

**Posthumous manifestations  
of divine grace through the prayers of  
Hieromonk Seraphim Platinsky  
(facts and description)**

**2020**

## Brief theoretical foundations

According to the teaching of the Seventh Ecumenical Council on the veneration of the relics of the saints of God, the practice of the Ecumenical Church and the Russian church tradition, recognition of an ascetic of piety is carried out based on consideration of certain lifetime and posthumous facts, which stand out as special *criteria for canonization*.<sup>1</sup>

These include:

- 1) testimonies of his Godly life<sup>2</sup>
- 2) testimonies of his veneration by people
- 3) testimonies of his posthumous miracles.

In addition to the testimonies of the pious life of the ascetic, his written works, if any, should also be included with their ecclesiastical assessment. That is applicable to Fr. Seraphim (Rose).

Of these three criteria for canonization, the most important is considered to be the presence of manifestations of divine grace in the name of the considered ascetic of piety, or miracles performed by the saint (through the prayers of the saint).

According to the teaching of the church, the grace of God, assimilated and multiplied in the earthly life by the ascetic, remains inseparable from the hypostasis of the saint even after death, as his second active force.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, our saints: "... in the tombs they lie and the spirits drive away" (Stichira for the Aposticha, In the third tone- to the Martyrs).

The following evidence are presented below.

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<sup>1</sup> As a reference to the theoretical justification of this position, attached are several pages from last works of the Russian Orthodox Church leading hagiographer, Archimandrite Damascene Orlovsky, his fundamental monograph "The Glory and Tragedy of Russian Hagiography. Canonization in the Russian Orthodox Church: History and Modernity" M.: 2018. These are recommended for reading as a fresh and modern source of traditional Church thought and practice in this area. (See Appendix).

<sup>2</sup> For martyrs - the fact of martyrdom for Christ.

<sup>3</sup> Not by its own by nature, but the energy of the hypostasis given by God.

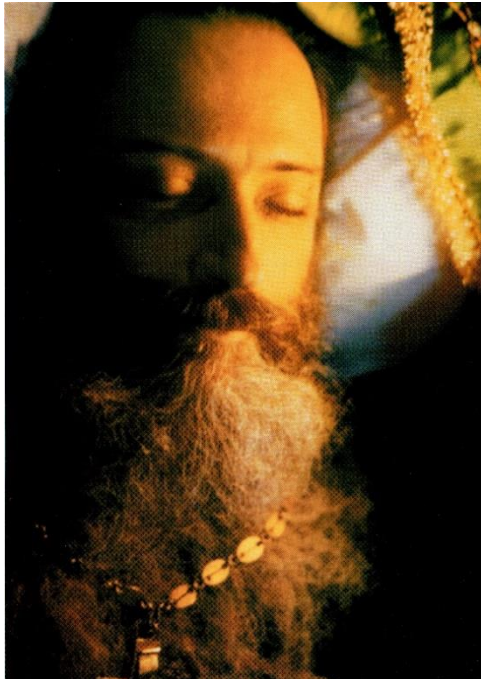
## Fact 1

### Fr. Seraphim's Repose

Olga Bay

Interview 06.10.2019.  
San Mateo, CA, USA.

The first and generally known posthumous sign (evidence) pointing to Fr. Seraphim righteousness, is the fact nearest in time and accompanying his death, in particular:



- “**facial appearance**”: a posthumous expression of the face, as an absolutely peaceful, serene, with features of unearthly peace and joy, despite of preceding period of severe suffering and torment experienced from a fatal illness preceding his death.

This fact was so extraordinary that people present near the coffin were compelled to open the monastic veil of Fr. Seraphim and peer into his face. This was acted by both adults and children. Some of the children questioned the adults about the reality of Fr. Seraphim death.<sup>4</sup>

Such facts are known in the Christian tradition, and along with other facts are perceived as a manifestation of the righteousness of the reposed, who thereby reveals not death, but his blessed "dormition" until the universal Resurrection.

At the coffin of Fr. Seraphim there were also noted:

- the **fact** of softness, warmth (not stiffness) and **preservation** of his **relics** until the moment of burial.

- **posthumous veneration** (immediately): reverence for the remains, lack of fear, the feeling of joy and as a result the extraordinary behavior of people at the time of death: prompt permission by the

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<sup>4</sup> See audio recording: Olga Bay\_2.

authorities to the burial in Platina (not in accordance with the norm of the law), joyful presence near his coffin, Easter chants, a tendency to kiss the remains.

Let us cite testimonies from the letters of Fr. Alexey Young:

“There was a terrible heat in those days: 46 degrees Celsius. We put the coffin in the church, where the candles and the large crowd made it even hotter. But the body of Fr. Seraphim showed no signs of decay. It remained soft. But the most astonishing was the face of Fr. Seraphim. It looked even better than during his life. In life, Fr. Seraphim's face was of sickly color, and



after death it became of completely normal color, cheeks turned slightly pink. And the expression on his face was so calm and joyful that at some point I thought: "He is not dead." It was a real miracle - his face, so the bishop blessed us not to cover it up, as it is usually done..."

