imminent dangers, could foretell disasters both in nature and society. Her prayer could heal the sick and comfort the suffering. Soon people started to come to her. People were going to the Nikonovs' house, carts and wagons with sick people from nearby towns, villages and even other regions would fill the roads on the way here. Shut-ins were brought, whom the girl made walk again. And in gratitude to the girl, they would give food and presents to her parents. So instead of being a burden she became a breadwinner for her family.

Matrona's parents loved to go to church together. On one church service, Matrona's mother was getting dressed and called to her husband to join her. But he refused. He stayed at home, prayed and chanted. And Matrona was at home, too. As mother was in church she couldn't help thinking about her husband. "Why he didn't come?" And she felt sorry. The liturgy was over and Natalia came home, where Matrona said to her,

"Mom, you have not been to church." "What do you mean? I have just come – I'm taking off my coat!" And the girl said, "Father was in church but you were not." By her spiritual vision, she could see that her mother was in church only physically.

Once in autumn, as Matrona was sitting on the mound, her mother said, "Why are you sitting here, it's cold, come in." And Matrona said, "I can't be at home – they're setting fire under me, stabbing me with a pitchfork." Natalia was puzzled: "There's nobody there." And Matrona explained, "Mom, you don't understand. Satan is tempting me!"

Once Matrona said to her mother, "Mom, get ready, soon I'm going to have a wedding." Mother told this to the priest, who came and communed the girl (he would always come and give her the Holy Communion when she asked). And suddenly, in several days, they saw lots and lots of carts coming to their house. People kept coming with their troubles and problems, bringing their sick, and surprisingly asking about Matronushka all the time. She prayed over them and healed many. Mother asked her, "Matrona, what is that?" And she replied, "I told you I would have a wedding."

Ksenia Ivanovna Sifarova, a relative of Matrona's cousin, recalled that Matrona once said to her mother, "I am leaving now. And there's going to be a fire tomorrow. But your house won't be burnt." And it happened as she told. A fire started in the morning and almost the entire village was burnt down, and then suddenly the wind changed and her mother's house remained untouched by fire.

As an adolescent, she got a chance to become a pilgrim. A daughter of a local landowner, pious and kind girl Lidia Yankova, would take Matrona along to pil-

grimaces: to the Kiev Caves Lavra, the Holy Trinity St. Sergius Lavra, St. Petersburg, and other holy places in Russia. There is a story of how Matrona met Holy Righteous John of Kronstadt. After the Liturgy in St. Andrew Cathedral of Kronstadt, St. John asked people to step aside in order to give a way for 14-year-old Matrona coming to the solium. Then he said loud and clear, “Matronushka, my dear, come over. Here comes my successor – the eighth pillar of Russia.”

Matronushka never explained the meaning of these words, but her relatives figured out that Fr. John prophesied about Matrona’s special ministry to Russia and Russian people during the years of persecution of the Church.

In a while, when Matrona was a little over sixteen, she was deprived of the ability to walk – her legs got paralyzed. The eldress herself pointed out the spiritual reason for that. It was in church after Holy Communion. As she was walking down the church she knew that a woman would approach her and take away her ability to walk from her. And it really happened. “I didn’t try to avoid it. It was the will of God.”

And she never walked again in her life but only sat. And her sitting in various houses and apartments, where she could find shelter, continued for another fifty years. She would never complain about her disability but bore humbly this heavy cross that God entrusted her.

Back when she was young, Matrona predicted the revolution, how “they would plunder and ruin churches and persecute everybody.” She would show vividly how they would divide the land, grab land plots greedily, get as much as they could and then leave everything behind and run for their lives. No one would need any land.

Matrona advised landowner Yankov from their village

Sebino to sell everything before the revolution and leave the country. If he had listened to the blessed woman he wouldn’t have seen how his property was plundered and would have avoided his early death, and his daughter would not have had to live a vagabond life.

Matrona’s neighbor, Yevgenia Ivanovna Kalachkova, narrated that just before the revolution, one lady bought a house in Sebino. She came to Matrona and said, “I want to build a bell tower.” “What you have in mind to do won’t happen,” said Matrona. The lady was surprised, “Why not? I have everything for that: the money and materials.” Yet the bell tower was never built.

Matrona (who became well-known in the region and whose request was considered a blessing) insisted on painting the Theotokos icon “In Search of the Perishing” for the Dormition Church. This is how it happened.

Matrona asked her mother to tell the priest that in his library on a certain shelf he had a book with a picture of the icon, “In Search of the Perishing.” The priest was quite surprised. The icon was found, and Matrona said, “Mom, I am going to order an icon like that.” The mother, distressed, “How are we going to pay for it?” And Matrona told her mother, “Mama, I’m dreaming and dreaming about this icon “In Search of the Perishing”. The Mother of God is asking to come to our church. Matrona blessed women in all neighboring villages to raise money for the icon. Among those who contributed was a man who gave a ruble reluctantly, and his brother gave a kopeck just for fun. When the money was brought to Matrona, she looked through it and found this ruble and this kopeck and said to her mother, “Mom, give it back to them – it spoils all the money.”

When the necessary amount was collected, they ordered the icon from an artist from the town of Epiphan.

His name remained unknown. Matrona asked him if he could paint such an icon. He said that he was used to that kind of orders. Matrona told him to repent of his sins, confess his sins and have the Holy Communion. Then she asked, "Are you absolutely sure you can paint this icon?" The artist said "yes" and started working.

After quite a while, he finally visited Matrona and said that he can't do it. And she said, "Go repent of your sins" (with her spiritual vision, she could see that he still had a sin he had not repented of). He was shocked to know she knew about it. And he went to see a priest again, repented, got communion, and asked **Matrona**

for forgiveness. And she said, "Go. Now you can paint the icon of the Heavenly Queen."

The money raised in villages with the blessing of Matrona was paid for another Mother of God "In Search of the Perishing" icon ordered in Bogoroditsk.

Once it was ready, it was carried in a sacred procession with church banners from Bogoroditsk to the church in Sebino. Matrona was led under arms for four kilometers to meet the icon. All of a sudden, she said, "Don't go any farther. They're coming. They're close." The woman born blind spoke as if she could see, "They'll be here in half an hour and bring the icon." And they did—in half an hour, the procession appeared. A prayer service was held, and the procession headed for Sebino. Matrona now held onto the icon, now was led under arms nearby. This image of the Mother of God "The Seeking of the Lost" became the holy thing of that place and was known for its miracle-making. In times of drought it was brought out to the meadow in the village center and a prayer service was held. After that, no sooner had the people got back home than it started to rain.

Blessed Matrona was surrounded by icons during her

entire life. In the room, where she lived for quite a while, there were as many as three red corners with icons from top to bottom and oil lamps burning in front of them. There was a woman who worked in Moscow Church of the Deposition of the Robe and who frequented Matrona. She remembered her saying, "I know all the icons in your church, where each of them stands."

People were also amazed at how Matrona had the same idea about the world around as people who can see. On one occasion, to sympathetic words of a person close to her, Zinaida Vladimirovna Zhdanova, "I'm so sorry, mother, you can't see how beautiful the world is!" she replied, "Once, God opened my eyes and showed me the world and His creation. I could see the sun and stars and everything on earth – all its beauty: mountains, rivers, green grass, flowers, birds..."

Yet there is even more amazing testimony to the insightfulness the blessed woman had. Z. V. Zhdanova recollects, "Mother Matrona was absolutely illiterate, but she knew everything. In 1946 I had a diploma project on the architectural ensemble of the Admiralty (back then, I studied in an architect school in Moscow). My supervisor harassed me for no reason at all. Over the period of five months he never consulted me and decided to crack me down on my project. A fortnight before the viva he announced to me, "Tomorrow a committee is coming and will confirm that your work is unsatisfactory!" I came home crying: my father is in jail, there's nobody to help me, my mom depends on my support; and this was the only hope – to get the diploma and start working.

Mother Matrona listened to me and said, "Come, come, you'll do it! We'll talk tonight, at tea time." I could hardly wait for the evening to come. Finally, mother

Matrona said, "You and I are going to Italy, to Florence and Rome, and we shall see the works of great artists..." And she started to enumerate streets and buildings! Then she stopped, "Here is Pitti Palazzo, here is another palace with arches. You should copy this – three lower floors with big bricks and two arches for entrance." I was shocked by her vision. In the morning, I rushed to the school, put tracing paper on the drawing and made all corrections with brown ink. The committee came at ten. They looked at my project and said, "Well, not bad, looks great! Congratulations!"

There were many people who sought Matrona's help. There was a man who lived four kilometers away from Sebino, who couldn't walk. Matrona said, "Let him crawl to me. Let him start in the morning and he will get here around three." He did crawl all four kilometers and went back home on foot, totally healed.

Once, during the Easter week, three women from Orlovka village came to Matrona. Matrona met them sitting at a window. She gave a Communion bread to one of them, some water to another, and a red egg to the third. She told the third woman to eat the egg as soon as she got beyond the garden, to the barn floor. The woman put the egg in her bosom. When they passed the barn floor, the woman—as told—broke the egg and found a mouse in there. The women got frightened and hurried back. They came to the window, and Matrona said, "So, are you disgusted at eating a mouse?" —"Mother, but how can I possibly eat it?" —"And how did you dare to sell milk from a container with a mouse in it to people, the more so to orphans, widows, and the poor, who did not have a cow? The mouse was in the milk. You took it out and gave milk to people." And the woman said, "Matrona, dear, they never saw the mouse and didn't

know it." —"But God saw it!"

There were many people coming to Matrona with their diseases and grief. Standing before God, she could help many.

A.F. Vybornova, whose father was baptized together with Matrona, spoke about the details of a healing like that. "My mother came from the village of Ustye, and she had a brother there. One day he woke up and his arms and legs didn't move; they became like lashes. He did not believe in Matrona's healing abilities. The brother's daughter went to get her mother in Sebino, "God-mother, hurry up, my father feels bad – he looks like he's out of his mind: his arms are hanging, his eyes don't look, and his tongue barely moves." Mother got a horse ready and they rode to Ustye. They came to my brother, and he

looked at the mother and could hardly pronounce, "sister." She packed up my brother's things and brought him to our village. She left him at home and went to ask Matrona if she could bring him. So she came, and Matrona said, "Your brother said that I can't do a thing, and himself has turned into a lash." And she hadn't even seen him before! Then she said, "Bring him in, I'll help him." She prayed over him, gave him some water and he fell asleep. He slept like a log and woke absolutely healthy. "Thank your sister; it is her faith that healed you," were Matrona's only words to him.

Matrona's helping for the sick not only had anything to do with spells, divination, traditional medicine, psychic practices, magic or other witchcraft, wherein the "healer" contacts dark forces, but was of a totally different, Christian nature. This is why Matrona was so detested by sorcerers and other occult practitioners, which is testified by the people who knew her well as she lived in

Moscow. Primarily, Matrona prayed for people. Being a God-pleaser richly endowed with spiritual power from above, she pleaded with God to provide miraculous help to people. There are many examples in the history of the Eastern Orthodox Church, when not only priests or hermits could heal those in need, but also righteous people living in the world.

Matrona used to pray over water and give it to her visitors.

Those who drank it got healed of various diseases. The content of these prayers is unknown but it was in no way the sanctification of water performed by the order established by the Church—only ministers have canonical right to do that. But it is also known that not only holy water has good healing power but also the water from some water bodies, sources and wells marked by visitations and prayerful life of holy people, who lived nearby, or by appearance of miracle-making icons.

In 1925 Matrona moved to Moscow where she lived for the rest of her life. The huge capital had plenty of miserable and many of people who had fallen away from faith, as well as spiritually sick people with poisoned conscience. Living in Moscow for about thirty years, she performed the ministry, which prevented many people from death, and brought them to salvation.

The blessed woman loved Moscow, saying that it was a holy city, the heart of Russia. Matrona's both brothers, Mikhail and Ivan, joined the Communist party. Mikhail became a village activist. It is obvious, that the brothers could hardly stand a blessed woman staying with them and receiving people daily and, by her own example, taught people to keep faith. They were afraid of persecution. Out of pity for them, as well as for her old parents (Matrona's mother died in 1945), Matrona moved

to Moscow. Her vagabond life—moving from relatives to acquaintances, from various houses to apartments—began. Normally, Matrona would not get registered where she stayed, and only by miracle avoided being arrested on several occasions. Novitiate nurses lived with her and took care of her.

It was a new period of her life of a hero of faith. She became a homeless wanderer. At times, she had to live with people being hostile to her. Yet it was hard to find a place to live in Moscow, so she was not picky.

Z.V. Zhdanova told about hardships the blessed woman had to endure sometimes. "I moved to Sokolniki, where mother lived in a small plywood house somebody gave her temporarily.

It was a late autumn. I entered the house and saw thick, damp and dank steam—a small cast-iron stove was burning. I approached mother Matrona as she was lying facing the wall. But she couldn't turn to me, her hair got frozen to the wall – we barely pulled it off. I was terrified, "Mother, how come? You know that I live only with my mom, my brother is at war, father in jail – and we don't know how he's doing – and we have two rooms in a warm house. Forty-two square meters, a separate entrance. Why didn't you ask us to accommodate you?" Mother sighed heavily and said, "God didn't allow me, so that you would not regret later."

Before the war, Matrona lived on Ulyanovskaya Street at priest Vasily's, her novitiate Pelageya's husband, before he got to jail. She also lived on Pyatnitskaya Street, in Sokolniki (in a summer plywood hut), on Vishnyakovsky Alley (in her niece's basement). She also lived near Nikitsky Gates, in Petrovsko-Rozumovskoye, stayed with her nephew in Sergiyev Posad (Zagorsk), in Tsaritsyn. She lived the longest (from 1942 to 1949) on Ar-

bat Street, at Starokonnyushenny Alley. Here, in an old wooden family house, in a 48-meter room, lived E.M. Zhdanova, Matrona's fellow villager, with her daughter Zinaida. It is in this room that three corners were occupied with icons from top to bottom. Old oil lamps hung in front of the icons, and heavy expensive curtains on the windows (before the revolution, the house belonged to Zhdanova's husband, who came from a rich and known family).

They say that Matrona – knowing in her spirit that there was trouble ahead – would always leave some places in a hurry a day before the police would come, since she lived without registration. The time was hard and people were afraid to have her registered with them. Therefore it is not only herself who she saved from repressions but also her hosts.

Matrona was several times on the verge of being arrested. Many people who were close to her were arrested, put in jail (or exiled). Zinaida Zhdanova was convicted as a participant of a church-monarchic group.

Ksenia Ivanovna Sifarova told that Matrona's nephew Ivan lived in Zagorsk. And suddenly, she mentally summoned him. He came to his boss and said, "I need a day off, I can't wait any longer—I badly need to visit my aunt." So, he came not knowing what the problem was. And Matrona told him, "Come on, hurry up, take me to Zagorsk, to your mother-in-law." No sooner had they left than the police came. And it happened many times: as soon as they wanted to arrest her, she had already left the day before.

Anna Filippovna Vybornova recalls. Once, a police officer came over to arrest Matrona, and she told him, "Go, hurry up, a bad accident happened at your home! And the blind woman will not get away from you – I keep

sitting on bed and go nowhere." So he listened. He went home and found out that his wife had burned badly because of a kerosene stove. But he took her to the hospital just in time. Next day, he came to work and they asked him, "So, did you get the blind woman?" And he replied, "I'm never going to get the blind woman. If she hadn't told me, I would have lost my wife. But because of her help I could take her to the hospital just in time."

Living in Moscow, Matrona would sometimes go back to her village – either someone asked her to come, or she would feel homesick or miss her mother.

From the outside, her life was monotonous: in the daytime—visitors, at night—prayer. Like ancient heroes of faith, she would never really sleep, but doze lying on the side, putting her little fist under the head. And years passed by...

Once, in 1939 or 1940, Matrona said, "You are all fighting trying to divide something, and don't know that a war is coming.

Many people will die but our Russian people will win."

In early 1941, Z.V. Zhdanova's cousin, Olga Noskova, asked mother Matrona for advice, whether she should take a vacation (she could get a holiday package, but she didn't feel like having a vacation in winter). Mother said, "Go now, because there will be no vacations for a long time. A war is coming. But we will win. The enemy won't touch Moscow; it will only burn a little. And you don't need to leave Moscow."

When the war began, mother Matrona asked all her visitors to bring willow branches. She broke them in twigs of equal length, peeled the bark and prayed. People close to her remember that her fingers were covered with wounds. Matrona could be spiritually present in different places—there was no spacial distance for her spiritual vision. She would often say that she visited the

battlefields helping our soldiers. She told everyone that Germans would not take Tula. And her prophecy came true.

Matrona used to have up to forty visitors per day. People came with their sorrows and grief both spiritual and physical. She never refused to help, except those who had evil intentions. Some people thought mother Matrona was a traditional medicine practitioner, who could break a curse or the evil eye. But after talking to her they understood that she was a God's person and would convert to Church and to its salutatory sacraments. She helped people unselfishly, and never charged anything.

Mother was always loud and clear when she prayed. People who knew her well say that she prayed well-known prayers, which people prayed in church and at home. "Our Father," "Let God arise," Psalm 90, "Lord Almighty, God of hosts and of all flesh" (from morning prayers). She emphasized that she didn't help by herself, but God did by her prayers, "Is Matrona God? God helps!" – she would respond to Ksenia Gavrilovna Potapova's request to help her.

By healing the sick, mother Matrona demanded from them faith in God and changing their sinful lives. Thus, she asked one visitor whether she believed that the Lord was able to heal her. There's another, an epileptic, whom she told not to miss Sunday worships, confess her sins and have the Holy Communion at each of them. She blessed those who had only civil marriage to have a marriage in Church. She told everybody to wear a baptismal cross.

