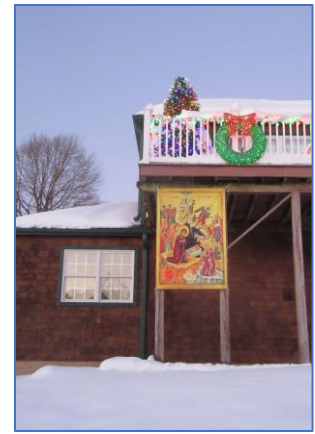




Skete of the Most Holy Theotokos
and Ever-Virgin Mary,
Queen of All
The Healer of Cancer

445 Longshot Lane • Rochelle, Virginia • 22738
www.queenofallskete.org • tel. 239-229-3871



Christmas at the Skete 2022

Nativity Lent 2023

Dear Friends of the Queen of All Skete,

Christ is in our midst!

So the wall was finished in the twenty and fifth day of the month Elul, in fifty and two days.

NEHEMIAH 6:15

This Biblical narrative about the restoration of the walls of the City of David resonated in my heart as I watched the Queen of All Chapel walls take shape. With God's help, and through the generous response that you – the faithful friends of the Skete – made to the matching funds campaign this year, the shell of the Chapel now exists. Before long, iconography will beautify the ceiling and icons embedded with holy relics will adorn the walls.

Nothing has changed about our "modern way of life". For centuries mankind has strived to beautify sacred space dedicated to the Lord. And the Almighty Lord honors our endeavors! It is no coincidence that here in Rochelle, Virginia, where the density is 40 people per square mile, an Orthodox iconographer who studied under the renowned teacher Ksenia Pokrovsky has purchased a house just a few miles from the Queen of All Skete! Paraskeve Kalvesmaki, known for her creative technique with gold leaf, is developing templates and work will begin before year's end.



Iconographer Paraskeve Kalvesmaki in her studio working on a template for the Platytera icon of the Theotokos over the Holy Place.



The Skete was blessed to have the chapel walls, ceiling and vaults finished by master craftsman Paul King, a British native who learned the art of plastering in the Old-World style – made to last for generations.

At the same time, the reliquary that is being built into one of the Chapel walls is taking shape. This will hold 36 relics, limited by the number of frames that could be obtained from Ukraine. This artistic work will incorporate framed miniature icons of the saints, gold-plated reliquaries and brass nameplates.



His Grace, the Most Reverend Bishop James of Sonora, Second Vicar of ROCOR's Western American Diocese, with Mother Andrea and the Hawaiian Iverskaya Myrrh-Streaming Holy Icon at the conference.

In other news, I was invited to speak at the ROCOR Western Rite Clergy Conference in Sarasota, Florida this September. The presentation was entitled: "Are You Living in Reality?" Many interesting observations were made by the audience. If you stop and think about it, people are taught from infancy to live in a false reality, squeezed into a mold shaped by the media, teachers, and other societal influences. Society is cancelling both femininity and masculinity as relics of a "pre-enlightened" past. As we inch closer to the end of historical reality, Orthodox Christians must be aware of the efforts of the Evil One to influence us in ways contrary to our salvation. We are called out of this chaos to find our

way (and lead others) in a challenging world. May God help us! However, this is why the spiritual oases of aesthetic theology as found in monastic abodes are so necessary – they are havens where the faithful may "recharge their spiritual batteries".



The completed border around the icon of the Divevevo nuns.



Many thanks to volunteers Father Michael and Popadija Susan Furry of St. Innocent Church in Salem, Virginia, for rebuilding the dilapidated front stairs!



May God grant all of you peace in these turbulent times, patience, wisdom, courage, a blessed Nativity Fast, and a spiritual renewal and refreshing welcome to our Saviour at the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord.

Your holy prayers for the Queen of All Skete are treasured, and know that you are also kept in prayer. And I ask that you please remember the Skete in your year-end almsgiving, so that beautification of the Chapel and other works of the Skete may continue.

In our Lord Jesus Christ,

Mother Andrea

From the Gift Shop

Additional items may be seen on the website www.queenofallskete.org or call 239-229-3871



Carved wood priest's blessing cross, from Serbia. 13³/₈", \$250

Only one available!

◀ detail



Soldier's Cross with Archangel Michael and Sts. George, Demetrius, Panteleimon, Alexander Nevsky & Dmitri Donskoi. 925 silver & 24k gold plate. 1½", \$188



Seriograph icon of the Mystical Supper, set in carved wood, with 925 silver and gold gilding, from Greece. 7.8" x 9.8", \$220