According to the traditional church understanding, such posthumous events can be considered a special manifestation of divine grace, figuratively (symbolically) revealing the posthumous fate of the ascetic and creating (even now) the appropriate atmosphere of reverent posthumous veneration by the children of the Church.

## **Fact 2**

### **Apostolate of Fr. Seraphim**

**Archimandrite James (Corazza)**

Interview 12.10.2019.  
Old Holy Virgin Russian Orthodox Cathedral, San Francisco, CA, USA.

**“The fact that the books of Fr. Seraphim spread throughout the world, were translated into many languages: Russian, Greek, Romanian, as well as the resulting fact that many people were enlightened by the light of Christ's truth and came to the Orthodox faith - is solid evidence of divine grace action through the personality of Fr. Seraphim as an "instrument of grace" and his own holiness.”**

«Fr. Seraphim had a very inquisitive mind, and as such, initially devoted himself entirely to the study of Western philosophy, hoping to find the truth. But he did not find nourishment for his heart there.

In his search he did not stop in the field of Western philosophy only, and turned to Eastern pagan philosophy, and in particular to Buddhism and Confucianism. There he saw only some external framework of what can be called knowledge of the spiritual world, but he also did not find answers to his questions.

After that, he came to the Russian Orthodox Church and began to absorb into himself, with all the thirst of his searching soul, the fullness of the offerings of ecclesiastical abundance.

All this is obvious from his writings.

He was grateful to God that he finally found the source of the truth of life not in some abstract philosophy, but in the Church of Christ, in which God became man. He was so grateful that in return he dedicated his whole life to God.

He asked the Lord and the Mother of God to give him enough time to thank God for the gift of this faith. And subsequently, he tried not to waste a single moment of his life but use it only to gain divine grace.

And he received this treasure.

Subsequently, it was observed, for example, that when he spoke - he did not speak much, but his every word was extremely balanced, as well as his very presence radiated peace, and such a state "as if you had taken a sedative."

He was erudite and exceptionally educated both in the field of philosophy and ecclesiastical thought and deeply knowledgeable on the entire Western way of thinking with all its limits and limitations, the Western character of life as well as the offerings and value of Orthodox church life and tradition. Thus, he wrote many books wishing to pass this treasure to the Americans and all of his contemporaries.

**The fact that his books spread throughout the world, were translated into many languages: Russian, Greek, Romanian, as well as the fact that as a result many people were enlightened by the light of Christ's truth and came to the Orthodox faith - is solid evidence of divine grace action through the personality of Fr. Seraphim and his own holiness.**

And all this with the extreme modesty of Fr. Seraphim, and without any vanity in his works. All his books were published not so much by his own efforts (except for the journals that they<sup>5</sup> printed themselves), but mostly without his involvement.

According to Fr. Jacob, theology of Fr. Seraphim is not a theology that is addressed to reason only but is a word that reaches the spiritual depths of human nature, and it is such because it is abundantly filled with divine grace.

"Saint Nicholas Velemirovich said about Fr. John of Shanghai, when he was a monk: *"If you want to see a living saint - go look at Fr. John"*. People saw and recognized the holiness of Fr. John even during his lifetime ..., and after his death it has been recognized by the whole world and even by those people who had never seen him or knew him, and who turn their prayers to him. The same applies to Fr. Seraphim, not to the same extent as a miracle worker (although there are undoubtedly miracles), but as an enlightened who wrote books that change people and lead them to faith."

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<sup>5</sup> Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose) and Abbott Herman (Podmoshensky).

## **Some examples of changes in lives as influenced by the personality and works of Fr. Seraphim Platinsky.**

To illustrate the above, we will briefly give several examples of the change in people's lives in the direction of turning (spiritual movement) to God, as influenced by both the personality of Fr. Seraphim and his written works. Or even what is more specific for us - the posthumous influence of his works, comparable to that of his very personality.

### **Fr. Martin Person**

Interview 13.10.2019.  
Sunnyvale, CA, USA.

Fr. Martin, when he was not yet in Orthodoxy and during his spiritual search, was especially interested in Buddhism. He was led to the Orthodox faith by Fr. Seraphim. He came to Platina and lived there for a week, having daily conversations with Fr. Seraphim. That was their first meeting.

The second time Fr. Martin saw Fr. Seraphim in the hospital at his death bed: "I remember this picture when Fr. Seraphim was in a hospital bed and suffered a lot. He was after a difficult uterine surgery".

Fr. Herman and Fr. Alexey Young have finished a prayer service and wanted to offer the Gospel for veneration to Fr. Seraphim. Despite of the severity of his state, he leaned forward to meet them, trying to stand up by himself and kissed the Gospel, and he shed tears. Every person was also in tears".

It was at that moment that the future Fr. Martin decided to be baptized and become Orthodox.

Thus, at their first meeting, Fr. Seraphim opened the doors of Orthodoxy for him, and taught him living in faith.

And at the second one, he showed how to die in faith.

Therefore, he can say without a doubt that Fr. Seraphim was one of the main people who influenced his spiritual choice and spiritual life.

Now he is a priest.