What problems did people bring to mother Matrona? Very common ones: an incurable disease, a loss, a husband who left the family, a broken heart, a sudden unem-

ployment or persecutions from management. Everyday needs and questions, like should I get married? Should I move to another place or get another job? There were quite a few people obsessed with various afflictions: someone fell suddenly ill, another one started to bark all of a sudden, someone's hands or legs went numb, someone was hallucinating. People call such people "spoiled" by sorcerers, witch doctors and wizards. These are people, who have been exposed to some demonic powers.

Once, four men brought an old woman to Matrona. She was waving her arms as a mill. Once mother prayed over her, she relaxed and got healed.

Praskovya Sergeevna Anosova who on many occasions visited her brother in an asylum, remembers, "One day, when we were on a way to him, a man and his wife were sitting next to us going to the hospital to take their daughter home. We were going back home together. All of a sudden, the 18-year-old girl started to bark.

And I said to her mother, "I am really sorry for you... We are going to pass Tsaritsyn. How about taking your daughter to Matrona?" At first, the girl's father, a general, didn't even want to hear about that. But his wife insisted on and we went to Matrona. As they brought the girl closer to Matrona, she started to look like a pole, arms like sticks, and then she spit at Matrona trying to break free. Matrona said, "Leave her, she won't do anything now." The girl was released. She fell and started to spin on the floor vomiting with blood. And then she fell asleep and slept for three days. Her parents looked after her. And when she woke up and saw her mother, she asked. "Mom, where are we?" The mother replied, "We are at the place of an insightful person..." And she told her everything. And the girl got completely healed.

Z.V. Zhdanova told that in 1946, a woman was brought

to their apartment, where Matrona also lived back then. The woman was a high official. Her only son had gone insane, her husband had been killed at war, and she wasn't a believer of course. She had taken the sick son to Europe but no well-known doctors could help him. "I have come out of despair,—she said,—I have nowhere else to go to." Matrona asked, "If God heals your son, will you believe in God?" The woman said, "I don't know, what it is—to believe." Matrona asked for some water and in the presence of the poor woman started to pray loudly over the water. Giving her the water, the blessed woman said, "Now go to Kashchenko clinic (a psychiatric clinic in Moscow—Ed. note), talk to the orderly there and tell them to hold your son tight as they lead him. He will struggle and you try to splash some of this water into his eyes and make sure it gets into his mouth."

Zinaida Vladimirovna recalls, "In a while, my brother and I eyewitnessed how this woman came to see Matrona again. She thanked mother Matrona standing on her knees and saying that her son was now well. And this is how it happened. She came to the hospital and did everything mother Matrona had told her. There was a hall there, to which her son was brought in on one side of the barrier, and she came from the other side. She had a vial with the water in her pocket. The son was struggling and screaming. "Mom, throw it away, the thing in your pocket, don't torture me!" She was shocked – how did he know? She quickly splashed some water into his eyes, some got to his mouth, and suddenly he calmed down, his eyes became clear and he said, "I feel good!" And he was discharged soon thereafter."

Matrona would often put her hands on her head and say, "Whoa-whoa, now I'm going to trim your wings,

but go ahead and fight for the time being!" "Who are you?" —she asked, and something buzzed in the man. And mother Matrona said again, "Who are you?" —and the buzz was even louder, and she prayed and said, "Well, mosquito, enough with your fighting!" And the man left healed.

Matrona also helped people who had problems in their family life. On one occasion, a woman visited Matrona and said that she was forced to get married a man she didn't love, so now they had problems. And Matrona said, "Who is to blame? You are. Because the Lord is the head, and the Lord is masculine, and we, women, have to obey men, and you should keep your crown for the rest of your life. It is your fault that you have problems with him..." The woman listened to the blessed woman, and her family life improved.

"Mother Matrona fought for every soul coming to her for her entire life - recalls Zinaida Zhdanova, - and she always won. She never complained about the hardships of what she did. I still regret never taking pity on mother Matrona, even though I could see how hard it was for her, how compassionate she was for each and every one of us. The light of those days still makes me feel warm. Oil lamps burned before icons in the house, and mother Matrona's love and her silence embraced your soul. The house was filled with holiness, peace and blessed warmth. The war was being waged, and we lived as if in heaven."

What do people remember about Matrona? She had tiny and short arms and legs—as if those of a child. People remember her sitting on a bed or a chest with her legs crossed. Fluffy hair parting in the middle. Tightly shut eyelids. A kind and lucid face. A gentle voice.

She comforted and soothed the sick, stroked them

on the head making the sign of the cross over them—now joking, now rebuking and instructing. She was not strict. She was patient to people's weaknesses, compassionate, kind, considerate, and always happy and never complaining about her diseases or sufferings. Mother did not preach or lecture. She gave specific piece of advice, how to act in a certain situation, prayed and blessed.

In general, she was laconic and gave short answers to visitors. Some of her general instructions have been preserved.

Mother taught that we should never judge our neighbors. She used to say, "Why judge other people? Better think about yourself more often. Each sheep will be hung by its tail. What do you have to do with someone else's tails?" Matrona taught to commit you to the will of God. Lead a prayerful life. Keep making the sign of the cross on yourself and things around, thereby guarding against evil forces. She recommended partaking of the Holy Sacraments of Christ more often. "Protect yourself with the cross, prayer, holy water, and Holy Communion... May oil lamps always burn before icons.

She taught how to love and forgive the elderly and weak. "If old people, sick people or crazy people say something which hurts, don't listen and simply help them.

You should help the sick eagerly and also forgive them, no matter what they say or do."

Matrona didn't allow to make anything of dreams, "Disregard them, dreams may be from the evil one – to distress you or ensnare you with thoughts."

Matrona cautioned against running around to various priests looking for "elders" or "insightful people." She said that if one around to different fathers he might lose his spiritual power and the right direction in life.

Here is what she said, "The world is in evil and temptation, and temptation of souls will be obvious. Beware!" "If you seek advice from an elder or priest, pray that the Lord give him wisdom to give you the correct answer." She taught never to be curious about priests and their life. To those who sought Christian perfection, she advised not to stand out by external appearance among other people (black clothes, etc.). She taught to bear sufferings. She said to Z.V. Zhdanova, "Go to church and look at nobody, pray with your eyes closed or look at an image or icon." Seraphim of Sarov and other saints also have a similar admonition. In general, Matrona's instructions had nothing that would contradict the patristic doctrines.

Mother used to say that using cosmetics is a great sin, whereby you spoil and deform the image of the human nature; you complement what the Lord has not given to you and create a false beauty, which results in perversion.

Matrona said the following about girls who started to believe in God, "Girls, God will forgive you everything if you are faithful to Him." If a girl gives a vow never to get married, she shall stick to the vow for the rest of her life. God will give you a crown for that."

Matrona used to say, "If an enemy approaches, make sure you pray. A sudden death happens if you live without prayer. "Your enemy sits on your left shoulder, and an angel on the right shoulder, and each of them has a book: our sins are recorded into one book, and our good works—to the other. Make the sign of the cross more often! The sign of the cross is like a lock on a door." She taught to make sure you make the sign of the cross over your meal. "Receive salvation and protect yourselves by the power of the True and Life-Giving Cross!"

This is what mother said about sorcerers, “He, who voluntarily entered into a union with an evil power and started to practice witchery, has no way out. Don’t go to witch doctors, they may heal one thing but spoil your soul.”

Mother Matrona used to say to her loved ones that she fought sorcerers and evil forces and waged an invisible war on them. At one point, a good-looking old man came to visit. He had a beard, looked respectable. He fell on his knees before her and said, shedding tears, “My only son is dying.” And mother Matrona leaned down to him and asked quietly, “How did you do it to him? For death or not? And he said, “For death.” And mother said, “Go, go away from me. You shouldn’t come to me.” After he left, she said, “Sorcerers do know God! I wish you prayed as fervently as they do when they pray God to forgive their evil!”

Mother Matrona venerated deceased priest Valentin Amfiteatrov. She said that he was a great man before God and that he helped those suffering people who came to his grave. She sent some of her visitors to get some sand from his grave.

Massive apostasy from Church, militant atheism, increasing alienation and bitterness between people, denial by millions of traditional faith and sinful life without repentance resulted in severe spiritual consequences for many. Matrona understood and felt that very well.

On the days of demonstrations, mother asked everybody to stay inside, shut windows and doors: hosts of demons were filling the entire space, all the air and embrace all people. (Perhaps, blessed Matrona, who often spoke allegorically, wanted to remind people of the necessity to keep shut the “windows of the soul” from the evil spirits—this is what the Holy Fathers call human

emotions.)

Z.V. Zhdanova asked Matushka, “Why did God let it happen that so many churches were closed and ruined?” (She meant in the years after the revolution.) And mother replied, “This is the will of God. The number of churches was reduced because there will be few believers and there will be no ministers.” —“Why is no one fighting against that?” —“People are hypnotized, they are not themselves; horrible powers have come... This power is in the air, it penetrates everywhere. In the past, swamps and thick woods were home for this power, because people went to church, wore crosses and were protected at home by icons, oil lamps and were blessed. Demons used to fly past such homes, and now they inhabit people, because people don’t believe and reject God.”

In an attempt to have a glimpse of her spiritual life, some curious visitors tried to take a peek at what Matrona did at night. One girl saw that she was praying and bowing all night long...

Living at the Zhdanov’s in Starokonnyushenny Alley, Matrona confessed to and was communed by priest Dimitry from the church on Krasnaya Presnya Street. Incessant prayers helped Matrona to carry her cross of serving people, which was really a heroic act, martyrdom and the highest expression of love. Praying over the demon-possessed, interceding for each of them by sharing human afflictions, mother Matrona grew so tired that by the end of the day, she could no longer talk with her loved ones and only groaned quietly lying on her little fist. Still, the inner, spiritual life of the blessed woman remained secret even for the people who knew her well. It will remain secret for the rest.

Being ignorant of mother Matrona’s spiritual life, peo-

ple, nevertheless, had no doubts about her being holy and really a hero of faith. Matrona's heroism was her great patience coming from her pure heart and fervent love of God. It is this patience, which will save Christians in the last days that the Holy Fathers of the Church prophesied about. Being a real hero of faith, the blessed woman taught not by words but by her entire life. Being blind physically, she taught and teaches today the true spiritual vision. Not being able to walk, she taught and teaches today how to walk up the hard path of salvation.

Zinaida Vladimirovna Zhdanova wrote in her memoirs, "So who was my dear Matrona? Mother Matrona was an incarnate warrior-angel as if holding a fiery sword in her hands to fight the evil power. She healed people with prayer and water... She was small as a child, and always reclined on her side, on her little fist. This is how she slept, she never lay comfortably. When receiving visitors, she would sit up cross-legged, two little hands stretched out over the head of the visitor, put her fingers on the head of the person standing before her, make the sign of the cross, say the most important thing that this person's soul needs and pray.

She lived and didn't have her own corner, property or savings. She would live at the place of whoever invited her. She lived on the offerings which could not dispose of, which she could not use on her own. She was in obedience to an evil Pelagia, who managed everything and gave to her relatives all the offerings people brought to Matronushka. Mother could neither eat nor drink without her permission.

Mother seemed to know all events in advance. Each day of her life was a stream of sufferings and troubles of people coming to her. Helping the sick, comforting and healing them. There were many healings by her prayers.

She took with her hands the head of a crying visitor, pitied for him, and warmed with her holiness, and the visitor left elated. And she, totally exhausted, only sighed and prayed all night long. She had a little dimple on her forehead from her fingers, from frequent signs of the cross. She made the sign of the cross slowly, diligently, her fingers looking for the dimple..."

During the war, there were lots of occasions when she responded to visitors' questions "alive or not." To some, she said - "he's alive, wait." To others, - "perform a funeral service and commemorate."

One can assume that people seeking spiritual counsel and guidance also visited Matrona. Many Moscow priests and monks from Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius knew about mother Matrona. By a reason known only to God, mother Matrona did not have an attentive observer or disciple beside her, who could lift the veil covering her spiritual activities and write about it for the edification of descendants.

Fellow villagers would frequent her as well, bringing notes gathered from neighboring villagers, to which she wrote answers. Even if someone from as far as two or three hundred kilometers away would visit her, she knew the name of the person. Citizens of Moscow and other cities, hearing about the insightful woman, would also come to visit. People of various ages - young and old and middle-aged. She would receive some, and would not receive others. She spoke in parables to some people and in simple language to others.

One time, Zinaida complained to mother Matrona, "Mother, I got problems with my nerves..." And she, "What nerves, there are no nerves at war and in jail... You should be self-possessed and be patient."

Mother taught that one should always seek medi-

cal assistance. Your body is a house given by God, and you need to fix it. God created the world, and medicinal herbs, and you should never ignore that.

Mother sympathized with her loved ones, "I feel so sorry for you, and you will live till the last days. Life will become worse and worse. Hard. A time will come, when they will put the cross and bread in front of you and say, "Choose!" "We will choose the cross," they said. — "How could one live then?" — "We will pray, take some dirt, make little balls, pray to God, will eat them and be full!"

On another occasion she encouraged in a hard situation and said that you shouldn't be scared, no matter how scary it is. "They pull a child sitting in a sleigh and don't worry! The Lord will manage!"

Matrona used to repeat, "If people lose their faith in God, they will face afflictions, and if they don't repent, they will perish and disappear. So many nations disappeared, but Russia exists and will exist. Pray, ask, repent! The Lord will not leave you and preserve our land!"

Matrona found her final shelter in this world at Station Skhodnya near Moscow (23 Kurgannaya Street), where she lived with a distant relative of hers, having left the room in Starokonnyushenny Alley. And here also, visitors came streaming and brought their troubles. It was only before the very death that mother Matrona, now really weak, limited the reception of visitors. But people kept coming, and there were some whom she could not refuse.

They say that the Lord revealed to her the time of her death three days before, and she made all necessary arrangements. Mother asked to have her funeral service in the Church of the Deposition of the Robe at Donskaya Street. (Back in those days, priest Nikolai Golubtsov, so loved by his parish, served there. He knew and revered

blessed Matrona.) She forbade bringing wreaths or plastic flowers.

Until her last days, she confessed and had the Holy Communion from priests visiting her. Being very humble, just like ordinary sinful people, she was afraid of death and didn't hide her fear from her loved ones. A priest, father Dimitry, came to take her confession before her death. She was very disturbed and folded her little hands properly. The father asked, "Are you afraid of death?" — "I am."

On May 2, 1952, she passed away. On May 3, in Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius, a note was received on the death of the recently departed blessed Matrona requesting a commemoration service. Among many other notes, this note drew the attention of a hieromonk who served on that day. "Who gave the note? — he asked with agitation. — Did she die?" (Many inhabitants of the lavra knew Matrona very well and revered her. An old woman and her daughter, who came from Moscow, confirmed: mother Matrona had died the day before, and today the coffin with her body would be put in Moscow Church of the Deposition of the Robe. This is how lavra monks found out about Matrona's death and could come to her funeral. Once the funeral service conducted by father Nikolai Golubtshov was over, all the people would come and kiss her hands.

On May 4, the Sunday of Myrrhbearers, a funeral service for blessed Matrona was held with multitudes of people present. At her request, she was buried at Danilovskoye cemetery, in order to "hear the service" (one of few active churches of Moscow was there). The funeral service and burial of the blessed woman were the beginning of her glorification as a God-Pleaser.

The blessed woman predicted, "After my death, few people will be coming to my grave — only loved ones. And

after they die, my grave will become desolate, except maybe for some rare visitors... Yet in many years, people will know about me and come in crowds to get some help in their troubles and with petitions to pray the Lord God for them. And I will help everybody, and will hear everyone.”

Before her death, she said, “All of you come to me and tell me, as if I am alive, about your afflictions, and I will see you and hear you and help you.” And mother Matrona also said that anyone who trusted themselves and their lives to her intercession before the Lord would be saved. “I will meet everybody who asks me for help at their death.”

In more than thirty years after mother Matrona’s death, her grave at Danilovskoye cemetery became a holy place for Orthodox Moscow. Many people from all over Russia and from abroad began to come here bringing their sorrows and illnesses.

The blessed Matrona was Orthodox in the deepest and most traditional meaning of the word. Her compassion for people coming from the bottom of the loving heart, her prayer, the sign of the cross, faithfulness to holy ordinaries of the Orthodox church were the focus of her intense spiritual life. The nature of her heroic faith is rooted in centuries of traditions of people’s piety. That is why, the help that people get after addressing the righteous woman in prayers yields spiritual fruit: people gain foothold in the Orthodox faith, become part of the church both externally and internally, get accustomed to everyday life with pray.

Tens of thousands of Orthodox people know Matrona. They call her affectionately “Matronushka”. She helped people when she was alive, and she helps people now. This is the feeling shared by people who in faith and love ask her to intercede for them before God, to whom the Blessed Elderess greatly yearns.



The Icon of the Theotokos “In Search of the Perishing”

Icon of the Mother of God painted with the blessing
of St. Matrona of Moscow.