## Monk Paisios (Levakov) beekeeper

Interview 25.10.2019.  
Jordanville, NY, USA.

“At the very beginning of my spiritual path, during my ideological search, I was strongly influenced by the books of Fr. Seraphim. One of the first such books was a collection published by the Russian publishing house "Pilgrim" "The Offering of an Orthodox American."

I was helped greatly by the thoughts of Fr. Seraphim on eastern spiritual practices, which I initially considered as alternatives to spiritual life in the process of my spiritual quest. In the book he speaks very clearly about this subject. After readings his works along with other sources, I stopped looking in this direction.

The second obstacle on the way of my movement to faith was the "Theory of Evolution" that got stuck in my head. Here I also came across a book of collected conversations by Fr. Seraphim with patristic commentaries on the book of "Genesis" ("Genesis for creation")<sup>6</sup>.

This book helped me a lot. I studied the materials given, rechecked all the references cited in the book, and the picture became obvious to me. This idol, as a result, fell away immediately and instantly.

After that I got acquainted with one more book by Fr. Damascene about Fr. Seraphim "Not of this world", where his life path is depicted. There he very clearly showed the beauty of monastic life.

After reading that book, along with other ones of course, I was irrevocably moved to monasticism.

Thus, I must say that his books, along with other patristic ones, had a strong ideological influence on me, and as a result, they inspired me to change my life and brought me to the monastery.

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<sup>6</sup> «Genesis for creation»



## **Matyshka Natalia (Vinogradova)**

Interview 29.10.2019.  
Novo-Diveevo, NY, USA.

Natalia (Vinogradova) was born in a village of Konakovo district, Tver region (Russia) in a communist family. By the age of 35, when she was baptized, her life had already reached such a state of despair that, in her words, she "did not want to live."

"The book of Fr. Seraphim "Soul after Death" was given to me by an acquaintance of mine, Sergei Pravdolyubov, then a student, later a Master of Theology.

When I read this book, it just "turned me over ...". ... I had a revival then - and I went to get baptized. "

Then I lived in Moscow and worked as a pianist at the academy until my retirement. There, I met Fr. Dionisiy Pozdnyaev and his family, who were planning to go on an Orthodox mission to China in the late 90s. I was 55 years old. When I was invited to join this mission, I agreed and, as a result, I lived in China for 10 years.

In 2009, with the blessing of Metropolitan Hilarion (Kapral), I was tonsured and returned to China, and in 2015 I arrived at Novo-Diveevo.

Likewise, my two friends from my homeland in Russia, also read the books by Fr. Seraphim - we passed them on to each other ... Both of them have joined the Orthodox church.

It can be added that besides those two close friends there was also a larger, like-minded Orthodox group of acquaintances in our area - about twenty people. And we all passed these books to each other, and then we would gather and exchange our thoughts.

Thus, I can testify that the influence of Fr. Seraphim (Rose) through his works, even by my example and the example of people I know, was tremendous. His books changed our worldview.

- We thought ... That's it ...! It's only this life, and then there is nothing... Besides that, all the women who have gathered were lonely and unhappy in life ... And, suddenly - he opened another life for us!" ...

It can be also noted that around Platina, namely around Fr. Seraphim, a group of his spiritual children and followers was formed (Fr. Vladimir Anderson, Fr. Alexey Young, Fr. Alexei Poluektov), who, after his death continued the work of Fr. Seraphim - preaching the word of God, print magazines, publish books (Mary and Catherine Mansur), hold conferences (Sicily Andersen), become clergy of the church (Metropolitan Hilarion (Kapral)), Archimandrite Luke (Murianka), Archimandrite James (Corazza), Father Martin Person, Abbot Damascene) (Christensen)) ... and others, pursue asceticism in monasteries. All of them have dedicated their lives to God.

## **Fact 3**

### **The story of Abbot Seraphim Bell**

**Abbot Seraphim (Bell)**

Kennewick, Washington, USA.

Interview 09.10.2019.

Saint Herman of Alaska Monastery, CA, USA.

... Let me tell you about the influence of Fr. Seraphim on my life.



I have three children and ten grandchildren. The incident that I want to tell about happened to my eldest son.

After he graduated from school, it happened that he left the Church, and at the same time he left his parents.

It was a very painful time for me and my wife, and for several years we prayed for our son with tears in our eyes. In our prayers we especially turned to St. John (Maksimovich).

And then, one day, there was a phone call from our son - it was difficult for him to speak - he was crying. Then he said: "Daddy, I don't understand what's happening to me - I saw a book by Fr. Seraphim and began to cry. And in general, the same thing happens again and again... when I think of Fr. Seraphim - I start to cry!".

At the time of call, he was at work, and in order not to be noticed by people in such a state, he had to leave his place and go to the warehouse, but he could not hold back his tears.

He asked: "... Dad, what's going on?"

I told him: "Go to the monastery. Go to Fr. Seraphim. It is clear that he is praying for you.

... Go to his grave and ask him for help, and also ask him to show your path in life. "

So he did just that.

I must say that today this son of mine is a much better Christian than myself. He is a conscientious believer, brings up his family and establishes it in Christ's faith.

Therefore, we are all very grateful to Fr. Seraphim for his prayers.

#### Conclusion:

Based on the above, one can state the fact of the manifestation of grace through the prayers of Fr. Seraphim in the form of a person's experience- a state of affection, an obvious supernatural gift in the period of his spiritual dryness, which softened his heart and prompted him to convert.

## **Fact 4**

### **The story about a pinecone**

**Ilya and Elena Poluektov**

Interview 03.10.2019.  
Sebastopol, CA, USA.

This incident happened in our time, with family members of a friend and associate in publishing of Fr. Seraphim, the late priest Alexey Poluektov, with his eldest son Ilya and his wife.

On June 16, 2018, Ilya and Elena Poluektov went on a pilgrimage trip to Platina, to the monastery of St. Herman of Alaska.

After visiting the monastery and with special reverence the cell of Fr. Seraphim, which is still cherished by the brethren with love and care as a memorial shrine of the monastery, Elena asked the brother to give her some incense from the cell of the ascetic, which she saw there and thought that perhaps it belonged to Fr. Seraphim. The brother replied that it's impossible to take away any things from the cell. Elena got out of the cell with a shadow of regret that she could not get even a small



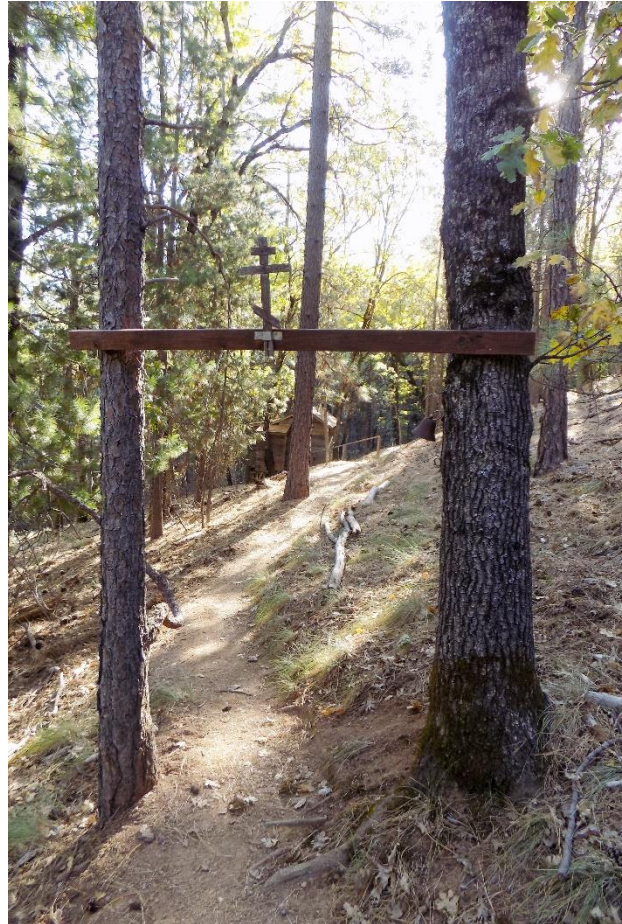
memorable thing of an ascetic whom they revere so much and whom her husband Ilya and his family knew from childhood. Although it was completely understandable and indeed it was impossible to give away objects to every pilgrim, otherwise there would be nothing left of the cell soon.

A few meters from Fr. Seraphim's cell, a pine tree grows on which a bell hangs, quite rusted from time. It was Fr. Seraphim who put it there for the notifications, instructing to ring it to those who wanted to come for a visit.



Between this tree and another, standing across the path leading to the cell, a wooden rail is nailed from above, thus forming the upper jamb of an imaginary doorway, and together with these two trees forming a street entrance to the territory of the cell.

Near this tree, walking back from the cell of Fr. Seraphim along the path, right in the opening of this symbolic passage, Elena stumbled and fell. And at that very moment, a huge piece of tree resin fell – in essence a local natural incense, and also a small cone fell nearby, which was apparently covered with that resin on the top of the tree, and thus was just waiting for its time to fall down.



Apparently, the incense got torn off the pinecone at fall and fell directly on Elena. So, it all ended up in the hands of a gaping pilgrim.

Lena began to cry ...

Later, someone from the brethren of the monastery told her that Fr. Seraphim often used this kind of incense for the service.

Since then, Elena has kept this piece of resin as "Platina's incense" and a pinecone as a blessing of Fr. Seraphim. She considers it to be a true miracle.

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Continuing the series of events about "Platina's incense", the following events could also be mentioned...

In 2018 and 2019, in the month of October, I also happened to be in Platina<sup>7</sup>, the goal and result of this visit is reflected in this work: collection of material about veneration of Fr. Seraphim and the facts of the manifestation of grace through the prayers of the ascetic.

At the monastery, one of my first desires was, of course, to serve a memorial service (pannikhida) at the grave of Fr. Seraphim. During my 2018 visit, when I've reached the monastery and left the car near the gate of the monastery, I was headed to the cell. I noticed on the ground a huge pinecone at the ends of each scale of which there was a large drop of resin.