Located in the Intercession Convent, Moscow



Blessed Elderess
Matrona



Farewell service to Elderess Matrona
May 2, 1952

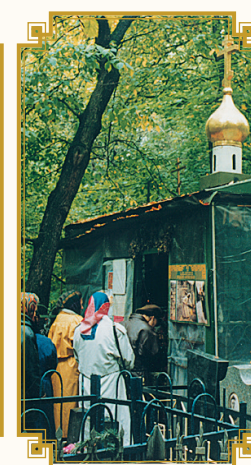


The house of the Blessed Elderess
Matrona in the village of Sebino

"In Search of the Perishing"
Icon that blessed Matrona bought
for Sebino church. Currently located
in Holy Dormition Monastery,
Novomoskovsk, Tula Region



Grave of Blessed Matrona
at Danilovskoye cemetery.
1952



Chapel at the grave
of Blessed Matrona at
Danilovskoye cemetery.
1997



Grave of Blessed Matrona
at Danilovskoye cemetery.
October, 2001



Font, in which Blessed Matrona received
the Sacrament of Baptism



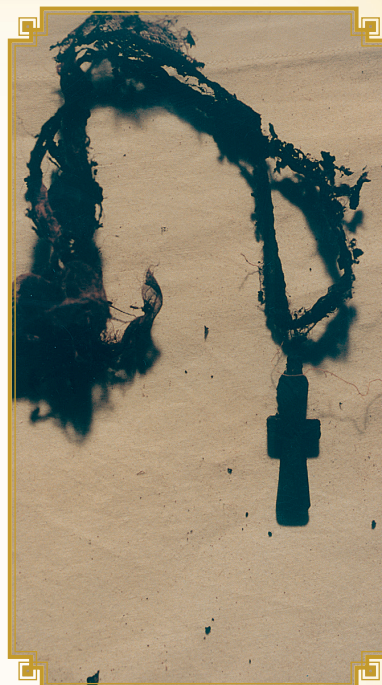
Icon with a particle of relics of Holy
Righteous Blessed Matrona given by
Patriarch Alexy II. Sebino October,
2001



Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Alexy II conducting a litany at the grave
of Blessed Elderess Matrona. March 4, 1998



Coffin of Blessed Matrona
before translation of relics



Baptismal cross Blessed Matrona
was buried with



Translation of the relics of Blessed
Elderess Matrona from Danilovskoye
cemetery Midnight of March 8, 1998



Absolution prayer from the coffin
of Blessed Matrona March 8, 1998



Archbishop of Istra Arseny and Mother
superior of Stauropegic Intercession
Convent hegumenia Theothania.



Mother superior hegumenia Theothania with sisters meeting the relics of Blessed Elderess Matrona in Intercession Convent. May 1, 1998.



Zhdanov brother and sister who have preserved the icon of the Theotokos "In Search of the Perishing" painted with the blessing of St. Matrona. The elderess used to carry it with her when she was alive



Hegumenia Theothania with sisters meeting the icon of The Theotokos "In Search of the Perishing"



Litany at the relics of St. Matrona May 1, 1998



Rite of canonization of Blessed Elderess Matrona in the Stauropegic Intercession Convent May 2, 1999



Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Alexy II sanctifying the corner stone of the new Convent bell tower at the place of the ruined one May 2, 1999



Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Alexy II and mother superior of Stauropegic Intercession Convent hegumenia Theothania in front of the new bells on the day of sanctification of the recreated bell tower. October, 2002.

**10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF HOLY RIGHTEOUS BLESSED
MATRONA OF MOSCOW**



On May 2, 2009, on the tenth anniversary of glorification of Blessed Matrona of Moscow in the community of saints, the Archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Church conducted a worship service in the Stauropig Intercession Convent



Patriarch Kirill at the sanctuary with the relics of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona of Moscow. May 2, 2009



Patriarch Kirill and Convent hegumenia Theothania with foster children of the Convent orphanage. March 8, 2018

**CHURCH OF HOLY RIGHTEOUS BLESSED
MATRONA OF MOSCOW**



Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Kirill visited the church of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona of Moscow, May 1, 2010



Archbishop of Istra Arseny, vicar of Moscow eparchy, conducted the rite of Great Sanctification of Moscow's first church of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona of Moscow. February 27, 2010



Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Kirill and mother superior of Stauropig Intercession Nunnery hegumenia Theothania in the Baptistry of the church May 1, 2010

375-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF INTERCESSION CONVENT



On November 22, 2010, on the day of the icon of the Mother of God “Quick to Hearken”, and the name day of holy blessed Matrona of Moscow Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Kirill conducted the Divine Liturgy in the Stauropegic Intercession Convent, Moscow

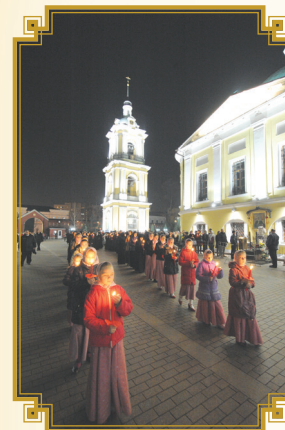


Mother Superior of the Stauropegic Intercession Convent Abbess Theophania with the pupils of the monastic orphanage at the Divine Liturgy on the 20th anniversary of the discovery of the relics of the blessed Matrona Moskovskaya on March 8, 2018



For the achievements in the revival of Stauropegic Intercession Convent the Archbishop of the Russian Orthodox Church conferred to hegumenia Theophania the right to wear a pectoral cross. November 22, 2010

SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE INTERCESSION CONVENT



Easter procession.
April 15, 2012



Mother superior of Stauropegic Intercession Convent hegumenia Theophania congratulating the members on the Holy Day of Resurrection of Christ. April 15, 2012



Svetlana Medvedeva visited the Intercession Convent, where she bowed to the relics of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona of Moscow December 30, 2012



Foster children of the orphanage greeting on the coming Christmas



Christmas performance by the foster children of the girls orphanage of the Intercession Convent. January 7, 2013

60-YEAR ANNIVERSARY SINCE THE DEATH OF BLESSED MATRONA OF MOSCOW



On the day of the 60-year anniversary since the death of blessed Matrona of Moscow and her canonization, Patriarch Kirill visited the Intercession Convent in Moscow. May 2, 2012



On behalf of the inhabitants of the Intercession Convent and all believers, the Most Holy Archbishop was greeted by hegumenia Theothania who presented to His Holiness an image of Blessed Matrona of Moscow. May 2, 2012



In the Intercession Church of the Convent, the Most Holy Archbishop conducted a prayer service with the relics of Blessed Elderess Matrona May 2, 2012

COURTYARD OF INTERCESSION CONVENT IN TROITSE-LYKOVO



Sanctification and raise of nine bells to the bell tower of the Theotokos Dormition church Courtyard of Intercession Convent in Troitse-Lykovo. April 27, 2013



In remembrance of Patriarch Kirill's visit to the courtyard of Troitse-Lykovo, Mother Superior hegumenia Theothania presented an Easter gift. May 4, 2013



Procession to the courtyard of Intercession Convent in Troitse-Lykovo. June 23, 2013



Trinity Church. 2017



Prayer service at the beginning of school year and first bell in the Orthodox preparatory school in Troitse Lykovo. September 2, 2013



15-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF TRANSLATION OF RELICS OF HOLY RIGHTEOUS BLESSED MATRONA OF MOSCOW



On the day of the 15-Year Anniversary of Translation of Relics of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona, Patriarch Kirill sanctified the corner stone of the chapel of St. Righteous Peter and Fevronia. March 8, 2013



Construction of the chapel of St. Righteous Peter and Fevronia. March 8, 2013



Laying the sanctified corner stone at the foundation of the chapel of St. Righteous Peter and Fevronia. March 8, 2013

COURTYARD OF INTERCESSION CONVENT IN THE VILLAGE OF MARKOVO



Church of the Icon
 of the Mother of
 God "Kazanskaya" at
 the courtyard of the
 Intercession Convent
 in the village of
 Markovo



Procession with a
 prayer service of
 water sanctification
 on day of Nativity
 of Saint John the
 Baptist.
 July 7, 2013



Mother superior of the Convent hegumenia Theothania with foster children of the Convent orphanage. July 7, 2013



Hegumenia Theothania with the inhabitants and foster children of the Convent July 7, 2013



Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Kirill and Mother superior of Stauropegic Intercession Convent hegumenia Theothania by the sanctuary with the relics of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona of Moscow

TRANSLATION OF HOLY RELICS OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA



Incessant reading of the Psalter before the sanctuary with the relics of Holy Righteous Blessed Matrona of Moscow in the Intercession Convent Moscow



ON THE NIGHT of March 8, 1998, on the week of the Feast of Orthodoxy, with the blessing of Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Alexy II, the true relics of the 20th century the ascetic piety Blessed Elderess Matrona were translated at Danilovskoye cemetery in Moscow. The exhumation committee was chaired by Archbishop of Istra Arseny. The translation of the true relics of the elderess Matrona was attended by: vicar of Novospassky Monastery bishop of Orekhovo-Zuyevo Alexy, vicar of St. Danilov Monastery Archimandrite Alexy with brethren, Father Superior of the Church of St. Martin the Confessor in Moscow priest Aleksandr Abramov. In Church of Descent of the Holy Spirit at Danilovskoye cemetery, vicar of St. Danilov Monastery Archimandrite Alexy with other clergy conducted a requiem litany. The coffin with the true relics of elderess Matrona was taken to St. Danilov Monastery and placed in the Church of Simeon Stylites over the gates.

Everybody present for this memorable event was spiritually elated and joyful and festive in a special way.

Apart from the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, there were other people on the commission, such as forensic expert, anthropologist, medical doctor and professor, Viktor Nikolaevich Zvyagin and archaeologist, doctor of historical sciences, Andrei Kirillovich Tanyukovich.

The commission completed its work on March 13. It was noted that in the examination of the remains of Elder-

ess Matrona, a cross-like bump was found on her chest, which is mentioned in her biography.

A part of the coffin of Blessed Matrona was placed on the analogion in the Intercession Church of St. Danilov Monastery. Here, during the Lent, services were conducted in commemoration of the deceased servant of God Matrona.

On April 30, with the blessing of Patriarch Alexy II, to solemn chanting of Easter troparion "Christ is risen from the dead...", the true relics of Blessed Matrona were translated to the church of Holy Father of Seven Ecumenical Councils. On that night, the brethren of the monastery conducted a vigil for the deceased.

On May 1, Friday of the Second Week after Easter, a day before the 46-year anniversary of the death of Blessed Matrona, archbishop of Istra Arseny conducted the Divine Liturgy and commemoration service. There were many people praying at that liturgy, even though no official announcement had been made.

On the same day, the coffin with the true relics of Blessed Matrona was translated to the Intercession Convent at Abelman Gate in Moscow. It was solemnly greeted, with the toll of bells, by hegumenia Theothania and nuns.

Today, the true remains of the blessed woman, venerated by believers as Holy relics, rest in this Convent. And just like during her earthly life, people keep coming to get some help from this hero of faith.

STORIES BY PEOPLE WHO KNEW BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA



The queue to the relics of the Blessed Matrona

ANNA DMITRIEVNA PROKHOROVA:

MATRONA was eight when our grandpa—Ilya Gorshkov (Matrona's sister's husband) —was arrested. His wife was lost, "Oh God, what am I supposed to do?" They had seven or eight children. Matrona said, "Just wait, your Ilya is coming back." "Leave me alone, blind gal!" —said the sister. And Matrona said, "Whatever, do as you wish..." On one day, they went to work in the threshing barn. Matrona warned them, "Do it quickly, or you won't make it." They laughed, "What are you trying to predict, blind gal?" —"Whatever. You may not make it." They started to work, and suddenly someone came running, "Ilya's back!" They ran leaving everything on the threshing floor. And none of them believed that before.

On another occasion (she lived with her sister or at home), there was a man who wanted to set the house on fire. But he saw that someone kept standing near the house. He left and came back again twice, and the person was still there. Later on, the man came by and repented, "It is true that your blind girl does something. I couldn't do anything."

MATRONA is my mother's aunt. At Skhodnya, where she lived later in her life (we visited the place later), everything was broken. And uncle Seryozha, at whose place she lived, died. I

didn't know how to address her, and felt embarrassed because of that. But she told me, "Why don't you address me in any way? Who am I to you? Grandma. Even though I never got married, I am still your grandma."

I came to Moscow in 1937... When the war began, I was going to Sebino. I bought a ticket, and came to visit Matrona before departure. "I am going home." —"No, don't." —"I've got a ticket already." —"Who allowed you to go?" —"I am afraid of bombing here." —"It's going to be even worse down there." But I was stubborn and didn't listen. And Matrona said, "Well, you'll grieve for a while and come back."

And it so happened, as Matrona had said. I came back to Moscow in 1947. In five years, I took a vacation from my job and went down to Sebino and was about to marry Vasily there, even though I wanted to marry another man. I came to Moscow to visit Matrona (she lived at Skhodnya back then, 23 Kurgannaya Street, at uncle Seryozha Kurachkin's place) and tell her I was leaving for Sebino. The wedding was getting ready down there, the tables were being laid. And she said, "Did you pray to God? Wait. Don't go." I said, "He's here to get me, how can I not go? We've got tickets already." —"You will go now and will have to come back again. Return the tickets." I didn't listen. We got home and got a telegram, Matrona died. And we went back.

Before Skhodnya, Matrona lived in Zagorsk, at aunt Polya's. I visited them on many occasions. Once, a sick woman came from Tsaritsyn, her husband was a colonel. She had been in bed for fourteen years. She was brought in on stretchers. After the second time, she could sit, and after the third time, she could walk. Her husband didn't even know how to thank her. "At least, I'll buy you a car." And Matrona refused to have anything, "I don't need your car, either."

HERE was a woman who frequented Matrona named Lena. She had been married since school times. Her son was 18 when her husband left her and married another woman. She came to mother Matrona, "Matrona, dear, what should I do? He doesn't want to see me again." —"It can happen"

In five years he got sick and ended up in the hospital. Lena came again, "Mother, what am I supposed to do? Go visit him in the hospital?" —"Yes, go." She came to the hospital and found him already dead. She came to Matrona again. "How am I supposed to mourn him now?" —"In whatever way you please." And the wife cried, "My dear.. honey!" And then asked, "Where should I put him on the prayer list?" —"Well, you can do it in every church." She did and started to visit grandma every weekend, asking, "How is he?" And Matrona said, "I see him every day wearing a suit and a gray shirt and bald. At one point, he flew in the form of a dove and said, "What a beautiful paradise up there! How do I get up there?" Also order a 40-day prayer for him." And she did.

At one point she came and Matrona was sitting on the bed smiling, "Didn't you see me talk to him?" And in a while, she said, "Here we go, your Bogdan is out of his skin now. And it's all because of you."

ON one occasion, at Skhodnya, at aunt Grusha's and uncle Seryozha's, grandma Matrona said, "Go home, all of you." And it became dark, a wind rose, things started to fly past the windows: metal, bricks, roofs, trains upside down, thick birch trees—everything just took off. It was the tornado of 1951. We all got scared, and Matrona comforted, "Don't be afraid!" Our house didn't even move, and all

the others had their property ruined—someone's roof moved off, another neighbor's shed was destroyed, still another had everything upside down on their yard. All the birch trees at the source, beyond the line, where a well used to be, got cut as if by a scythe. But we didn't have even a brick moved. All of a sudden, it cleared up again.

SHE knew everything in advance. Once she said this about Sebino church, "It will open up, don't worry." She said to me, "Even though I'll die, I will still be with you, alive. Never forget about me." She told me, "Go to the village. You'll eat bread and even meat there." And it happened so—we live in abundance now. Back then I didn't believe her, "What meat? I have never eaten it since I was born."

Matrona sat on her bed all the time. Small hands, short legs. I was afraid even to touch her. She called me Semka, aunt Dasha—Petka, aunt Tanya—Vanka, aunt Grusha—Andrei; she had names for everybody. Pelageia took care of Matrona. She died later—aunt Polya Krasnopolskaya. After her, aunt Dasha and aunt Tanya died. At Skhodnya—aunt Grusha (Agrippina Ivanovna) and uncle Seryozha Rakitinsky, the second aunt Polya (Rakitinskaya).

Many people visited Matrona. Great many of them, some of them would come by car... "Spoiled" people were brought in. One spoiled woman propped against the lintel and wouldn't budge. And kept telling what people did to her.

Matrona would pull her legs in, under the skirt. People would kneel and she would spin her one hand over her head, and make the sign of the cross with the other. And the woman shouted, "Blind, fool, freak, where are you pushing me, it's raining outside!"

ZINAIDA VLADIMIROVNA ZHDANOVA:

MOTHER predicted an unusual destiny for my mother. The villagers ridiculed what she said, since they thought my mother was a spinster (28 years old), ugly, illiterate and had no boy-friends. On one day, my grandma Feoktista rushed to Matrona, "A bachelor came. He is a widower. (His wife died and left four children). He came to propose to Evdokia. What should we do?" Mother Matrona suddenly hushed at grandma, "No bachelors! Do you know your Dunya's destiny? Here is how her bachelor will look like—here she straighten up—a landowner with a little mustache." She stroked the imaginary mustache as if looking into a mirror—my dad used to do that. "Handsome, the entire province will be amazed! Don't even think of letting her get married now." Grandma Feoktista headed home moody, and the villagers explained to her, "Feoktista, your Dunya will die, and that will be her landowner."

In a while, Matrona said to my mom, "Go to Moscow and get a job." (Mama supported twelve orphans left from her brother who needed help.) My mother came to Moscow, walked around for a day, no job... Evening came. Where did she suppose to go? She went to this address: Arbat Street, Starokonnyushenny Alley, to her future mother-in-law, my grandma of my father's line, who came from aristocrats. Before Varvara, my mother's sister served there as a maid, and whom grandma loved. Grandma gave my mom a job in the house, to help in the kitchen. My father Vladimir was the only son in the family. He was handsome and had a fiancée—princess Ksenia Shukhova.

On one night, he heard the Savior's voice, "Vladimir, ma

ry Evdokia!” He asked my mom if there was Evdokia in the house. “Yes,—responded my mother,—she helps in the kitchen.” He went to the kitchen and saw Evdokia, and almost passed out. So afraid was he of a destiny like that! Shortly, my father went to pass his internship (he studied in a railroad school) in Perm. He rode in a carriage with his coacher. As they were riding in a field surrounded by a deep forest, an old stooping man came out of the forest with a knapsack on his back, wearing a white canvas robe girdled with a rope. My father said to the coacher, “Pull over, let the old man pass!”