The next day, I and Fr. David Ogan from Nashville (TN), who was there on a pilgrimage, have asked for a censer and started to serve the



pannikhida. We used that previously noted pinecone, with each drop of resin being an adequate piece of incense. During the service, it was placed on the tombstone for Fr. Seraphim, quite abundant for the divine service, and plenty of "incense" remained.

Subsequently, Fr. David took it home with great joy, as a blessing.

Also in 2019, after a conversation with both Ilya and Elena Poluektov and the recording of their testimonies about Fr. Seraphim, I went to Platina. Elena gave me a little of this "miraculously found" incense, for the sake of Fr. Seraphim.

Having arrived at the monastery, and getting ready to serve the pannikhida, I could not possibly serve with any other incense.

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<sup>7</sup> Fr. Alexander Trushin - the compiler of this material.



Thus, it happened again that we served a pannikhida with the same "Platina's incense" of Fr. Seraphim... only this time I served with the reverent Abbot Seraphim Bell from Washington State.



It may indeed be pleasing to God to commemorate Fr. Seraphim by burned incense naturally grown at his own monastery, which the Lord gave him for salvation and where he rests from his labors.



## **Fact 5**

### **Myrrh-streaming photograph of Fr. Seraphim Platinsky**

**Ilya Poluektov**

Authentication 15.10.2019.  
Sebastopol, CA, USA.

On the day of meeting (03.10.2019) with the family of Ilya and Elena Poluektov, children of the late Fr. Aleksey Poluektov, Ilya's brother Ivan, and mother Margarita, the wife of Fr. Aleksey, with the aim of collecting material about Fr. Seraphim, Ilya noticed the myrrh-streaming of Fr. Seraphim Platinsky photograph.



Ilya called and asked me to come to witness this fact.

**15.10.2019 Question:** "When did the picture of Fr. Seraphim Rose begin streaming the myrrh? "

**Ilya's answer:** "I only noticed when you came<sup>8</sup>. I noticed a dot (oil stain) on the right shoulder. And when you left, then a drop in the center appeared, right here. ... And then the rest of the streaks appeared."

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<sup>8</sup> This refers to the first meeting, when we did an interview about the "case with the pinecone" on 10/03/2019.

## Case of Sicily Andersen

### Sicily Andersen

Interview 28.10.2019.  
Richfield Springs. NY. USA.

The family of Sicily (born in 1962), daughter of the priest Vladimir Andersen, were very close to Fr. Seraphim and to Platina. Her father was a well-known associate of Fr. Seraphim in Christian preaching and book printing, as well as his assistant in the work of founding the monastery of St. Herman.

At that time, he travelled by bus from Willits, CA (the place where they were living) to work in the bookstore of Gleb and Eugene (three hours away). They were busy setting up a monastery, and therefore could not be there.

The time of Fr. Seraphim in Platina were the years of Sicily's youth. Father Seraphim was her Godfather, and as she put it: "I could talk to him about anything ...".



Her brother Vasily had the same blood type as Fr. Seraphim, and when Fr. Seraphim was at his death bed in hospital in Redding, he was next to him on another bed giving blood for transfusion. Also, it was Vasily who made the coffin of Fr. Seraphim after his repose, as he was known to be a handy man.

Incidents described below happened to Sicily Andersen.

### **Fact 6**

On the eve of Fr. Seraphim repose, Sicily Andersen could not be with him, as she was in Albany at that time (NY, USA). Nevertheless, she knew that Fr. Seraphim was very sick.

She was called right after his death. After hearing the news, she cried and cried, out of compassion and due to the fact that she could not be near her beloved Fr. Seraphim. However, in her mind there was the thought that until the third day he was still here ..., and an even more timid thought, like the last and almost impossible hope... that he could visit her.



And at some point of crying and prayer, she unexpectedly and clearly experienced a state of peace/calm that had come to her heart from outside. And this peace was so deep that it simply stopped her from crying, ceased the stream of tears<sup>9</sup>, and dispelled any confusion.

She experienced it so deeply and clearly that from that moment she completely calmed down. She believed that Fr. Seraphim visited her and gave her this consolation and hence in the joyful state of Fr. Seraphim, who should no longer be mourned but rejoiced.

### **Fact 7**

Another case happened many years later. Here's how Sicily describes it.

"My brother Vasily passed away on August 31, 1996. He was a subdeacon and at that time served in Lakewood in the church of Alexander Nevsky.

Two weeks before his repose we talked about death, because there was a reason for this - his wife Sandy (Alexandra)<sup>10</sup> had cancer. He told me about a deep thought that is contained in the prayer "Our Father ..." when we say: "Thy will be done ..." - after all, this means "Yours, Lord, and not mine ..." He understood these words by his life! "God's will is everything!" - he said.

When my brother Vasily died<sup>11</sup>, it was extremely difficult for me to accept. On the 38<sup>th</sup> day after his death, I had a dream about my brother and Fr. Seraphim. I dreamed about Fr. Seraphim, who was busy with some clerical work. I went over and asked him what was he doing? And he answered that he was preparing papers so that Vasily would enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

I was 34 years old then, Vasily – 35.

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<sup>9</sup> See recording 002.