The coacher pulled over, and the old man stopped and said, “Vladimir, marry Evdokia!” —and went his own way. The coacher looked back and said, “Sir, the old man’s gone.”

My father came to Moscow and started to visit various churches. In one of them, he saw an icon of the reverend Seraphim of Sarov—the old man looked just like him. The time came to go to the internship again, this time for the entire year. Grandma said to grandpa, “I will send with him the ugliest girl—Dunya—to serve him. Just to be on the safe side!” It was two years before the revolution...

I was born in 1917, father found a place for us in Sergiyev Posad, across from the monastery (a two-story building was in front of the entrance to the lavra). He visited us once in a while, since his parents didn’t recognize us. If father hadn’t marry my mom, he would have been executed, as many of his relatives were who were close to the emperor.

At one point of his life, my father was a member of a theosophic society (chaired by Belyusin, who later worked for the Cheka at Lyubyanka Street). Father was a sincere believer, but as a young man got so carried away by this

false spirituality that even wrote with his friend Shmakov a book, now very well known among occult practitioners under the title of “Tarot Arcana.” My mom hated when father attended the meetings of this society. She did her best trying not to let him go, but he still did, pretending to take me for a walk. The meetings were held in a house on Trubnaya Square. It is there where they experimented with the “materialization of space.” I was around ten and I remember well, how during these experiments, real rose fell on the table right from the thin air. Yet Matrona urged mom not to bother him. “The Lord will save him!” — and she prayed for him. Really, in the late 20s, father cut all the strings that attached him to this society, even though dreaded their vengeance long afterwards.

Many years passed, the World War II began, and my father was arrested in the fall of 1941. We didn’t get any news of him for a long time.

Mother Matrona spoke about the father, “He is alive and will come back. “But before that, you will receive a letter from him. He will tell you where he is and ask to keep his books.” In six years, we did receive a letter like this. It was accompanied by a note from his doctor saying that father was exhausted and might die. (It turned out that father wrote us before that, but a neighbor of ours, who lived in our apartment, whom father felt sorry for and gave him shelter, would throw them away. This letter was found by a friend of ours in a trash can.) We tried to send a package to him, but the post office wouldn’t accept it—it was prohibited. We came to Matrona, and she said, “Wait, there will be a person who will send packages for you.” And it really happened. In a church at Arbat Street, on Filippovsky Alley, a strange woman approached my mom and said, “I know about your trouble. I work in Government Package Department at Kursky railroad terminal. I

will help you.” Moreover, she helped with groceries, and carried heavy boxes with mail packages and prayed that they would get to their destination. Father survived and came back.

DURING the war, mother Matrona saved Katya (Yekaterina Zhavoronkova) from jail. Katya counterfeited sugar stamps. It was found out and she was sued. Prison was imminent. Punishment for that was severe. Mother Matrona calmed my parents, “I will be in court myself. Nothing threatens Katya.” So what do you think happened? The judge asked, who the defendant was. Katya, “I am.” He, “No, it’s not you!” And she, “Yes, it’s me.” He laughed, as if there were something comic in her (like she put on a big hat), and closed the case. People in court were offended—how come, everybody gets convicted and this one is not?!

Mother Matrona would often tell Katya, “It doesn’t matter how much money you make, what’s important is what the Lord gives you for it.” After prison (Katya was arrested with me in 1950), her pension was very small. Yet, on a monthly basis, she gave a part of it to the poor, to blessed Antonina and Anna, members of Peter and Paul Church on Soldatskaya Street. I couldn’t figure, how she could live for this little, and she said to me, “By the grace of God, I have enough and don’t starve. You can get thousands, and all of it will go down the drain.”

THE WAR began. The sister with three children and mother were about to get evacuated. So she came to ask mother Matrona, whether she should go. Mother Matrona said, “Don’t go anywhere. Who goes, will see a lot of suffering.” The sister listened and stayed in Moscow. Another woman, Vera

Kucherova, also asked mother Matrona, whether she and her son should go to Sebino. Mother said the same words to her, “Stay in Moscow.” Her husband was a colonel, and he wanted her to go to Sebino, because it is a remote village—forty kilometers from the railroad. He thought she would be safe there. And Vera didn’t listen to Matrona and left.

Later on, she told that a hit squad of Germans entered the village. They burnt houses, gathered all the children in the village including her son, put them in a cellar and set a bonfire above them. They pulled all the mothers together to watch their children suffer. Suddenly, a German came by driving a motorcycle and gave an order. The Germans began to hurry and released the children... This is how mother Matrona’s prayers helped to save her home village Sebino.

MOSCOW was starving in 1942. Lay low. Quiet. Streets were empty. Snow up to the knee. Dark. A hard time for my mother and me. The head of the office offered to go with the assistant manager to Ryazan, to trade some things for food. I refused, “I don’t know how, I can’t, I’m afraid.” And mother Matrona said, “Go, don’t be afraid. You’ll do everything and, on the wings of God, will come back home! And I will pray for you.” So we went. We didn’t manage to trade anything near Ryazan. So we went to Ryazhsk, and to the surrounding villages—going 25 kilometers away from Ryazhsk. Here we got some food. Loaded it onto sleighs—about five pounds each. We were far away from the driveway. So we decided to go to it across country with mounds and ravines around us. We lost time—it was March. We woke up early and set off walking on the snow crust. We walked three kilome-

ters. The sun started to burn, snow turned into sugar, and we started to fall through. We pulled hard... The sleighs climbed a hill and here was a ravine... We fell panting and exhausted. To come around, we started to eat snow. Desperate, I suddenly shouted, "Nicolas, God-Pleaser, help, I'm dying!" In a split of a second, the assistant raised his head and said, "Look, look, a black dot is coming." No sooner had I responded than I saw a horse pulling sleighs was coming across ravines and snow drifts. And it came right up to us. A respectable man wearing a long (to the ground) black coat and a black calotte on his head, spoke to us, "All of a sudden, I decided to turn... Probably to get you." We got loaded on his sleighs, still shocked. The man asked, "Where to?" And I said, "To Ryazhsk," and he said, "You need to Ryazan, in order to get to Moscow after, don't you?" I grew stiff, and wasn't even surprised. "I'll take you to Ryazan." And off we went... As we kept going, it was getting dark. The man said, "We'll stop for the night." Suddenly, in the middle of nowhere, we saw a lonely timber house.

The old driver said to me, "Go inside." We did, the house was empty—nobody lived there—with icons on the right in the corner, a table under them, benches against the wall, and nothing else... An old man stood at the table, his face pale and exhausted, wearing long clothes, long hair cut evenly around. He didn't say a word. We saw a stove and rushed to it. The stove was hot. We leaned against it, and exhausted by the experience, slid down and fell asleep.

Early in the morning, we set off. The driver, with no questions, drove us to the train station and took my sleigh, "Hurry up, the train to Moscow is leaving." As we came, we heard the first honk signaling the departure. It was impossible to get on, cars overcrowded. A man standing in the front letting nobody through. He waved his hand, "Step

aside, let them in." And they did, no question asked. The people raised the sleigh and we got to the train. I was so excited that even forgot to say thank you and felt nothing. Once I got home, mother Matrona said to me, "So? Whose wings brought you?"

I understood whose only in 30 years. How patient and merciful is the Lord! We had to move from Arbat Street to Medvedkovo. I came to Intercession Church on the first floor and put a candle to Nicolas the God-Pleaser... Oh Lord! It was him, this great miracle-maker, I could see the same face under the mitre. And it all had happened to me by mother Matrona's prayer!

Ever since, my soul has been full of gratitude and warm infinite love to St. Nicolas, our prompt helper. And it is only now, that I ask myself, amazed. How could the sleigh get to us so fast without a road? How could a horse come across deep ravines covered with loose snow. Why did help come instantly after I screamed to Nicolas the Miracle Maker? What kind of house was that, lonely in the middle of nowhere? How did the driver know, where we were from, and brought us to the station right before the train left?.. Who was that old man in the house standing under icons? Was the house real?

AFTER the war, I was very poor, like many people back then. I had nothing to put on, my coat was worn out. And mother Matrona kept saying, "You will have everything,"—and would count my coats on fingers. And it came true—after the camp I had everything I needed. I would say frequently, "Mother, I am bad, I am sinful. I can't get better (I was quick-tempered, arrogant and cocky), what should I do?" And she said to me, "Come, come... First, we will pull the weeds, then we will give it some milk and you will become good!"

MOTHER Matrona could plead God to change someone's lot on this earth. As I wrote before, a little 5-year-old girl came with mother Matrona, named Nina, a true angel! If somebody gave her something sweet, she didn't eat it, but hid it under her little cabinet, and when visitors with problems came she asked them if they had grand children. And she would give all her sweets to them. The girl was special. And she died... A week before she was seven... Of the diphtheritis. We all grieved and cried a lot.

Mother said, "Don't cry. She would have had a very hard life. She would have become a great sinner and would have lost her soul. I felt so sorry for little Nina and I pleaded with God to give her death.." Once, mother Matrona said, "I saw Nina. She is in paradise, in beauty. I saw her come fearlessly to the Savior as He was walking and ask, "Lord, when is my mama coming here?" (She used to call me mama Zina; she didn't recognize her own mother since she was a promiscuous drunker and tortured the girl sending her to a freezing kitchen, and didn't give her a slice of bread. Eventually, she was deprived of her parental rights.) The Lord answered, "Dear, the limit of time has not come yet for her to come."

In 1959, my husband and I came from Magadan, where we had been doing time, to Moscow. We wanted to get married in church but kept facing different hurdles. I was desperate. My husband returned from the North and, after a stroke, he was sick. At one point, I came to a church, and the priest, father Vasily Serebrinkov, the superior of Jerusalem Courtyard Church at Arbat Street, refused to marry us, "Lent is coming, come after Lent..." My mom spoke to him, but he told her the same.

One night I had a dream: Nina came wearing a long white dress and said strictly, "I have to tell you that I am going

to help you with your marriage!" And I looked at her and thought: how can she, she's dead? And she responded, "I asked the Savior's permission for that..." I woke up in the morning, and a woman I knew came running from the church and said, "Father Vasily says, that he will marry you tonight at eight."

BLESSED Mitrofany was God's man, his life being total wandering. In the time of the revolution, he was brought to a nunnery near Vyazma from Petrograd, to hegumenia Sarah. He lived under her personal care and helped sisters to tuft blankets. But he didn't stay there long. Mother Sarah told him, "The nunnery is going to be empty soon. Everyone will be chased away. They'll take me, and I will bless you to become a wanderer. He lived all his life without home, relatives or things, he just wandered around staying here and there. Everybody in Vyazma knew him. You could see far in the field, a little black long-haired head. It is our Mitrofany. He and mother Matrona lived with us for the whole war.

In 1948 blessed Mitrofany was arrested in Vyazma, he was sentenced to twenty five years and was exiled to Mordovia. He was released in the mid-fifties, and he died in August 1982. He was buried in Vyazma. He also was very insightful and a servant of God. Mother Matrona loved him very much. She said, "When I'm gone, he will stay to help you."

A lot of wonderful things can be written about blessed Mitrofany. I left my first husband Boris, since he was an atheist. And I married him not because I loved him, but because he saved my brother. I vowed to be faithful to him. My husband was wounded at war and sent to Gorky. Mother Matrona was staying in Zagorsk and I didn't seek her advice. In Gorky, my husband worked in the headquarters. He started drinking, coming late at night, and say, "So much work!"

In summer, I came to Moscow and went to visit mother Matrona—she lived in Sokolniki back then. I came in and said, “Mother, I’m getting married.” And she, “Why didn’t you ask me? Leave him!” —“But I vowed before God that I would be his faithful wife.” Matrona said, “I will take this sin on me, and you go home; your husband got sick. When you’re there tell him right away, “Boris, let me read the letter from Tanya,”— after you read it leave your husband! Yes, he did save your brother, but he would have done it anyway.” On the way back from Sokolniki, I cried: how was I supposed to ruin my life? I had to support my old mother, I had not graduated from university yet! So I said. My husband was at home, sick. I entered the room, and said immediately, “Boris, give me the letter from Tanya.” Not even thinking, he got an envelope out of his pocket, and, terrified, demanded it back, “How did you know? I just got this letter.” The letter was from waitress Tanya, he had been spending time with. This is how I left my husband.

Many years passed. He died, but I didn’t go to his funeral. Elder Mitrofany asked me to come and said, “Why didn’t you go to Boris’ funeral?” And I said, “He’s an unbeliever.” In about two years, the elder asked me to come again, and said, “Why don’t you commemorate him?” I said the same thing, and suddenly, he said, “You know what, he is in the Kingdom of God.” And I said, “How did it happen? He never went to church, never had the Holy Communion?” And the elder said, “He did good things to people for his entire life. He saved many, helped many. He was very kind, not greedy, gave everything to his neighbors. He didn’t spare his lifetime—spent his strength joyfully.” And my eyes opened. I had seen everything and hadn’t noticed. His father was a priest, he suffered, he was baptized, he never blasphemed.

NOT even one word of mother Matrona was wasted. In 1943, she said to me, “In your house, one room should face the east. There should be a table—God’s altar—for prayers; never eat or drink at it.” These words fell on my deaf ears, since we neither had a room facing the east, nor our own house. Yet, in forty six years, her words came true.

In 1988, our village house burned down. My brother and I, being over 70 years old, didn’t want to build a new one. But my brother saw in a dream the deceased Mitrofany in white clothes come into the room and strictly say, “Build, build and build!” Our house was built by the Lord Himself, since construction materials were hard to get back in the day. The construction went smoothly and successfully until a wooden house was complete. In that summer, a nun aged 93 died. We got her table, and my brother brought it into our new house. So what do you think happened? Soon after I arrived in Moscow, a priest, father Aleksandr, told me during confession, “Take care of the table you got from mother Maria, it is special. At her death bed, she personally asked me to preserve it. This table is an altar of God. During the first year after the revolution, the sacrament of the Eucharist was officiated on it. Bishops and Patriarch Tikhon himself and other great people of our Church conducted services at it. Don’t eat or drink at it.” And one of our rooms faced the east.

MOTHER Matrona was frequented by some Anna Georgievna, a former landowner. She told me this. Just before the war, mother blessed her and sister Natalia to go on foot to Sarov and Diveyevo, saying, “Go, go, father Seraphim is waiting for you!”

It took them long to get there. They were not far out

walking in the deep woods of ancient pine trees in the dusk. The wind was rocking the trees, it was getting darker, the road was becoming less and less visible, and it was scary. Where to stay for the night? They saw a stooping old man on the road, wearing a white canvas robe, who said to them, "I've got a house nearby, let's go, you can stay there overnight." They got to the house, entered it and saw an empty room with nothing but a wide bench. They laid down and fell asleep right away. They woke up in the morning to the twittering of birds and pleasant sun beams, feeling joyful. And they saw that they were lying on a mound under a huge pine tree, and there was no house. And they remembered mother Matrona's words, "Father Seraphim is waiting for you."

ANTONINA BORISOVNA MALAKHOVA:

IT WAS SHORTLY—maybe a year—after I moved to Moscow from the village. I had a very hard job, in the boiler house of the First City Hospital. I was in charge of supplying hot water to the maternity house. A dirty and dusty place; I was scared. I would lock in at night, and my mom would stay for the night with me—I was young, and was afraid when someone knocked on the door. We prayed at night in this boiler house. It was all before Matrona, before visiting her. When we met her, she started to talk to me, "Where do you work? Well! You'll be taken from there." I didn't know anyone in the hospital administration, so I thought, "Who's going to take me? Who would need me?"

In two weeks, the chief doctor invited me to his office and said, "You are an intelligent and literate girl. We'll appoint you to a position of the chief storekeeper." And I said, "I'm afraid, it's too hard for me." —"You will man-

age "If someone hurts you, come to me and I'll help you with everything." This is how I became a storekeeper. And later I got transferred to the accountant's office.

She also said to me, "Are you planning to go to school? Go, it's good time for school." And I wanted to become a nurse. But it was shortly after the war, and I still had fear that I would be recruited, so I was afraid to go to school. But after she blessed me, I did. Later, she also told me, "Your destiny is far away. The bachelors courting you now are not yours—chase them away, your destiny is far away."

I was 22 back then, and I got married when I was 29. She was right. She also had said, "After that you will lead a very good life, and won't even know how much money is in your purse." And really, today I don't know how much money I have in my purse. Other people keep counting and re-counting their money, and I never know. If I don't have money today, it will come tomorrow.

AROUND three kilometers out of Sebino, there were settlements in the field, around five houses in each. Two sisters, Natasha and Shura lived there. They also accommodated a beggar, Praskovya, (everybody called her Panka) and three of them lived together. They had a horse and a cow, which were confiscated from them.

Shura went to Moscow to try to solve that and to visit Matrona. She came to her relatives and asked for Matrona's address. And they didn't want to give it to her. "You are pretty, have boyfriends, you have nothing to do with Matrona." One night she had a dream: Matrona came up to her, put a gold crown on her head and said, "They didn't let you come and see me, and I am putting a gold crown on your head." She woke up in the morning and told her relatives, "You didn't let me go and see Matrona, but she

appeared to me in a dream.”

She wanted to have an appointment with Kalinin and got in line. And the line was a week long. She needed some documents. People could see that she was from the country and asked her if she had a passport. “Here,—she showed,—under my armpit. When they call me in, I’ll show it to them.” (Of course, she didn’t have any passport. A villager had no way of getting one back in those times.) Suddenly, a woman approached and said, “Come with me, I will lead you through another way.” She took her around, they went up to the seventh floor and entered Kalinin’s office. He said, “Have a seat. What’s your problem?” “Our horse, cow and land got confiscated,”—Shura replied. —Are we supposed to starve now?” “No, it’s not right. You’ll get everything back. Go, and please, don’t worry.”

She left for home on the next day. Aunt Natasha met her, “Shura, where have you been? We’ve got everything back—the cow and the horse.” And this is the way they went on living, like individual farmers. Shura died when she was young—33. On one night, Panka saw aunt Natasha in her dreams, soon after she died. Panka asked her in her dream, “How is Shura doing up there? “I am doing good,—aunt Natasha replied,—and Shura lives much higher than I, in the garden. She’s doing great.”

TWO women came to visit my grandma and then went to Matrona so she could heal them. One of them had faith, the other was smart. So they came to Matrona. She accepted one, gave her some water, but didn’t accept the other and didn’t even give her water. “I don’t have water for you,”—she said. So they came back from Matrona, and my grandma said, “Come on, honey, I will give you some water, I’ve got

some of Matrona’s water!” So she fed the old ladies, gave them some tea, and they started to pack. And grandma remembered, “Wait, I’ll give you some water.” She poured it into a bottle, put it on the table, “Here, don’t forget,”—and the bottle got split in two, and the water got spilled. My grandma got agitated, “Whoah, what did I do, why did I give you water?” She ran to Matrona. She came in, and Matrona said, “Come! I’m going to show how to give my water away! Don’t you think I have no water myself? Try to be kind? And gave her water! Did you? —”No, mother, I didn’t. The bottle broke...” —”I know that! She wasn’t even worth to hold my water in her hands.”

MY BROTHER came from Moscow to visit our mother. He and I took our cow to Moscow to sell it. After about 30 kilometers we found out that my brother lost the documents—both his and mine, and for the cow—everything. He said, “I’m gonna kill myself. Where should I go?” And I called him a fool. “How can we go now?” —”We will ask Matrona. She will help us and come with us.”

Matrona’s a great person! Showed us the way and shelter to stay for night. It took us 10 days to get to Moscow on foot. And here how we spent nights: Matrona showed us a house, we knocked—and got received. Showed mentally, of course. I asked my brother, “Where do we stay for the night?” And he said, “See the house over there, with a blue roof?” We went there, knocked on the door, the hosts let us in and let us stay for the night. When the patrol asked, they said, “We’ve got no strangers, only our brother and sister have come to visit.” And we didn’t have documents! And they didn’t ask us, and received us as their relatives. And this is how it was until we got to Moscow.

So it took us ten days to get there, and we brought the cow, alright. My brother was puzzled: after the war, patrol was everywhere stopping people, but we were never stopped. I told my brother, "See? This is a miracle!" And he said, "I do." And then I said, "When we get back at 10 or 11, will you go to visit Matrona?" —"I will." My brother and I came to visit Matrona, and before we opened the door, we heard her voice. Her nurse opened the door, and Matrona, laughing, "Let them in, I know who they are. I, being blind, went with her and led their cow by the tail all the way. I led their cow and gave them shelter with good people! This is when you needed me! You didn't let me off your tongue!" And to my brother, "How come, your younger sister called you a fool?" My brother later said, "My hair stood on the end. She didn't come with us, and she knew everything!" And my brother asked Matrona, "I lost all the documents. What am I supposed to do?" —"Your documents are worth just ten rubles. You will manage to solve it."

I WENT to see her many times. On one day, I took my cousin along. I was talking to Matrona and she was praying over me. And my cousin was silent as if she saw a wolf. Matrona asked her, "Why are you so quiet! You can only swear at home, and can't do it here?" My cousin stayed quiet for a while and then said, "I sort of lost my tongue—I can't talk."

She only asked about her husband, but Matrona said, "Think for yourself." My cousin got scared and said nothing thereafter, neither about her husband, nor about her brother: they didn't come back from war. And Matrona said, "Your brother is alive. And I think of your husband quite often. He is also alive." And it turned out to be true. After that, my brother came to visit us many times.

A WOMAN from Sebino, Valentina, worked in Moscow as a secretary for a judge. Her boss advised her to get a job at a storage house and taught her how to steal, "You may grab something when you get a chance." She decided to go to Matrona and find out, whether she should get another job, and Matrona said, "Don't rush for big money. Stay where you are, and later you'll get more." So the boss offered another secretary to go to the storage. She agreed, and Valentina took her position. A better-paid one. Valentina came to visit Matrona and said, "I earn more now." —"See? And the other job was not for you." And the other girl worked in the storage for three months only. It only took once to steal two little cans with something, and get to prison for three years. Valentina thanked Matrona, "Grandma, thank you very much. You know, that other girl got three years in prison." —"I knew it wasn't your job. It was for her."

PRASKOVYA KUZMINICHNA FROM EPIFAN:

VANNA Ivanovna Menyayeva, the president of Epifan congregation, said that in 1951, she got a job as an accountant in the regional consumers' union. And she felt uncomfortable working there. So she decided to seek Matrona's advice, "Matrona, dear, I got a job in the accountant office." Matrona waved three times before her eyes, "Hell-hell-hell!" And she did it nine times. Anna Ivanovna understood, that the job was bad, not for a believer, and quit it. She stayed at home for a while, and thought, "Where should I go now?" With the help of a prayer—probably Matrona's prayer—people stopped by at her place and offered her a job of the assis-

tant of the congregation president, which she accepted, and has been working there ever since.

KLAVDIA PAVLOVNA GORYACHKINA, WHOSE MOTHER FREQUENTED MATRONA:

THIS is what Matrona said about the church in Sebino, “They are going to scalp our Dormition Church, remove icons, and tarnish the entire Church of the Dormition of the Mother of God. And it did happen during the war. I had beloved. My mother went to see Matrona to tell her that I meet some boys. “Oh, don’t worry about boys. How about this one, Dmitry Korneich Goryachkin, how is he doing?” —”His son Ivan offends him.” —”Do they have another son?” —”Yes, but he’s gone missing.” —”It’s OK, he’ll appear. He is a good guy, and nice.”—said Matrona. It is him, whom I married and we has been living together for 35 years and raising 5 children. And our father’s brothers could hardly make ends meet—all of them were killed, and one—hanged himself.

VASILY MIKHAILOVICH GUSKOV, LOCAL RESIDENT OF SEBINO:

WHEN Matrona lived here, she had a lot of visitors from Ryazan and other regions, many of people. I didn’t visit her here—my parents did. They went to see her in hard times. At one point, our horses went missing. We spent three days looking for them—but didn’t succeed. There were grain seedlings in the village of Tatinki. My father told me, “Go to the the grain seedlings area, they may be there.” Father went to

see Matrona, and I went to look for the horses passing the forest, cross-country directly through the fields. No sooner had I reached the woods than heard horses neighing. I listened—again. I entered the woods, went down a hollow there, then up a mound then to an aspen wood—and here they are. I saddled them up and rode them home. Soon, father came back from Matrona. He had asked and she’d said, “Go home, they’re back.”

MY MOTHER’S sister lives in Zhurishki. At one point, she came to visit and invited us to Zhurishki. My grandma fished all year round, so we always had fish. My mother packed some fish and we left for Zhurishki. The road to Zhurishki lies nearby the church, close to Matrona’s house. My sister asked, “Should we visit Matrona?” And her mother said, “We would have to give her some fish, and there’ll be not enough for us.” And right at this moment, Matrona calls to her mother, “Would you give me some fish?” “What are you talking about, Matrona, where are we gonna get it?” “We do have fish,”—said Matrona. And at this moment, my mother and sister came in. Matrona took some and said, “Take this with you to wherever you go, or you won’t have enough.”

SEMYON Alekseyevich lived two houses from ours. He had a nephew who could hardly walk. Once, I came to visit him and saw—the nephew had come and they were talking about Matrona, “We all go to see her. Now what does she know?” So the nephew is about to leave (put on a jacket) and says, “I’m going to test her—will lie to her that I want to get married.” He was back soon and told us how Matrona received him. “You are literate and have sight, and I am blind. Why have you come you come? Go away.”

LATER on, when I lived in Moscow and got a job in a factory, collectivization began in Sebino. And they started to confiscate property from households. Father fled and came to my place, mother was arrested and put in the Venyov jail. Matrona hosted by engineer Zhdanov's, on Starokonnyushenny Alley. He was a compressed air engineer. Matrona lived alone at Evdokiya's (maiden surname Peskova) in a 40-square-meter room. The room had an iconostasis, old oil lamps, and heavy curtains. It was a wooden house with lions at the gate. A part of the engineer's house had been confiscated and inhabited with people. I came to Matrona to tell her that her mother had been arrested. "They'll let her go,—said Matrona. —What is she guilty of? Nothing, so they'll release her."

After applying to various institutions we came to the Central Executive Committee on Mokhova Street. The entrance was free—there were guards but they let us in. We had been writing to Kalinin, but there were lots of secretaries there. Where should we go? A woman came up and said, "Go to the room four hundred something on the third or fourth floor—there is no elevator." I went up and saw—there were many of people, wearing home-made shirts and straw shoes. They were "kulaks."

They had brought their applications to the room, and now a secretary was calling them in by cards. It was the secretary in charge of agriculture. I told him about the situation, showed him a paper signed by my neighbors which says what household I owed. He opened my file, and it was specified there that we had a 40-hectare garden, a barn and some employees. And he filled in a form for me to get everything back a form ordering to give back everything. He even swore. And I told him, "My mother got arrested." And he replied, "I will make a petition myself."

I came to Epifan's prosecutor, And he said, "Give me the form," I didn't (the secretary had said: "Don't give the form to the prosecutor. Let him write his own, otherwise I'll deal with him.") The prosecutor said, "I don't have time,"—and ran away. And then he came back and gave me his form, reading, "The household does not belong to the state. The property should be returned back." And mom came back in the morning, The property should be returned back on that night...

ALEKSANDRA ANTONOVNA GUSKOVA, THE WIFE OF VASILY MIKHAILOVICH:

THE FIRST time I visited Matrona was in Moscow, at Zhdanova's apartment. I also was in Tsaritsyn. My husband had been captured—we got a notification about that: "Gone missing." I came to see Matrona. It was a little wooden house. I knocked on the door. Her nurse answered, "What can I help you?" "I came to see Matrona." —"I can't let you in, I don't know you." The door remained open. Matrona heard that and said, "Let her in, why don't you?" I went in and kissed Matrona. I asked her about my husband. She said, "He is coming. he is being kept by severe supervisors." Then I asked her about my sister's husband. She, through clenched teeth, "He is coming." I understood that she didn't want to distress me. And he never came.

ZINAIDA ALEKSANDROVNA KARPINA, NATIVE OF SEBINO:

WHENEVER my mom was going to see Matrona in Moscow, people from all neighboring villages sent their notes with her. And Matrona answered to them. Back then, I was still

little and my mom became widow pretty early. There were five of us—her children. The director of the winery proposed to her, and she told him, “I’ll give you an answer in a month,” and went to seek Matrona’s advice. Matrona said, “Dunya, you shouldn’t do that, but go down God’s path.” My mother listened and rejected the director’s wedding proposal.

My mom had a brother in Moscow. So on one day, she came to see him and she asked Matrona, “Can I stay for one more night?” And Matrona said, “You have to leave, or you’ll get robbed.” My mom didn’t listen, and when she came back, she found out we’d been robbed.

I left for Moscow when I was 16. I stayed with my sister in a dorm. She was 14 years older. In two years and a half, they tried to arrange my marriage to a man, whom I had not even seen. My mom wrote me, “Daughter, even if you know a man for two days, but if Matrona gives her blessing, you should marry him. Moscow is a deep forest. It’s not like home where you know everybody from several villages.”

So I went to Skhodnya. I found a house, where Matrona lived. On the way, I was thinking (I just couldn’t help it): “She knows nothing about that.” A woman—her maid-servant as I found out later—met me at the door. I didn’t tell where I was from. And she told me right away that today, Matrona was seeing no one else. I knew immediately—it is because I was thinking bad things about her on the way here.

One room was shut, but another slightly—by a finger—ajar. I turned to go and heard her voice from the room, “Tatiana Petrovna, let her in, it is Dynya’s daughter from Sebi-no,” and Tatiana Petrovna let me in. Mother Matrona didn’t let me talk and said right away, “He’s going to be be your husband; he commits some darkest deeds; you’ll soon get married, even before your sister.” She also said that I would

visit her again soon. She was right, in two months I came again and she said, “This one is going to be your husband, and you will live well. But first get married in church, and don’t let him do anything before that.” She prayed over my head and said three times, “Be an honest Christian, and you’ll live well.” And I did. We were married in the Epiphany Church. My sister was visiting me and also married a man who lived in living in the same house—so she is on the second floor and I am on the first.

KSENIA GAVRILOVNA POTAPOVA:

In 1927 I came to Moscow from the village. I was 19. I got married when I was 16 but my husband died in a year. First I got a job of a housemaid, then I found another job and married a widower with two children.

I met Matrona in 1935. I was 27 then and I went down with Tuberculosis. Matrona healed me and, shortly before her death, she said, “You will never have problems with your lungs.”

Matrona had been helping me during my entire life. In 1935 she lived on Vishnyakovsky Alley, not far from Nicolas Church in Kuznetsy, on Tagarskaya Street. She lived in a two-floor house, in the basement, at her niece’s place. Once I visited her and I didn’t wear a body cross—I was afraid to wear a body cross. She had a novitiate, who asked, “Are you wearing a body cross?” And Matrona answered for her, “Who could give it to her? They left all crosses and now are only seeking health from God.” The novitiate told me, “Put on a cross, and then come. Do you know who you’ve come to?”

I asked mother Matrona, “Matrona, please help me! And she replied, “Is Matrona God? God helps!” “Here is Matryona,”—I said.

Matrona would always receive me well. If she doesn’t

want to see someone, she talks in parables with them, but with me, she talked in simple words.

She had two novitiates back then: Tatiana and Dasha. First, she had Pelageya. She arranged her marriage with a priest. They had two children, a boy and a girl. There was also an orphan, who died at the age of 5.

Doctors didn't notice I had TB, they thought it was heart decease. They prescribed me to take twenty valerian drops. By the time they found out the right diagnose, the lungs developed a cavern.

They put me on a breathing apparatus, and there was something wrong with it. I asked them to send me to a sanatorium, it was really hard to go there. I came to see mother Matrona and asked, "What should I do? Should I go to the village or wait before they send me to a sanatorium?" "You'll go to a sanatorium." And I did. In two weeks, they send me to a spa in Crimea and they covered all the expenses including travel fare and three-month accommodation.

I did not work during the war. My child came along just before the war began. I made my living by going with bags to Plavsk, Tula Oblast. People were usually checked by the police after Serpukhov station. Before each journey, I would stop at Matrona's, "Mother, please bless me!" "Go, nobody will touch you." And the police would not go check my ticket and went back before getting up to me. I carried bags that weighed up to 50 or 60 kilograms on my way to the village.

When my daughter turned 20, she also caught TB. She was in the hospital in Sokolniki, and back then, Matrona also lived in Sokolniki. One night she requested to let her leave the hospital to visit Matrona with me. So we approached her house, my daughter stayed outside, and I got inside and talked. And then I plucked up some courage and said, "I've got my daughter with me." Matrona smiled, "You can't help

coming one at a time, keep bringing company." And suddenly, "Yes, yes." I asked who she was talking to: there was nobody in the room. "You don't wanna know,"—she responded. She might have spoken with angels.

Then my daughter was transferred to a hospital in Zvenigorod: her lungs began to decompose. They suggested a surgery. I came to see her and she cried, "I'm afraid, I'm gonna die."

I went to see mother Matrona, and said that they suggested to do a surgery to my daughter. "What surgery?"—"On the lungs."—"I don't allow! —and knocked her fists one on the other. —Have her discharged if they offer to, but tell her to refuse the operation."

Soon thereafter, my daughter felt much better. So much better that she wanted to get married. She came to see Matrona, "Matrona, I want to get married. "You shouldn't. It's Lent. After Lent, I will find you a good match." But she married her guy in spite of Lent and gave birth to a girl. And soon my daughter had a severe case of TB again—with blood spitting and lung decomposition. It was in winter. They suggested an operation. Doctors said, "If you agree—you'll live for a year, if you don't—we don't guarantee anything." And let her go to seek her parents' advice. She came for the Butter Week, and cried, "Either way, I'm gonna die." And I said, "We've got someone whom we can consult. Let's do what she says." "Go down there and ask,"—said my daughter.

Back then Matrona lived at Skhodnya or on Arbat Street—I'm not sure. So I came to seek her advice, "What should I do? "Either way, she's gonna die." And she knocked her fists again, "I don't allow! And if you parents allow, she'll die under the knife. She will live as long as God let her." My daughter refused from the op-

eration, and the process in the lungs stopped, and she recovered completely. Her lungs are absolutely healthy now, they even removed her file from the registry.

I raised my husband's two girls from the first marriage as my own children and worried about them. Before the war, I gave birth to a son and didn't work for 17 years, Matrona didn't let me, "You work at home, be a house wife." When my son finished the tenth grade, I got a job. And I'd seen a dream before that. I walk and see a wooden fence before me. It has a little window cut in the middle, and it looks like mother Matrona receives people through this window. I thought, "Now I'm going to ask her about my son." Suddenly, Tatiana comes up to me. "Ksenia, where are you going?" —"Tatiana Petrovna, I want to see mother Matrona. Are you going to see her?" —"I am, but later." I'd forgotten something and went back to get it. When I returned, the window was already closed. I beg the deceased novitiate, "Tell her that Ksenia Gavrilovna is here, she used to receive me well, she will see me, alright." And she ran a host on paper, and an inscription appeared, "F+V+++". She showed me the four crosses and went back to ask Matrona (maybe it's: family life—a cross, and son Vladimir—a cross three times bigger).