<sup>10</sup> A daughter of Valentina Vasilievna Harvey (for those who know more about the biography of Father Seraphim).

<sup>11</sup> He died from an accident.



At first, I reacted to this vision with caution, thinking that if that is to happen, it must be on the 40<sup>th</sup> day ... and it was only the 38<sup>th</sup> day. But when I woke up, I was convinced firmly that my brother is now destined into the Kingdom of Heaven, and that Fr. Seraphim was the reason.

And on the same night his wife Sandy also had a similar dream. It was not associated with Fr. Seraphim, but it also had a symbolic meaning, which assured her that Vasily entered the Kingdom of Heaven.

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There is also another case, told by Sicily, connected with Fr. Seraphim. This case cannot be directly applied to our criterion of posthumous manifestations of grace, but to the first - the life events of Fr. Seraphim. It is worth mentioning because of the same people, who were connected with each other spiritually, and as an illustration of this connection even after death.

"In 1972 my sister Margarita (Maggie) passed away. My family wanted her to be buried in Platina, but at that time no one was allowed to be buried there yet. Nevertheless, my parents received special permission for the funeral, both from the Bishop and from the State, because no cemetery had yet been established there.

After all these approvals, the whole family and the Platina's monks took coffin to the monastery of Herman of Alaska. After bringing Maggie to the monastery, we placed her in the church and began to read the Psalter. My dad, brothers, Fr. Seraphim and Fr. Herman went to dig the grave.

After the grave was settled, we were very tired, Fr. Seraphim read the Psalter at night.

In the morning they carried my sister to be buried, and when the coffin was lowered into the grave, I looked at the church and heard singing coming from the church.

I looked at the others - they didn't hear anything. There is no way to suggest that anyone was in the church at that time. I was 10 years old back then and I was very worried. Later I wrote to Fr. Seraphim: "... Is it possible that this was really happening?" and Fr. Seraphim answered that it was not only "possible", but most likely - "it was so!"

## **Fact 8**

### **Case of Elena Anderson from Redding**

**Told by Solomonina Nelson**

Interview 28.10.2019.  
Richfield Springs, NY, USA.

This incident happened to Elena Anderson from Redding, whose husband's name was Michael - their family was close to Fr. Seraphim. Michael communicated extensively with Fr. Seraphim, and later Fr. Seraphim baptized them at Etna, among many others.

One of the closest associates of Fr. Seraphim, Solomonina Nelson recalls: "I remember very well that we were at Fr. Seraphim's funeral, at the church service. There was a coffin in the middle of the church, and the clergy were around. Elena Anderson, who was at that time slightly over thirty but no more than forty years old, stood somewhere near the coffin, maybe a little to the side.

And at that moment, the following incident happened: perhaps she burst into tears, and turning her head, she saw Fr. Seraphim behind her and somewhat above. She shared this with me, and I remembered this incident very vividly, because then I thought: "Oh, why couldn't I see this as well?! ..."

## **Fact 9**

### **The Healing of Mother Suzanne Young**

**Hieroschemamonk Ambrose (Young)**

Recorded 13.10.2019./ Added 02.04.2020.  
Sunnyvale, California, USA. / Denver, Colorado, USA.

This healing happened to my wife, Susan Young, about a year after Fr. Seraphim's repose when our youngest child was still very little.

My Matushka was diagnosed with cancer: she had a metastatic melanoma, and it was terminal. The oncologist told us that with such a diagnosis, he gives at the best twenty percent to live another five years.

I then asked the fathers of Platina to send me some oil from the lamp that burns on the grave of Fr. Seraphim. During the next year, every day, I anointed Matushka with this oil, right to the place where the cancer was located. I continued with anointment for another 5 years, although less regularly.

Every year we underwent examination in order to monitor cancer metastases, common practice during such treatment. However, after ten or even fifteen years of annual testing and monitoring the disease was no longer progressing. The doctors concluded that she was completely healed of cancer with no trace of it to be found, and that it was a true miracle.

Unfortunately, in the late 90s, she reposed in the Lord at the age of 53: she had a heart attack.

However, I firmly believe that her time came when she was diagnosed with cancer, but the Lord heard Fr. Seraphim's prayers and gave her several more years of earthly life.

## **Fact 10**

### **The story of Fr. Athanasius Kone**

**Fr. Athanasius Kone<sup>12</sup>**

Interview 09.04.2020.  
Kailua (Honolulu), Hawaii, USA.

In 2003, I lived on Kodiak Island, Alaska, with my wife Denise and my two-year-old daughter Selah. It was the time I was deeply immersed in Protestantism and was even preparing to become a Protestant pastor.

I have worked with Alaska Natives in villages where the population is completely Orthodox, but as a Protestant, I believed that Orthodoxy was a religion of the past and did not deserve any attention.

In the summer of 2003, I was the director of a spiritual camp for the Alaska Natives Association (KANA). The camp was organized in such a way that it provided an opportunity for local youth to immerse in a special atmosphere of communication, where three generations of indigenous people came together to teach and learn. It was a fairly popular and successful Protestant missionary program.