And it did turn out this way. The novitiate comes out and says, "She told you to get a job, or your husband will grumble because of money." I frowned: she kept forbidding me to get a job.

"But what should I do?"—I thought,—"I haven't worked for 17 years." I went to Matrona's grave, knelt and asked her to help me to find a job.

Shortly, I was standing in line as I saw the head of the tool shop at Krasny Proletary factory, and she gave me a job. I had no problem with that, even though I finished

only four grades, and the requirement was 10 grades.

I still remember how, before Matrona's death, on the Holy Week, I came to see her. She lived at Skhodnya. There were people standing on the porch. Dasha, her novitiate, came out and said, "Matrona feels not well." And mother Matrona had told Dasha, "Send all people away, but tell her to wait." Matrona knocked me on the head and said, "Listen to me, listen!"

PRASKOVYA SERGEYEVNA ANOSOVA:

AS YOUNG, I had pretty bad health condition. I would have fits like an epileptic. Matrona gave me some of her water and said, "It'll pass away." And by the age of 16, she healed me.

One of my daughters, Natalia, had a bad case of umbilical hernia, big as a fist. Matrona also said that it would all go away. She gave her some water, prayed over her head and soon it disappeared.

Many of people came to see Matrona, some had divorce or other kinds of family problems. She told me that we would have lots of children and that my husband would die soon, and I would stay alone with the children. And the husband was well at the moment. We had six children with him. Suddenly, my husband developed a stomach cancer, and on March 28, 1961, he died. When my seventh child was born—a boy, Matrona told me, "He won't live with you. God will take him from you." The boy was wonderful, smart beyond his age. He died at the age of one year and a month. Once, she said to Pasha's (her novitiate) brother, "Go and say good-bye to little Nikita—you won't see him again." He laughed, "Why not?" Next day, bullies killed Nikita in the village and threw him into a well.

THERE was a church in Tsaritsyn. It was small but nice. As it was being ruined, someone wanted to take the bell. Matrona said, "Well, Let it be. Let them try. They all will be killed, but won't enter the church." There were three komsomol members who went. They entered the church, and there was water there—they drowned. Nobody could understand anything. Four people were sent down from the Regional Executive Committee. They took a ladder and started to climb up to get the bell. And suddenly, a slab fell off and killed them all. The church was closed. In a while, some people from the Regional Executive Committee wanted to see, what kind of miracles were going on in the church. They went, tried to get in and almost drowned.

MATRONA was persecuted after Zinaida Zhdanova and Yekaterina Zhavoronkova had been arrested. Great many of people came to see her. Those who could walk came on foot, those who couldn't were brought in wagons. Two women from Biryulev came to see Matrona. One of them was a bullyish type and started to pinch Matrona. And mother Matrona said, "Why are you pinching me? I am not one of you. I am from God." Then she turned around to us and said, "Here you are? She's got problems with her bladder, you know why? "She wants to take away a father from his four children—she prays for his death."

THERE was a woman who came to Matrona multiple times. She wanted to visit a monastery but had no money. So on one day, she came to see Matrona, and Matrona, after reading her thoughts, said to her, "Well, I see you want to visit the monastery? Don't worry, you will. And you'll

have money." And in a few days, the unknown woman came and brought 100 rubles. Mother Matrona gives her the money and says, "You want to go to the monastery. Here is one hundred rubles." The woman was surprised and happy: she didn't even hope that her dream would come true so soon. She went to the monastery and came back without a ticket. She had lots of stuff, and conductors were coming. "Got no tickets? Get off!" They grabbed her by the sleeve, and there was a service man sitting next to her. And suddenly, he said, "I am a correspondent. If you don't leave the woman alone, I'm going to go the highest administration in Moscow!" And they left.

The woman got home safe and thought, "I should go to Matrona and thank her." She took a bag with onions, cucumbers and other gifts and set off. And at Matrona's place, lunch was being cooked and they were ran out of onions. And Matrona said, "Wait, in twenty minutes I'm going to the market and will bring you some onions." And in twenty minutes, the woman came with onions. Matrona was happy, "See? I've brought you some onions! See, how fast I have been!"

IFOLLOWED her pieces of advice during my entire life. There were times when I would come to see her and ask, "I'm going somewhere, may I? Will something happened with me?" And she would say, "Go! You'll be alright" She saved my mother. When my father was exiled to the Kolyma, my mother was very ill. And Matrona told me, "Don't worry, your father is coming back—you'll live together. And give your mom some water,—and she gave me some of her water, —your mother will be well, you'll be fine." And that is exactly what happened.

ANNA PHILIPOVNA VYBORNOVA:

WHEN Matrona died, my mom was still alive. When we got the telegram, my mom was busy with something, and she didn't go to the funeral. And she was depressed because of that afterwards, "Daughter! Why didn't I go? I was too lazy!" Shortly after that, she had a dream. Matrona said to her, "Why were you lazy and didn't come? Well, come on, I'll show you around." And she showed her in the dream that the dead were suffering. Those who laughs a lot laughs a lot—they are in the worst situation, with their tongue on a hot pan. And mother told her, "I'm afraid!" And she showed her around a lot. She also remembers: there was a fence there, and people beyond it boiling in fire, only their heads sticking out. Mama told, "I even called out and turned away, and kind of didn't want to watch." So that was what she showed her. My mom couldn't forget the dream for quite a while.

SERAFIMA GAVRILOVNA UKRAINTSEVA:

IFOUND OUT about mother Matrona in 1944, when I was in school in Moscow. I came for vacation to Uzlovaya station to visit my relatives. A friend of my mom's gave me Matrona's address and asked to give her some groceries (she was in Tsaritsyn at the moment, I lived continuously on Starokonnyushenny Alley). When I came, the host let me in to mother Matrona, and I knelt before her. She prayed for me and called me by name. After this visit I started to come and see mother Matrona quite frequently, telling her about my problems.

People starved in Moscow back then. I finished school, but I developed some health problems because of malnutrition, so I had to leave for Uzlovaya to my relatives. Treatment didn't help and, in two months, my mother and sister took me to mother Matrona. She is kind and loves everybody. She prayed, gave me some water and with her prayers, God gave me my health back. Back in the seventies, my child got sick. I took him to Matrona's grave, and with her prayers and by the mercy of God, he got well.

Mother Matrona helps me a lot today, and I have a book about her that I always carry with me.

MARIA AFANASIEVA IGNATIEVA:

ACCORDING to my mother, Anna Lebedeva, she didn't live far away — maybe fifteen kilometers from Sebino, Matrona's home village. My mom lived in the village of Klekoti of Epifan region, Tula Governorate (today, it's Gorlovo region, Ryazan oblast). Mama was young and sickly. Doctors couldn't find any disease in her, but she suffered for seven years. My father went as far as Moscow, where he found out from a professor that there was no diseases — you only need to pray to God. My mom heard a voice at night, "Only Matrona from Sebino can heal you." She started to ask about her and somebody told her, that there is an insightful girl in Sebino. Father didn't go immediately. There were three dreams, and only after that, did my father go. When they came to the village, they didn't know where her house was. A woman came out to a porch, and just as he was about to ask her, where Matrona lived, she said, "Are you from Klekotki? Hurry up, Matrona is waiting for you." Two girls were in line before him, talking, "Let's go to the

blind broad. What is she gonna babble, I wonder?" When they came, Matrona told them, "What am I gonna babble, a blind broad?" — and she didn't receive them, but said, "I need that woman," — and she called my mom in. And she said to her, "I'm going to heal you. You have two girls, bring them to me." But mom got well and forgot to bring the girls. And soon they got sick with scarlet fever. One died, and the other recovered, but for her entire life suffered from a weird disease. She couldn't study or work. Later mom remembered Matrona, but she had been taken to Kuntsevo, as she was told.

Mother remembered Matrona until she died, and she told everybody about her. My mom died in 1943.

NINA SERGEYEVNA CHIZHIK, NÉE VLASOVA:

I WAS born in Moscow in 1942. When I was seven, I suffered from pneumonia. The disease developed a severe complication: my arms and legs went numb, I couldn't move whatsoever. At times, my parents would move me from place to place, but I spent most of the time in bed. My parents saw many of doctors, but nobody could help. My parents heard about Matrona from a friend of theirs—aunt Pasha, I don't remember her surname. She told them that there was a woman in Zagorsk who helped people and could heal any disease. My parents book a car and took me to Zagorsk. We approached a church (I don't remember, which one) and asked people who were praying how we can find her, and they told us. She lived in a village nearby. We had been driving for half an hour from the church. We came early. There were many of people near her house, waiting outside. My parents stood in a queue and waited. Suddenly,

the door opened, the woman who took care of mother Matrona came out, walked along the line, came up to my father and said, "Take the girl and follow me." I was lying in the car. My father took me in his arms and carried me into the house. Mother Matrona told him to leave me for three days. She told him, "You'll come and get her in three days, and she will walk with you to the car." Mother Matrona was sitting on a metal bed, propped by pillows. She asked to put me on her bed, so she could reach my hands. I still can see her in my mind's eye: wearing a white kerchief of tiny blue dots, dark-blue dress also of tiny dots with buttons on the chest. Her tiny, chubby hands, the sleeves of her dress tied up with an elastic band, empty eye-pits. The room was full of icons. It looked like light reflected from the icons, and it was as if mother Matrona emanated light and heat. The room was full of this light. I was staying in bed next to her as mother Matrona was receiving visitors. I felt as if mother Matrona got inside of me, I felt her heat, love of God and her love.

On the first day, mother Matrona held me either by one hand, or by the other hand, and kept stroking them. I felt my hands grow warmer and numbness going away.

On the next day, mother Matrona called her nurse and told her, "Put her on the floor, she's been lying for so long." "Yes, you have, darling - she said to me with tender, "Yes, you have, darling!" I got scared, since I'd been lying motionless for a whole year. The woman helped me to stand up me, and I stood on my feet and was standing at the bed where mother Matrona sat. Then she told the woman to put me on the bed, so that she could reach my legs with her hands. During the daytime, she would receive visitors, and at night, we stayed alone with her. She would doze off on her pillows, pray a lot and kept stroking my legs and arms.

On the third day, mother Matrona told me to walk a little and asked the nurse to help me—she helped me move my feet. I was totally scared. Mother Matrona kept saying, “Move, move your feet—they are ‘walkable.’”

On the fourth day, my father came to take me, and I walked to the car myself. Of course, I was walking scared, barely moving my feet: after a year of total immobility, my legs didn’t quite obey. I needed some time to get used to be totally healthy.

Mother Matrona could read people’s thoughts as an open book. As I lay on her bed on the first day, I didn’t think I would get up and walk, and she told me, “In three days, you will walk on your own, and I send home those who don’t believe.” I had a hard time falling asleep, and she said to me, “You have a hard time falling asleep. Now you’ll fall asleep and sleep tight seeing sweet dreams!” She could read thoughts at a distance. It was in my presence, when she called her nurse and started to count on her little fingers—I can see her like now, they are so chubby and tiny. She counted and said. “You go to the line and count to the thirteenth in line. Let her find another helper.” She didn’t accept money, only groceries, and only home-grown groceries. She would give them to the houses where she sent the rest of people to stay for the night. She never let anyone stay outside for the night, taking care of everybody.

GLORIFICATION OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA



2 May 1999.
Canonization of Blessed elderess Matrona



ON MAY 2, 1999, an event which had been expected by many Orthodox people finally happened: Blessed Elderess Matrona of Moscow—Matrona Dmitrievna Nikonova—was canonized. With the blessing of His Holiness, the Synodical Canonization Committee had been working for months considering the glorification of righteous Matrona. Having considered the life of the hero of faith, pious Matrona Dmitrievna Nikonova, her veneration by people and her miracles, the Committee found nothing that would prevent from her glorification among local saints.

On that May morning, people from entire Moscow, suburbs and other cities and towns came to Pokrovsky Convent bringing flowers. The yard of the convent was full of people, but there were not enough space for everybody. At midnight, in the lower church of the Pokrovsky temple, the morning liturgy was conducted, and then the final commemoration service for mother Matrona. Most of the worshipers stayed in the monastery for the night, to participate in the feast of glorification of the blessed woman.

One could see the growth of the line of those who wished to worship the relics of Matrona from that day on convent. The line began in the middle of the convent yard, skirted a half of the Pokrovsky Temple and only then flew into the church door. Those who attended the late litur-

gy could get a candle from dozens of people standing in line, “Would you please put it there at the relics?”

The worship service on that holy day was conducted by Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Alexy II in the assembly of arch-flamen and clergy in the higher church of the Pokrovsky temple. Before the liturgy began, the clergy brought the sanctuary with the relics of the Blessed Elderess covered with a red Easter cover and placed it on the right side of the solea.

This service was the last one where the prayer for the peace of the soul of the servant of God, Matrona, was jointly prayed, and where the “eternal memory” was chanted for the last time. Thereupon, His Holiness proclaimed from the pulpit the Pronouncement on the Canonization in the Host of Local Saints of Righteous Matrona of Moscow.

**Pronouncement of Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus
on the Canonization in the Host of
Local Saints of Blessed Matrona of Moscow (Matrona
Dmitrievna Nikonova, 1881-1952)**

Great is the assembly of the pleasers of God—faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church of the 20th century, who by their heroic life glorified God and who keep interceding for us with their prayers in front of the Altar of the the Supreme Being. In the years of persecution, when the holy places of Orthodoxy were trampled and the spiritual bases of the Russian people were ruined, the Lord, by His unspeakable mercy, gave us His chosen people—holy martyrs, confessors, heroes of faith, pious lay people—who were ignited as bright lamps with the

love to God and neighbors testifying to the Divine Truth and the Truth of God.

Matrona Dmitrievna Nikonova was born in Tula Governorate in a pious family of farmers. Being blind from birth, since youth she received from God a gift of spiritual vision, the ability to get into the mysteries of the Providence of God. Grace that reposed on her was manifested in the gifts of prayer, spiritual reasoning, knowledge and insightfulness. People started to seek her advice in her early age – at the beginning it was some local residents and then visitors from other places.

In 1925 Matrona moves to Moscow, which became the place of her heroic ministry and righteous death. Persecuted by atheists, Matrona had to move continuously finding shelter in believers’ homes. People came to see Matrona in an endless flow—they wanted spiritual healing, instruction, prayers. By her prayers, the weak, the limp and the suffering found healing from diseases of body and soul. Her prophecies and predictions helped many people to avoid danger and death, and find the right path in hard circumstances. Multiple testimonies about these miraculous events have been preserved.

After her righteous death in 1952, many people came to the grave of righteous Matrona at Danilovskoye cemetery. Her veneration grew, miracles and healings occurred.

Hereby we pronounce:

- 1. Elderess Matrona of Moscow should be ranked among the host of the righteous for local ecclesiastic veneration in the city of Moscow and Moscow eparchy.**
- 2. The true remains of Blessed Matrona of Moscow**

placed in the Stauropegic Intercession Convent of Moscow, should be henceforth named holy relics and be duly venerated.

3. Commemoration services to honor Blessed Matrona of Moscow should be conducted on the day of her death—April 19 (May 2.).

4. A special service to honor Blessed Matrona of Moscow should be prepared in a special way, and before its preparation, a general service should be conducted for Righteous Matrona.

5. An icon for veneration of Blessed Matrona of Moscow should be painted in accordance with the pronouncement of the 7th Ecumenical Council.

6. The biography of Blessed Matrona of Moscow should be published for the instruction and piety of the children of the church.

7. This Pronouncement of Ours the church should be brought to the attention of the clergy and religious people of Orthodox parishes and monasteries of Moscow and Moscow eparchy.

**Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus Alexy II
May 2, 1999**

The voices of young chanters sounded under the church domes. For the first time, they performed a troparion to Holy elderess Matrona. Together with the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, everybody present chanted, “We glorify you, saint righteous blessed Matrona, and honor your holy memory...”

On that day, entrance to the small upper church of the Intercession Cathedral was limited—most of the people stayed outside of the temple and listened to the broadcast of the Patriarchal worship. It was cold and overcast that

day, the hail started three times, but people’s yearning to touch the sanctuary and become part of the great spiritual feast was stronger than their wish to find shelter from the rain. By the noon, the sun suddenly glimpsed through the low gray clouds. Its beams lit the quiet crowd, highlighted red Easter robes of the clergy who accompanied Archbishop of Istra Arseny coming to the steps of the Intercession Cathedral to commune the people standing outside with the Holy Sacraments of Christ.

Once the liturgy was over, the Patriarch with the clergy came down to the lower church of the cathedral. Here he conducted the first prayer to the newly glorified saint at the sanctuary with the relics of the Blessed Elderess. After that, the Most Holy Patriarch sanctified the foundation of the convent bell tower that had been destroyed in the years of atheism and now was being restored. At the church yard, he addressed his parish congratulating them on the glorification of the Blessed Elderess Matrona of Moscow, «who, we believe, has been and will always be praying for our long suffering people, for our Holy Church and our Fatherland.”

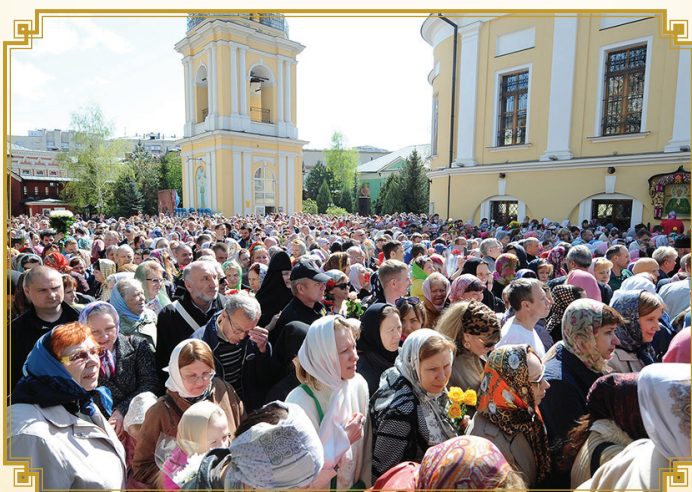
A one more star shone in the ecclesiastical sky—another pleaser of God joined the host of holy intercessors for our Capital City, and all Orthodox people. Orthodox people keep pouring into the Intercession convent to worship the blessed woman believing in the power of her blessed intercession. Her help is incessant—more and more people find out about her.



* * *

We found out about Blessed Matrona's posthumous miracles reviewed by the Canonization Commission from multiple letters, most of which are listed in the next chapter. We believed, that after canonization, the flow of these testimonies will become stronger, and we will be able (God willing!) to list them in the next augmented edition of this book.

POSTHUMOUS MIRACLES OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA



BY THE PRAYERS of blessed mother Matrona, the Lord brought my brother, a drug addict, to the Holy Baptism and the Holy Communion. On the night of June 24, 1994, I visited the grave of Mother Matrona. Priest Igor was conducting a litany there and I asked Matrona about my brother, so that the Lord would bring about his Baptism. By the prayers of mother Matrona, my brother went to church on his own and was baptized, even though he didn't even want to hear about that before.

*Novitiate Maria,
Belopesotsky Nunnery, Stupino, Moscow Oblast.*

ITESTIFY to a miracle that happened to the servant of God, Olga Garpenko. She suffered from a bad disease—cancer. She was supposed to be operated. Before the operation, she visited the grave and asked blessed Matrona for help. Before the operation, they examined her and found out that the tumor was totally gone. She was discharged from the hospital without any surgery.

Priest Sergy Sokolov, Moscow.

MY HUSBAND drank very much. After reading a book about Mother Matrona, I started visiting her and asking her to help and intercede before God. At one point, my husband started to drink again. He did not appear at work, didn't come home—nobody knew where to look for him.

I felt immediately: something bad happened to him. I went to visit mother Matrona's grave. I came and started to pray, "Mother Matrona, please help me to find him!" I felt peace inside. My husband was already

at home. He'd been robbed and beaten, but he could come home by himself. After that he gave up drinking and started to go to church and pray.

L. Salnikova, Moscow.

WHEN I was at mother Matrona's grave, a woman with her daughter Ksenia came up. They were in a terrible situation. They had come from Belarus—the girl needed a surgery. They lacked 90 thousand rubles for the operation and the surgeon refused to perform it. Another child of hers was in the hospital. They stayed at the train station. No place to stay for the night. The woman was crying bitterly, all people tried to comfort her in whatever way they could. Suddenly, a priest came to the grave. He asked the woman, what had happened. He gave her the phone number of a place they could stay for the night, and said that he would call and talk to the doctor. And the priest gave 200 thousand rubles to the woman. The woman was lost, and said that she wouldn't be able to pay back. And the father replied, "Please take it to the glory of God." It happened on July 26, 1994, at 5:35 p.m. We all knelt and thanked blessed Matrona for her good work.

S. Avdysheva, Moscow.

I WAS at blessed Matrona's grave and then I needed to pick my child at the kindergarten. As I was crossing the road, a car hit me—I rolled over three times because of the hit. I only could think of blessed Matrona but I had a feeling that somebody lifted me up on the arms. I got up, mostly shaken but unhurt except for some bruises—blessed Matrona saved me.

E. Teterkina, Moscow

IN SEPTEMBER 16, 1996, I had communion in Danilov Monastery and stopped at a church shop, where I saw a book about Matrona. Suddenly I decided that I needed to go. I was having hard times: I quit my job, didn't know how to live further, and I had to support my relatives. But the biggest problem was my weakness I'd been fighting for several months now: I would often feel depressed and lie without strength for days. I realized mentally that I needed to get up but I didn't have strength to. On days like these, I could stay at home and did not go to work, the house would go to a mess—dirty floors, unclean rooms, lots of laundry—and I could only sleep and eat. So I came to the cemetery, venerated the grave and asked for help. I asked about different things but Matrona helped with those that I needed the most—she healed me of my depression. I was going from the cemetery and feeling elated thoughts, "When I get back, At first I will wash the floor—it's not been washed for quite a while—and then I'll eat." Having come home, I went to the kitchen and couldn't help it and sat down to eat in the mess. And as I raised the spoon, I felt as if someone frowned, unhappy with my being disobedient. And my joy disappeared. I got distressed and went to bed. I slept for a long time—around four hours, and in my sleep I felt somebody standing nearby, which made me feel so good and happy. I woke up healthy, went outside, walked for a while, came back and washed everything: the kitchen, other rooms, almost the entire apartment in one night. And I did almost all laundry. I thought to myself: I need to improve and do everything, and on the next day—I should go to Matrona and apologize for the disobedience and to thank her. Whatever I asked for, it came true. And today, with the help of Matrona and by the mercy of God, I feel good, my vitality is back.

M. Kidienkova, Moscow.

I WORK in a criminal investigation department. I was baptized late—at the age of 31—my wife insisted so. My wife told me that Blessed Elderess Matrona was buried at Danilovskoye cemetery. And she healed people when she was alive and after her death both spiritually and physically. My wife, my child and I would visit Matrona on multiple occasions, prayed her for the well-being of our family.

On November 6, 1995, I was put in custody at my work on suspicion of committing malfeasance in office but was released soon. On the night of November 7, my wife and I went to visit Matrona's grave but we were not let in, for it was late, around 7 p.m. My wife and I knelt before the grave and asked for help. After that, by a miracle, Nobody called me for a month. I kept carrying some sand from Matrona's grave in my pocket, confessed my sins, and communed. In January of 1996, I was summoned to the prosecutor's office, and from there to jail, where I spent forty five days. I contacted a lawyer asking to be released from arrest before the court hearing against a written undertaking not to leave place of residence. However, nobody in the cell believed that I would be released from jail, since the charge was too serious. In February of 1996, the court considered whether my arrest could be replaced with an undertaking not to leave place of residence. When in court, I had the sand from Matrona's grave and my wife had poured some sand on my head as I was being escorted by convoy. As a result, by a miracle, the judge discharged me from custody in the courtroom. After that, we visited Matrona again and in 1996, we visited her on a regular basis thanking her for help and asking her for the mercy of God. Investigators of my case started to be replaced one after another. One

of them, whom I had known before, promised that he would personally take my case to court. My wife and I decided to pour some sand from Matrona's grave to the criminal file, which was about to be sent to court. After that, the investigator went on vacation, and in a month my case was closed, since no proof of my guilt was found. That is how Blessed Elderess Matrona helped me and my family.

Igor, Moscow.

THE ALL-MERCIFUL Lord helped me through His pleaser, blessed mother Matrona, who put my entire family on the path of purification and salvation. Several years ago, I finished a course of traditional medicine and had a noble goal—to heal my relatives from various diseases. Back in those days, I went to church only on rare occasions and knew only a few prayers. Gradually, by word of mouth, people started to find out about me and come seeking my help more and more often. I charged whatever they could afford. It wasn't much—enough to feed my daughter and me. During my seances, I lit a church candle, pronounced prayers and used psychic methods of healing. Almost all my patients recovered, at least they improved quite a bit. But I didn't do well. Besides, my daughter's old chronic disease worsened considerably. Neither I, nor my colleagues could help her with her methods. My daughter grew worse year after year. I didn't notice how I became totally dependent on dark forces and they led me down to destruction. Whatever happened in my life, I thought: this is the will of God. Since I finished a course of healing, read occult books (back then, I didn't realize that God gave the true gift of healing only to those He chose, to holy heroes of faith who spend all their lives fasting

and praying),—the Lord didn't prevent Satan from taking possession of me. The fallen angel is much smarter than a man and knows his weaknesses. My weak spot was my daughter who needed help. And instead of praying to God, the Mother of God and holy saints, I deviated from the true way. Yet the Lord gave me a great lesson through this temptation.

From believers, I learned about mother Matrona. When I visited her grave for the first time, I stood in line and asked her to pray to God for me, so that He would forgive me. I asked her help me figure out what forces healers represented, and if I needed to get purified—I asked her not to leave me but help me with that. At the cemetery, I bought a book about blessed Matrona, took candles from the grave, water and oil. At home, I read the book on the life of our precious helper, drank the water, lit a candle, put icons in front of me and Matrona's portrait and started to sorrowfully ask her to give me the understanding of who had been helping me to heal people. Suddenly, my fingers crooked and, beyond my will, tried to break the candle and put out the flame, but they never got to Matrona's candle. It was an answer that left no doubts.

From that time on, I started to read the Bible on a daily basis (from the Old Testament, I found out that the devil can also make miracles), I prayed in the morning, during the day and even at night, I would wake up to read canons of repentance to Jesus Christ, the Mother of God and my guarding angel. My daughter and my mother joined me. Besides, we drank the water from the grave several times in a day and rubbed the oil from the grave into our skins. In my further visits to Matrona, I took some sand from her grave. When I first put it on my head, having put a lit candle in front of me, and asked the Lord Jesus Christ and Matrona to forgive me and purify, I fell and

writhed screaming. This happened to me three times.

We started to go to church frequently and have the Holy Communion. Now, my daughter's health significantly improved. My mom who had had many operations stopped having pains. In the Church of the Resurrection of Christ in Sokolniki, archpriest Valentin was very kind and considerate to my daughter and me. He helped us to repent of all our sins. Almost every time I am in church, I put a candle for the peace of mother Matrona and thank God for her.

Valentina, Moscow.

I WAS an atheist before I was thirty. I lived without God, until a big trouble happened in my life. My husband was belied and ended up in jail. I myself had been serving in police for a long time, and nobody in my family ever violated the law. My husband's arrest was a real shock to me. I began to fight for him right away, being so confident in my strength and also relying on my friends' help. But I failed many times. My friends betrayed me and after six months of imprisonment, his case got to the hands of a dishonorable judge who demanded from me large amount of money, which I couldn't make in ten years of service. Seeing no way out, I spoke to a Christian girl I knew and she advised me to go to Danilovskoye cemetery, visit the grave of blessed Matrona and ask her for help.

On December 31, 1996, I went The Danilovskoe cemetery to the relics of Matrona and prayed her to make a miracle. There were almost no people at the grave on that day, and the novitiate who kept vigil there gave me candles, some sand from the grave and a sheet with a prayer to blessed Matrona. People were compassionate and kind to me, I was touched by that since I had had barely any

friends left.

I prayed the prayer to Matrona almost every night before going to bed, and a miracle happened. The case was taken away from the corrupt judge by superior authorities, and in two months it got to the hands of an honest judge, who was a man of principle.

On April 4, 1997, my husband was released. Shortly thereafter, he was baptized.

Elena, Moscow.

IN JANUARY of 1995, my friend with her five-year-old son and I came to The Danilovskoye cemetery to Matrona and venerated the grave. As we were about to leave at about 4 p.m., monks from Trinity Lavra of St. Sergius arrived and started a commemoration service. We were standing and listening, then every one left, and we went home. A day passed, then another day, and still another day. And I couldn't understand what was wrong with me: when I started to swear, my tongue got stuck, as if tied into a knot. Finally I realized that Matrona healed me. I haven't been swearing for three years now. I am very happy now that I've got rid of that sin. I have sworn like a trooper before. Now everything is different, we have started to attend church by the whole family and I tell people about blessed Matrona and give my case as proof. My husband and I even had a church wedding in St. Trinity church at The Cemetery two years ago.

L. Nikitina, Moscow

FIRST visited mother Matrona's grave in the fall of 1995. On that day, I prayed, took some sand and left for home in Nizhnevartovsk. People love mother Matrona in our church, and many visit her grave when they're on vacation in Moscow. I had kept the sand for al-

most two years before sister Maria told me about her disease—thyroid cancer. She was awaiting treatment: surgery, ray treatment, hormonal drugs. Maria had read a book about mother Matrona's life, and when she found out that I had sand from her grave, she asked for some. After I gave her some sand, mother Matrona came to Maria in her dream, stroked her on the neck and said, "I know about your disease. Don't worry—you'll get well and be fine." Maria doesn't need a surgery now. This is the way mother Matrona helps us. Her power is enough to help all of us, weak people, over a distance. Member of Christ Nativity

Church, Nizhnevartovsk, Tyumen oblast.

IN 1994, I underwent a computer-aided examination, and found out that I had a very serious disease. I was afraid of the doctor's verdict and refrained from going to the hospital for about four months. My daughter in Murmansk sent me a book about Matrona. I read it in one sitting, eyes full of tears. As I went to bed, I asked mother Matrona for help. And I see a dream: I am on an operating table, a woman standing next to me, elderly, plump, wearing a white robe and holding some tools. A little table with multiple various instruments stood next to her, and she changed them frequently. The woman stroked my leg and arm very tenderly, barely touching, and said in a quite and gentle voice, "Please be patient for a bit, my dear, it's almost over! Now, everything's going to be in the past, and you'll be fine." And I felt so peaceful beside her, and she kept changing her tools. On the next day, I went to see the doctor. He didn't find any signs of the disease. Before leaving for Moscow, I went to see the doctor again. He confirmed: I'm fully recovered. I knew perfectly well that it was Matrona who healed me.

L. Yarochkina, Yekaterinburg.

I HAD lived with my child alone, without a husband, for years. It was hard, and I asked the Lord to send me a good husband, not necessary a wealthy one, but a good Christian and loving. But I didn't find a man like that. When I lost all hope, a woman got a job at the place where I work, and she told me about blessed Matrona. I started to visit her grave. On November 9, 1995, I came to visit the grave again and I was depressed. I laid my head onto the grave, but I screamed inside, "Will I ever have a husband?" And suddenly, I heard a female voice, which I will never forget, "You will, don't worry!" It happened so unexpectedly that I recoiled from the grave. A question popped up in my head: when? And the voice clearly said, "In less than two months." I stepped away from the grave and could not believe that. I both waited and didn't wait. I didn't dare believe that the Lord was so kind to me, but, on the other hand, I remembered the authoritative voice. On December 19, I thought, "More than one and a half months have passed, and I never met anyone." On the eve of the Day of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Unexpected Joy", I met my future husband. Three days after we met, he proposed. We immediately fell in love with each other. On February 10, we got married in the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. Three years have passed since we got married. I thank the Lord for the husband, I thank Matrona for her prayers for me. Matrona made me happy.

Each time I need advice or have a need, I go and pray at mother Matrona's grave, and I want to hear the voice, but I don't. Yet the miracle did happen. My husband had two cars at work that he could use: a Zhiguli 5 and a UAZ that used to be an ambulance van. They needed to send an employee to Voronezh. My husband gave him the

documents for the car, and the guy headed for Voronezh, and my husband—home. Back at home on the next day, he saw that he had given to the man the wrong documents. My husband kept the documents for the ambulance UAZ, and the driver had left with the documents to VAZ-2105. He who traveled long distance in Russia knows how meticulously the traffic cops examines vehicles and checks documents. When I found out about that, I told my husband, "We've got only one hope left—Matrona. Only she can help." My husband read the book and knew, how Matrona had helped us get married. But it was just impossible to think that everything would end up well. But it did! The driver was back, and he didn't even notice that he had the wrong documents—he didn't even had a chance to look at them. My husband asks, "Didn't the traffic wardens stop you?" "They did, five times and even gave me a ticket. And examined the van inside out! The ticket was for lacking something in the first aid kit." But what amazed me the most was that one officer was looking from the docs to the van and back, and then said, "Why does your van have a cross painted out?" (The van had been an ambulance in the past.) And the driver said, "It's a former ambulance van. Don't you see? It's in the documents —ambulance UAZ!" The officer looked closely at the documents and gave them back to the driver and let him go. I have asked myself many times, what did the officer see? In the registration it was written, VAZ-2105! Matrona helped us. Otherwise my husband could have been in trouble. He explained to the driver, "You understand that it was God who helped both you and me, don't you? The van could have been arrested and taken in custody. I would have had to go and bail you out, but how... I don't have documents to your car. How was I supposed to give to you? And I would have been in big trouble with

my boss, they could have kicked me out.” And the driver said, “No, I just looked very confident when I submitted the documents!” But my husband has traveled a lot and knows how meticulous the road police are: they want to check every digit on the body and engine and compare it with the registration. My husband told me. “Before he got back, I didn’t believe it was possible, even though I know that Matrona has helped many people in more difficult situations.”

Olga L-va, Moscow.

I KNOW no measure when it comes to wine. There was going to be a party at work—an employee got a promotion. I didn’t really feel like going. At night, before going to bed, I complained to mother Matrona, “Mother, I don’t want to go. I will get drunk with wine. And in the morning, after I woke up, I remembered what mother Matrona had said last night, “Go. Have two glasses, and no more!” And I did. And felt how unpleasant it was, to look at your drunk colleagues. Yet I myself had been like that on many occasions.

Tatiana G., Moscow.

ON SUNDAY, December 25, 1995, I came home around 11 after the morning service. My wife told me to go get some cabbage and shred it. I saw a friend in the store who suggested having a drink. I didn’t really feel like, but something urged me. We got some vodka and went down to my basement to get some carrots to shred and to have a drink, for that matter. We drank vodka with cabbage leaves. I felt bad right away. Then I came home and shredded some cabbage. I went to bed at 11 p.m. I don’t know how much time passed, but I started to vomit blood. My wife called ambulance.