The camp was located near Pestrikovsky beach on Spruce Island, not far from Kodiak Island. I, being a leader, lived on Spruce Island, and my family lived on Kodiak.

Once my family and I decided to visit the so-called “Monk’s Lagoon” - the place where St. Herman of Alaska practiced his ascetic

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<sup>12</sup> This message was sent on September 13, 2006 to the monastery of Rev. Herman of Alaska in Platina by Athanasius (Arum) Kone (later a priest (Fr. Athanasius Kone), now a rector of the Holy Theotokos of Iveron Russian Orthodox church in Honolulu (Hawaii). At that time he converted to Orthodoxy just three months ago.

Additions and clarifications were made during interview with Fr. Kone in April 2020 in the process of collecting material describing the facts of the manifestation of grace through the prayers of Fr. Seraphim Platinsky.





life and was also laid to rest there. There is a small church there in the name of the Monks Sergius and Herman of Valaam. On a weekly boat with visitors from Kodiak Island, my wife and daughter have arrived one day.

My wife grew up on Kodiak Island, has Russian roots, but has never been to the Monastic Lagoon. The incident that I want to tell actually happened on the spring day in this holy place, on the Spruce Island.

I, my wife, and our daughter Selah were walking along the path leading from the cemetery to the church, when suddenly we felt a fragrance: it smelled of roses and incense at the same time. My wife said, "I can smell incense ... but I thought the monks live on the other side of the island?" I replied: "Yes, they are. There is no one on our side." On the island there is an Orthodox hermitage which belongs to the monastery of St. Herman of Alaska from Platinum (California), and it is

indeed located on the other side, about two hours walk from this coast. Therefore, the smell of incense that we felt, if indeed coming from the church service, could not be the reason for our experience.

The smell that we felt was strong enough and varied in intensity: it would fade a little, then increase again ... it was noticeable.

We realized that something unusual was happening!

In a couple of minutes we saw a lot of people climbing the path - they were children from the camp and their parents. They were accompanied by two teachers Judy Simenova from the local village of Akhiok and Ziki. There were about fifty of them. The teachers led them from Pestrikovsky beach to the church - the distance of about half a mile.

When they approached us, we asked if they felt any smell (scent) - they answered "no" - they did not feel anything like that.

After that, Judy, who was a native of this island, invited my daughter to try the waters from the spring of St. Herman, which happen to be nearby. My daughter ran, but I didn't really like the idea. I had no intention of trying this water, because the very idea that water might have some special healing properties was not yet acceptable to me at that time. But since my daughter had a sip, I did the same. Then my wife also had some water from the holy spring.

My wife Denis had a severe headache that day from the very morning, but after drinking water, she felt something clicked in her head, and the headache instantly went away.

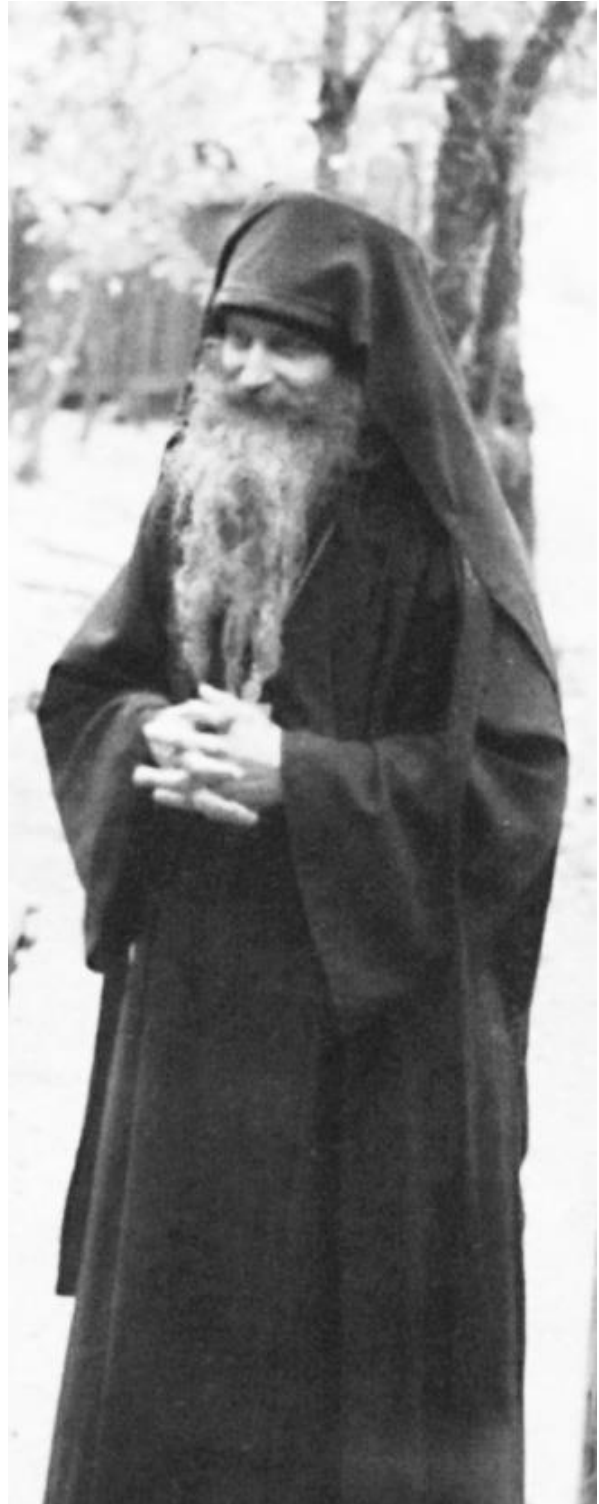
After the events on Spruce Island (I was confused) I did not know what to do ... We felt that all this happened through the action of the Power of God and through the prayers of St. Herman, but we tried to explain it to ourselves in our own way, and the only way familiar back then - through Protestantism. Therefore, that spiritual experience,