I started to black out. The ambulance came. Gave me a shot. Blood pressure was 60 to 20. They took me to the hospital. I stayed there for four days. When I felt better, I reached into a pocket on my shirt and felt two little bags there. I remembered that they were from the grave of blessed Matrona: one from the last year, and the other from this year. And I saw everything in a different light. When my wife came to visit, she asked at the desk whether how I was doing. They asked her who she was asking about, since right at that moment another man was brought with the same diagnosis. My wife told them the name. “We have saved yours,—said the nurse, but we didn’t save the other one.” Matrona’s prayers for me were answered.

My cousin’s father got sick. They failed to cure him in the regional center, so they brought him to Moscow. The doctors said that he would hardly live up to a year. So we went to the grave. My brother was first. I looked at him and was amazed: he had so strong faith in Matrona, that this faith could save my father, he had tears in his eyes. Looking at him, I thought, “I also go to church, but I can’t feel so much as he is now.” I also came to the grave. I prayed and asked Matrona to pray for me, a sinner and a fool. I took the branch they gave me and we left. We said good-bye to each other and I left. It took my bus quite long to arrive, so I decided to take another one, even though I had to walk from the bus stop about a kilometer or so. I got off at the bus stop and needed to go through a field, and it was freezing. As I was walking I felt that I was dozing off and freezing, even though I wore a parka. I looked ahead and saw a little gate house with a window lit. I came over, knocked—no answer. I sat and felt like lying down. I took off my boots, put them next to me and lay down. I don’t know how much time passed

before somebody nudged me. I got up and didn't know where I was. There was no house, I was sitting on a little hill and couldn't feel my feet. The inner voice said, "Get up and go." I barely managed to put my boots back back on my feet, as if as if not there at all, and set off. When I got home, I thought about what had happened. And I realized: the devil's work, it was him who had set up a house for me, which had not been not real, and put me on a little grave, in advance. And Matrona saved me—a branch from her grave was still in my pocket. And my cousin's father is still alive, he holds his own farm in the village.

V. Kolchin, Moscow.

I WAS ELECTED Principal of an Orthodox prep school. The local authority didn't want to give a place for our school. We spoke with people in Moscow Duma, and in the State Duma—without a result. So we decided to gather with the school children and their parents at Danilovskoye cemetery and conduct a commemoration service at the grave of blessed Matrona. In a week, we got an order signed by the prefect that three rooms were allocated for the school. The paper had the date when the decision was made—the same day when we did the service on blessed Matrona's grave.

Deacon Valery Vakhterov.



HVMH

TO HOLY RIGHTEOUS BLESSED MATRONA OF MOSCOW

KONTAKION 1

Oh Blessed Elderess Matrona chosen by the Holy Spirit from your infancy, you received blindness and bodily weakness to be purified by God, you have been endowed with the gift of insightfulness and miracle-making, and have been decorated with an imperishable crown from the Lord. For this sake, we, being grateful, are bringing to you a thanks-giving crown, and proclaim: Hail, righteous mother Matrona, who pray fervently for us to God.

IKOS 1

The angel has come down to Earth—Blessed Matrona fulfilling the will of God. From your nativity, you have been blind bodily, but the Lord who fills the blind with wisdom and loves the righteous, has given you spiritual sight, so that could serve the people, and the works of God will be manifested through you. We proclaim in love to you:

Hail, the one chosen from infancy; hail, the one covered

with the grace of the Holy Spirit from the cradle.

Hail, the one endowed with the gift of miracles from her childhood; hail, the one filled with God's wisdom from above.

Hail, the one who can see the will of God with her mental eyes; hail, the one who puts to shame wise men blind in their minds.

Hail, the one who brings the lost souls to God; hail, the one who comforts in trouble and affliction.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who pray fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 2

The people and priest who saw in your baptism a miraculous pillar of smoke over your head and smelled a great aroma were amazed, who this child will become, and chanted to God: Hallelujah.

IKOS 2

Having an insightful mind, priest of God Vasily was aware that she, who he baptized was a vessel of God, and he gave the child a name, oh Righteous Matrona. In our zeal, we thank you:

Hail, the one who was in the holy font received fragrance from the Holy Spirit; hail, the one who had a seal of the cross on her chest.

Hail, the one who prays, the one given by God to people; hail, oh inextinguishable candle giving light before God.

Hail, the one glorified by God with the gift of miracle-making here on earth; hail, the one crowned by the Lord with an imperishable crown in heaven.

Hail, the one who proclaims the love of God to sinful people; hail, the one who gives from the source of living water to the thirsty.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 3

You felt the grace of God when you were still an infant, oh blessed Matrona. You yearned for holy icons, and with your pure lips and heart, you praised God. Hallelujah.

IKOS 3

Having the gift of insightfulness from your childhood, oh blessed mother, you saw the hearts of those who came to you, and you proclaimed to them, bringing many people to the true path. By praising God who gives wisdom to the blind, we proclaim to you:

Hail, oh amazing prophet; hail, the one who reveals hidden sins.

Hail, the most holy instructor of those with darkened souls; hail, the one who leads the way for the lost.

Hail, oh star showing the way to faithful; hail, oh candle shining in the darkness of this world.

Hail, the one who served the only God; hail, the one who had overcome the schemes of the devil.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 4

A storm of perplexity and confusion has developed in people because of your miracles, oh blessed mother, and to you, who has led them to the Lord, wonderful among His saints who had glorified and praised you, we chant: Hallelujah.

IKOS 4

Mother Matrona, having heard from people that you help in spiritual and bodily weakness, I come to you in trust, and, having received good advice and healing, I thank God and proclaim to you:

Hail, the one who receives the sick and suffering; hail, the one giving peace to the grieving.

Hail, the one who brings the lost to reason; hail, oh instructor of piety.

Hail, the comforter of our sorrows; hail, the soother of our grievances. Hail, oh good unmercenary; hail, oh healer of various diseases.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 5

You are a star lit by God, oh blessed mother Matrona, who in the days of trouble in our Fatherland as a new confessor has carried the burden of Christ zealously and fearlessly through your entire life, and strengthened by the grace of God, you have given understanding to the bewildered, ease to the suffering, healing to the sick, who gratefully call up to God: Hallelujah.

IKOS 5

Russian people have seen plenty of miracles of healing, given from you by the grace of God: walking to the lame, healing to the paralyzed and lying in bed, expulsion of evil spirits to the demon-possessed. Now we yearn to you, mother, as to an inexhaustible source, and drinking abundantly thereof, with a moved heart we call up to you:

Hail, the one who puts people on the right path from her infancy; hail, the righteous woman given us by God.

Hail, oh healer, who heals our infirmities; hail, oh quick helper in our needs.

Hail, the one who instructs us of good spiritual advice; hail, the one who solves our perplexities.

Hail, the one who expels evil spirits from people; hail, the one who with her prayers protects us from all evil.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 6

When the proclaimer of your holiness and righteousness, oh blessed mother, holy and righteous father John of Kronstadt saw you in the church, he named you his successor and the eighth pillar of Russia. And all who heard that, praised the Lord proclaiming to Him the song: Hallelujah.

IKOS 6

Can your prayers, Mother Matrona, light the light of the grace of God in the hearts, who do not know God and who provoke His wrath by their sins. However, those, who see the miracles made by you, turn to the Lord and praise you thus:

Hail, the one who glorifies God with her heroic acts; hail, the one who reveals us the glory of God.

Hail, the one who turns infidels to the right path; hail, the one who purifies those defiled with sins with her prayers.

Hail, the one who urges us to repent; hail, the one who encourages us to thank God for everything.

Hail, the one who teaches us to love the temple of God; hail, the one who gathers dispersed sheep into the protection of the church.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 7

Willing to give due praise to our Most Holy Queen the Mother of God, mother Matrona, you told people to paint the most true image of Her, "The Seeker of the Lost," and to place it in the church of God of your vil-

lage, so that people looking at the holy face of the Most Holy would give Her praise, and proclaim to the Lord: Hallelujah.

IKOS 7

The Lord gave to Russian people a new protector, prayerful woman and intercessor before God in times of trouble, because many departed from the Holy Church, and you, mother, instructed those of little faith and lost with your word and deed by showing great miracles of God. Therefore we sing to you thus:

Hail, the one sleeplessly grieving over our Russian land; hail, the intercessor of our salvation.

Hail, the one who praises God, the Righteous Judge; hail, oh patron of the weak and the hurt.

Hail, oh helper of the infirm and hopeless; hail, oh continuous fighter against evil spirits.

Hail, as princes of demons tremble; hail, as angels and people rejoice.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 8

Those of little faith and reason amaze how the one born blind can see not only the present but also the future, because they do not know the power of God, which is exercised in the weakness of men. But we, blessed mother, seeing the wisdom of God manifested in you, call up to God: Hallelujah.

IKOS 8

You have suffered, blessed mother, all kinds of vexes and offenses, exile and reproaches, but never complained thanking God for everything. Thereby you teach us to bear our cross patiently, and to praise you like this:

Hail, the one being continuously in prayer; hail, the one who has expelled evil spirits with prayer.

Hail, the one who received graceful peace; hail, the one who has saved many with her love.

Hail, the one who has served so much in your life; hail, the one who keeps helping people after death.

Hail, the one who hears our petitions now; hail, the one who does not abandon those who trust in your help.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 9

You have suffered various afflictions and infirmities, mother Matrona, and have constantly fought the dark forces, revealing their schemes and plots, and expelling demons from demon-possessed, you have helped the suffering, the infirm and the grieving until your last day, and we keep singing to you: Hallelujah.

IKOS 9

There are no words that can duly glorify your holy life and miracles that you made by the power of God, oh wonderful elderess. We, willing to praise God among His saints in psalms, and out of heartily love, we dare sing to you like this:

Hail, the one Who chooses the narrow path; hail, the one shining in many virtuous prayers.

Hail, the one who refused temporal things in life; hail, the one decorated with humbleness as with a crown.

Hail, the one who lived according to the Gospel on earth as if a bird of heavens; hail, the one who followed the Son of God, who didn't have where to repose His head.

Hail, the one who rejoices now in heavenly abode; hail, the one who does not refuse your mercy to us, sinners,

who pray to you.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 10

You wanted to save many people from their suffering, bodily and spiritual infirmities, you stayed all nights in prayers, oh the righteous one of God, asking for help and strengthening for them from our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, to Whom we sing: Hallelujah.

IKOS 10

You have been a wall and protection in the days of your life, oh blessed mother, to all who came to you, and after your death you keep interceding before God for people who flow in to your tomb. Therefore you also hear us, sinners, who suffer from afflictions, diseases and many grievances and who rely on your prayerful help, to all, who call up to you:

Hail, the one who intercedes for the hurt; hail, the one who suffers hardships.

Hail, the protector of true marriage; hail, oh reconciler of adversaries.

Hail, the protector of those who are judged unfairly; hail, the one who mercifully intercedes for the guilty before the judgment of man and God.

Hail, oh shelter of the homeless; hail, oh protector of all who invoke you.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 11

You heard the songs of angels, righteous mother Matrona, being still on earth. Teach us, unworthy, how to praise God, venerate in the Trinity, Father,

Son and the Holy Spirit, to whom the hosts of heaven ceaselessly and in many voices sing: Hallelujah.

IKOS 11

Your life shines like a light that illuminates everything, oh Blessed Matrona, you overshadow the darkness of this carnal world and attract our souls to you: so that we also will be lit with beams of the grace of God and walk down the painful path of our temporal life in a godly way and reach the Kingdom of God, where you, oh mother, have settled, and hear our voices calling to you:

Hail, the everburning candle of God; hail, the true pearl that enlightens us with your holiness.

Hail, oh fragrant flower, giving us the aroma of the Holy Spirit; hail, the rock of faith, giving foundation to those those. Who weak in piety.

Hail, oh brightest star, who shows us the right way; hail, oh good warrior of Christ, who terrifies demonic hosts with the sword of prayer.

Hail, the one, whose entire life is holy and pure; hail, the one whose death before the Lord is righteous.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 12

You received the grace of God from cradle, oh blessed mother, to have it for the rest of your life. We believe beyond any doubt that, after your dormition, this grace is always with you. For the sake of that, we pray: do not deprive us, who wander on this earth, of your help and intercession, asking the Lord to have mercy on all who sing to Him, Halleluja.

IKOS 12

Singing about your multiple and wonderful miracles, oh Mother Matrona, we praise God who gave you, oh steadfast pillar of piety and faith, to Moscow and our Fatherland in the days of atheism and persecution. So today, oh blessed mother, we are grateful to you in our hearts and sing to you thus:

Hail, the one who received the peace of Christ in your soul: hail, who brought many people to God.

Hail, the one being in a weak body, who showed us the power of God.

Hail, the who in the translation of your true relics showed us your mercy.

Hail, the flower of the host of Moscow saints; hail, the glorious decoration of the city of Moscow.

Hail, oh eternal guardian of our Fatherland.

Hail, the one who urges all in the Russian land to repent and pray.

Hail, Righteous Mother Matrona, who prays fervently for us to God.

KONTAKION 13

Oh Blessed Mother, hear our today's singing where we praise you and plead with the Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us our sins, to give us Christian and peaceful death and good response on the Day of His Judgment, and we will glorify with you the Holy Trinity, invoking: Hallelujah.

(This kontakion shall be chanted three times, followed by Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1)

PRAYER

Oh Blessed Mother Matrona, your soul is standing before the Throne of God in heaven but your body is resting on earth and emanating various miracles by the grace given from above. Have mercy with your merciful eye on us, sinners, who spend our days in afflictions, diseases and sinful temptations, comfort us, for we are desperate, heal our weaknesses, that God lets happen to us because of our sins, deliver us from many troubles and sufferings, plead with our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us our sins, iniquities and falls, which we have committed from our youth to this day, but having received by your prayers grace and great mercy we glorify you in the Trinity of One God, Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

TROPARION, VOICE 2

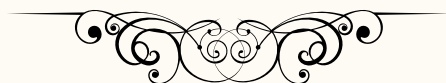
Let us praise today Blessed Elderess Matrona, who was made wise by God, the prosperity of Tula land and glorious decoration of the city of Moscow. For she, having no knowledge of daily light, was enlightened with the light of Christ and endowed with the gift of insightfulness. Being the pilgrim and the stranger on earth, she is now in Heavenly Palaces standing before the Throne of God praying for our souls.

KONTAKION, VOICE 7

Oh righteous Matrona, you have been chosen to serve Christ from the womb of your mother, by walking down the path of afflictions and grievances, you have manifested steady faith and piety, pleasing God. Therefore, commemorating you, we pray: help us also to stay in the love of God, oh Blessed Elderess.

EXALTATION

We exalt you, Holy Righteous Mother Matrona, and revere your holy memory, for you pray to Christ our God for us.



CONTENT

LIFE OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA	3
TRANSLATION OF TRUE RELICS OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA	49
STORIES BY PEOPLE WHO KNEW BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA	53
GLORIFICATION OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA	91
ON POSTHUMOUS MIRACLES OF BLESSED ELDERESS MATRONA	99
AKATHIST HYMN TO HOLY RIGHTEOUS BLESSED MATRONA OF MOSCOW	115





RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH STAUROPEGIC INTERCESSION CONVENT, MOSCOW AT POKROVSKAYA GATE

Banking details:

Religious Organization "Stauropegic Intercession Convent at Pokrovskaya Gate of Moscow, Russian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)."

109147, 58 Taganskaya Street Tel./fax: (495) 911-49-20

INN 7704132581, KPP 770901001 s/a 40703810938330100492 Moscow
Bank "Sberbank of Russia" JSC, Moscow c/a 3010181040000000225 BIC
044525225

Banking details for foreign currencies:

RIELIGJOZNYA ORGANIZATSIA POKROVSKY STAVROPIGI-
AL-NYY ZHIENSKY MONASTYR- U POKROVSKOYZASTAVY, G.
MOSKVY RUSSKOY PRAVOSLAVNOYTSIERKVI (MOSKOVSKY
PATRIARKHAT) S.W.I.F.T - code SABR RU MM SBERBANK,
(HEAD OFFICE - ALL BRANCHES AND OFF RUSSIA)
Moscow, Russian Federation.

Current foreign currency account: 40703978138360100492 in euro,

Transit currency account: 40703978038360200492 in euro.

Current foreign currency account: 40703840538360100492 in USD,

Transit currency account: 40703840438360200492 in USD

Passed for printing on Sept. 23, 2018. Order 3

Format 60x90/16. Volume 8 printed sheets

Circulation 10,000 copies. Offset print. Offs. paper No. 1

Printed from the electronic version of Intercession Convent Publishing House
in OOO Sovremennaya Poligrafia, 443063, Samara Oblast, 36 Sredne-Sadovaya
Street.

NAVIGATION TO STAUROPEGIC INTERCESSION NUNNERY TO THE RELICS OF ST. RTHS. BLSD. MATRONA OF MOSCOW



Our address: 109147, 58 Taganskaya Street

Email: info@pokrov-monastir.ru

web-site: <http://pokrov-monastir.ru>

Schedule of Worship Services

Daily—liturgy at 7.30 a.m., evening service at 4.45 p.m.; Sun-

day—Divine Liturgy at 6.15 a.m. and 9.00 a.m.

Daily, a prayer service with akathist hymn is conducted at the sanctuary of the relics of Matrona of Moscow, on Wednesdays and Fridays—with sanctification of water.

Commemoration service on Wednesday and Saturday.

Nunnery is open daily: Monday through Saturday from 7.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m., Sunday from 6.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

We have a store where you can buy church attributes and books. Tel./fax: (495) 911-49-20.

How to get: Marksistskaya metro station, exit at Taganskaya Street, then take any transport (bus, trolleybus) to Bolshaya Andronyevskaya stop—Intercession Nunnery (Pokrovsky zhen'sky monastyr); Krestyanskaya Zastava or Proletarskaya metro station, then a 5-minute walk to Abelman Gate square.



Stauropегic Intercession Nunnery at Pokrovskaya Gate