although raised all these serious questions, did not bring us any closer to Orthodoxy at that time.

About thirty days after events on Spruce Island - I had a dream!

In a dream, I saw several people from the St. Innocent Academy praying for me (this is an Orthodox school on the Kodiak, and I had some friends there). While these people from the academy were praying, I began to cry bitterly... I began to look for something to wipe away my tears and saw a folded piece of fabric laying on the shelf. I grabbed this fabric, and it seemed to me that it belonged to a great prayer and a deeply spiritual person. It was a folded clerical garment<sup>13</sup>, apparently a riasson.

And then a priest appeared in front of me, dressed in black, with a long, disheveled beard and a radiant face. I felt that the fabric I had just used as a napkin belonged to him. He said his name is "Seraphim Rose".



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<sup>13</sup> I didn't know at that time what it was or what it was called, so I identified this thing with the Jewish shawl known as "tallit", but all this naturally was at the level of certain semantic associations.



I want to repeat and especially note that his face was shining! It radiated a white light! Light came out of him! Not in the sense that he was smiling and full of joy, as it is customary to understand allegorically, but he was truly emanating light.

Also, at the moment of communicating with him in a dream - I experienced an awe.

Then he said a lot about my life. He said that I have a vocation, that I will accept Orthodoxy and become

a priest. I began to argue with him, saying that I did not want to accept Orthodoxy and wear such an "awkward black hat" like his...

He talked about other things ... but now, as well as right after my dream, I could not remember everything.

When I woke up, I realized that something deeply spiritual had happened to me. I want to emphasize that before this dream I did not know anyone with the name "Seraphim Rose". Moreover, I must admit that, being a Protestant, it was even unpleasant for me to be visited in a dream by an Orthodox priest, and especially by a dead one, as I've known somehow.

I could ignore an ordinary dream, but what I experienced was different from an ordinary dream. It was so intense/colorful that I couldn't forget it.

The next day, I went to look for an Orthodox priest. I knew Father Paisios, the dean of St. Innocent's Academy, so I went to see him. Sitting in his office, I told him that I might be losing my mind, and asked if he had heard of a priest named Seraphim Rose. He was very happy

and having said "Yes" handed me a thick book about the life of Fr. Seraphim. And I told him about my dream.

I read the book "Out of this World" the whole weekend. I was amazed by the life of Fr. Seraphim. I have never known such Orthodoxy. The main thing that struck me was how deeply the life of the holy fathers of the early church, their thoughts, and their way of life was inscribed on the life of Fr. Seraphim<sup>14</sup>.

Having a history education and a scientific degree, I partly knew the holy fathers of the Church, and had enough knowledge to recognize a similar way of Fr. Seraphim's thinking and living from his biography.

I could not forget the dream about Fr. Seraphim and could not explain it. This dream deeply touched my soul. I had a lot of questions and started reading a lot. I even spent the weekend at the skete of St. Michael the Archangel on Spruce Island. The spiritual atmosphere of this place amazed me. Walking through the grounds of the monastery, I felt a "cloud of stillness/peace" enveloping me. All this led to a profound change in me.

After all that had happened and described above, I began to pay a serious attention to Orthodoxy. My wife even joked that I "started an affair with Orthodoxy", and not without a bit of a perplexed question ... since we both had serious obligations to our local Protestant church.

Definitely, the revelation(s) we had did not match our previous life plans. We thought that we had already figured out everything in our life ... but now it was as if we were ripped out of it. It was very destructive!

I started reading Orthodox evening prayers, because a good friend told me that it is impossible to understand Orthodoxy without its main spiritual practice - prayer.

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<sup>14</sup> ... In fact, he was one of them.

About three months later, while reading evening prayers, including the prayer of St. Basil the Great, I suddenly realized that this man, in 25 lines, had described all the necessary elements of the knowledge of God. I remember thinking for the first time - he really saw God, unlike me.

My conversion lasted for two or three years. Sometimes in the morning I would come to the Protestant community, and in the evening I was at Vespers in an Orthodox church.

On the feast of Pentecost 2006, after such careful preparation, my wife, daughter and I were baptized in the Orthodox Church in Washington, in the church of St. Silouan the Athonite.

And later, I became a priest, just as Fr. Seraphim Rose have had predicted.

## **Closing**

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- Memorial Day of St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco.