

COVER

THE ANCIENT ICON OF SAINT
GEORGE THAT WAS FOUND IN A
CAVE BY THE SEA NEAR THE
DESERTED MONASTERY OF
CHRIST OF SYMVOULAS. THE
MONASTERY IS LOCATED IN THE
DISTRICT OF LIMASSOL.



Icons of Saint George showing his tortures

All devout Christians who wish to assist in the restoration of Saint George the Great Martyrs Monastery of Christ of Symvoulas, they can communicate at telephone No. 25391501 or make any contributions in to account No. 0334 - 00 - 009246 with Bank of Cyprus.

Apolydikio (introit)
of Saint George the Great Martyr

(The Church celebrates his memory twice a year.

The 23rd of April, and the 3rd of November).

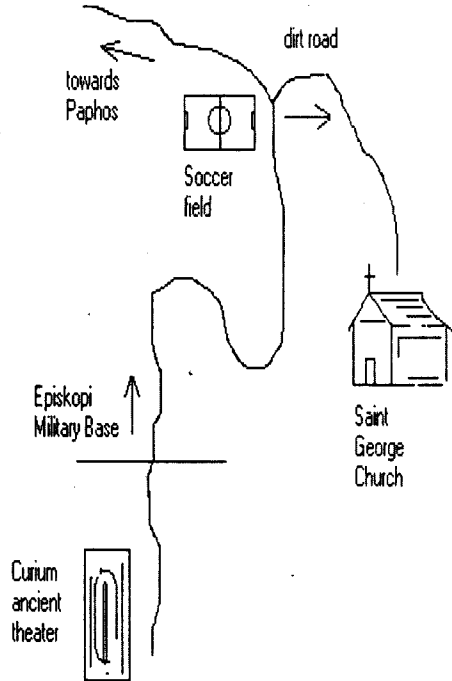
Liberator of prisoners of war
and defender of the poor
healer of the sick, and ally of Kings
Triumphant Great Martyr Saint George,
please be our mediator
to the presence of Christ who is a God,
in order to help us,
for the salvation of our souls.

Explanation

What is an Apolydikio.

The Apolydikio is a introit (small honorary hymn) that we psalm during the Mass that is dedicated to each of the Saints. The Church writes these introits for each of the Saints in order to remind the faithful of their lives, their miracles, and the wonderful ways in which they are gifted by God in order to help those who ask for their help. Saint Paraskevi for instance, is well known to cure people that have eye problems. Saint Modestos cures the farmers' animals, and the Archangel Michael is known to be the protector of the Air Force.

Directions



How to get there

From Limassol we take the old road to Paphos. After we pass the ancient theater of Curium that we pass on our left hand side, we arrive at the Episkopi Military Base. As we travel through the Base the road starts to wind around downhill. At the end of the downhill run (bottom), there is a clearing. On our left we can see the soccer field in a small distance. On our right hand side the dirt road that will take us to the Church of Saint George. (If you start to travel uphill it means that you have just missed the turn to the Church). The dirt road is in good condition, and it is about 1 kilometer long.

SAINT GEORGE OF SYMVOULAS

- The recently found Church of Saint George the Great Martyr, in the Symvoulas area, "Happy Valley", Episkopi.
- The icon of Saint George on the cover was found in the Symvoulas area in a cave that is located on the beach front, a few years ago. A continuous miracle is known to take place there for the faithful. There is a spring of fresh water coming out of the ground in the cave. This water is called agiasma (holy water), and the faithful drink it or they place it on their bodies in order to be cured.
- Many miracles have taken place because of the Saint's Grace, here in the Church of Saint George the Great Martyr.
- Prayers for the needy take place often there, with the participation of a priest.

The name Symvoulas.

The name Symvoulas comes from the Greek word symvoulia (συμβούλιο), that means council. It is speculated that the Monastery took that name during Byzantine times when the Bishops of the Church of Cyprus used to meet here for the councils of the Church. The reason this location was preferred by the Bishops for their councils was probably because of the Monastery's convenient geographical location.



**SAINT GEORGE DOES NOT FORGET,
AND HE IS NOT FORGOTTEN. THE
GREAT MIRACLE OF SAINT GEORGE
OF SYMVOULAS.**

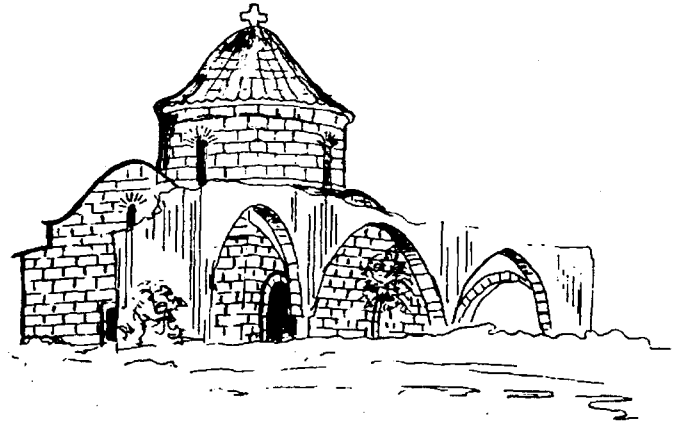
The Saints do not forget, even when people forget about them. The only thing they ask from us is to PRAY, and to have FAITH. Then they perform their miracle. That is exactly what happened in June in the year 1992 somewhere in an area named Symvoulas, which is located in "Happy Valley" Episkopi in a British Military Base, involving a long forgotten Church of Saint George.

The bells of a deserted Church suddenly started to ring after hundreds of years of silence. Candles were lit, and pious hymns started to fill the air. The ground yard of the Church was filled with religious pilgrims when the story of how the Church was found, was spread around amongst the Christians. My name is Eleni Leonida Skourou, and I come from Limassol. I was 47 years old when the story

of the Great Miracle that happened to me begun. At the time I was facing serious heart problems. The tests from heart examinations that I got from doctors both in Cyprus and abroad, showed that only 15% of my heart was working. My heart arteries were partially closed so I was getting ready for an operation. My doctor had already send my medical file to Nicosia so the hospital there could schedule my operation. My doctors name was Dr. Nicos Tsangarides. I remember him writing on my medical file -URGENT-. My heart problem forced me to visit the hospital emergency room more often. I also went to another doctor to get a second opinion before my surgery, and he told me that "I have a very serious problem" and that "It is a miracle that I am still alive". He also said, " I should have had the operation a long time ago", and that " I should have the operation as soon as possible". He also told me that he was very anxious to know my news after my operation. I immediately thought to myself that maybe he wanted to know if

I had made it. My husband Leonidas was shocked when he heard all these things and he could not stand on his feet. When we went home he started to ask God for His help. He was also trying to figure out a way to sell our home, so we could gather up money quickly for an operation abroad. He kept saying, "don't be afraid you will have an operation and you will become well". I kept answering, "I am not afraid, and you must not come in despair. God might want to give me an extension of my life, so I can be prepared better spiritually when is time for me to meet him. He might even want to make me well without an operation". My husband could not believe that I could become well without an operation, because my problem was worsening as time went by. I also kept saying to him, "I am praying and I am hoping for the help of God to free me from this situation in a way that He only knows, before it is time for me to go into surgery". A great miracle did take place, and I was freed from my illness, even though I consider my self

unworthy before the presence of our Triad God who is our Creator. He cares for His creations you know, because He created us like His Image and Likeness. God wants the salvation of the souls of All people and wants all of us to "come to a verification of the truth". That is why, He tries us out, but only to the extent that we can handle it. Then the Grace of God "steps in", as It did in the story of the blind man in the Holy Bible. "Go in peace" He told the blind man, "do not sin again".



HOW DID THE GREAT MIRACLE TAKE PLACE, ONE EARLY MORNING BEFORE MY OPERATION.

It was 5.30 in the morning. My husband Leonidas was in bed half asleep and half awake. Two young men appeared, they were very bright and very handsome. "I knew their names," he later told me. The one on the right was George, and the one on the left was Andrew. They took Leonidas for a drive in the forest. While they were driving (Leonidas was driving), they ordered him to climb a very steep hill. Leonidas reacted by saying to them, "this is not an airplane that I am driving, but a car. How do you expect me to get up there?" "Give it a try my son", they replied. Suddenly he found himself on the top of the hill. From the peak of the hill they showed him the valley and asked him. "What do you see"? Leonidas replied, "I see many ruins, and a Church". Then George (Saint George) asked him. "Are you

looking for a Church"? "Yes I am", Leonidas replied. "Is this the one"? "Yes it is", says Leonidas. Then Saint George says to Leonidas. "The Church you are looking for is the Church of Saint George. You must go down there and find it. There is also another Church that belongs to Saint George that I want you to visit, that is located close to the house you live". Then the Saint pointed out to Leonidas the direction he should follow to find the Church, and also advised him where to go to ask for directions. Immediately Leonidas got up and came to my room. I had already been awake because I had been praying as I do every morning before he wakes up. Just before Leonidas came to my room I remember talking to God in my prayer and saying. "You did not cure me my Lord because of my unworthiness. However, I am still awaiting to receive Your help my Lord". When Leonidas came to my room he says to me. "Why are you kneeled down and crying? Get up. From this day on you will be no

longer ill, you will no longer need to take medication, you do not even need to have the operation". "The blessed moment is here", I said to my self. I asked him what happened, and he told me the story. I must mention here that that I was begging God to make me well. At the same time I was asking Him to let it be known to me, how my cure was accomplished though His intervention. I see now the reasons why, our Gracious God chose to visit us and bless us through my husband, who was shown a deserted Monastery that was forgotten by all.

I felt well immediately. I felt a certain calm and a certain sweetness going through me. This was a great relief for me because the pain that I had been continues latently. Sometimes the pain was so great, that it made me fall unconscious.

We immediately started to look for the small Church of Saint George in Limassol, following the directions of the Saint. We located the Church near the Turkish settlement, behind the Church of Saint

Antonios. The Church is very very small, and it has the name "Saint George of the poor". This Church is unknown to a lot of people today, and it was also unknown to us at the time we found it.

It was the middle of the week. We had decided that the Sunday that was coming up we were going to visit the forest in Episkopi near "Happy Valley", to search for Saint George's Church, in the area that was pointed out by the Saints Andrew and George. Before we started to search, we had asked a lot of people to help us with the location of the Church. No one seemed to know anything or was able to assist us. We were determined to start with our search, regardless of the negative outcome of our first inquiries. We were sure that we were going to find it.

Sunday morning came. Before we were going to start the search for Saint George's Church, we attended Sunday Mass as we do every Sunday. We wanted to attend mass at the Church of Saint Andrew, "Xaraki". Somehow we lost our way and

found our selves in the vicinity of another Church that is dedicated to Apostle Andrew, the one that is located in "Mesa Geitonia". (Later it became all clear to us that the reason we lost our way and found our selves in the "Mesa Geitonia" Church, was because Saint Andrew wanted us to). While we were in Church I felt a hand touching me around the waist. I didn't give it much thought at the moment. I was passing in front of Saint Andrew's icon at the time that was placed on a stand in the front of the Church. I moved on. I went to light a candle. I looked back over my shoulder. I tried to see who or what touched me. I saw the icon of Saint Andrew. Immediately something like an electrical current went through my body. I felt my body shivering. It is at that moment that I realized, that we got lost because Saint Andrew wanted us to attend Mass, pray, and light our candles in His "Mesa Geitonia" Church. During the same day we attended a baptism in the Church of Saint George in Ypsonas. After the

ceremony was finished we went in front of the icon of Saint George to honor Him and pay our respects as we usually do. I felt a heart crisis coming on. My body was paralyzed. I started to beg the Saint to show mercy on me. I told Him that my children and family still needed me. I was begging Him not to let me die in His temple. Suddenly the pain was gone and I came back to my senses.

We went home to get oil and candles and everything else needed when someone is going to go to a pilgrimage to a Church. We were hoping that we would at least find the foundation of the Church. We were hoping that we were going to be able to light our candles and pray there that day. The area that we went to was completely unknown to us. When we went to the spot that the two Saints took my husband we found our selves on a rural road. The valley was surrounded by tall hills and we felt as though we were in a tunnel. We kept searching for ruins on that main rural road regardless of the fact that we had options to follow

other small roads joining that one. We both felt an invisible power guiding us and we were determined to continue the search till the last second of the daylight. We slowly moved on for about a kilometer. Suddenly we saw some ruins on our left side that reminded us of a deserted village. On our right, hidden behind some bushes, we see a Church that is half ruined!

Words cannot describe our emotions. We quickly pushed the bushes on the side and entered the Church. We stopped there in astonishment. Down on the floor on our left, stood an icon of Saint George the Great Martyr. Tears of joy filled our eyes and feelings of gratitude filled our hearts for Saint George who was our mediator to God. We eventually returned home. From that moment on I felt a great need to start a project on the side. Next day after I had lunch I laid down to rest a little. I was thinking of the site we found, and the ruins. I could see in my mind the hill (I was now half asleep) and that I had to somehow walk down to the

valley. I kept thinking that I was very ill. I knew that because I could barely walk up the steps of my own house. I kept asking my self "how can I walk down this hill and how can I possibly return in the condition that I am in". I kept thinking to myself that I was not able to do it. Then, I found myself climbing down the hill. It was nighttime. I was standing in the dirt road across the ruins. There was also a water reservoir there. I started wandering what the name of this deserted village was. On my left I could see a vineyard. Suddenly a young man rose above the ruins. He stood straight as a torch. He was tall and His hair was curly. He wore an officer's uniform. He also wore epaulets on His shoulders. He was holding a spear and he had it resting on the ground. Suddenly the spear lit up. He stood a short distance from me without saying a word. Then I thought to myself, that the young man is probably going to wonder, what I had been doing here in the middle of the night all by myself. Then I showed Him the spot where the Church is

re-tested in the hospital, because the doctors would have not believed me if I had told them that I am well because a miracle had taken place. Dr. Nicos Tsangarides M.D who was my doctor did not say no to me. After getting the results of few of my tests, I went back to see Dr. Tsangarides. He kept reading the reports over and over. He kept looking at me. He was lost for words. "Take these papers to some other doctors. I can not find anything wrong with you". Then I asked him. "What happened to the heart problem with which I needed surgery"? He kept saying to me. "Everything is okay. There is nothing wrong with you". I suddenly started to cry. Tears of joy replaced all those tears of pain and agony of past times. I told Dr. Tsangarides that "a miracle took place" and that "medical science has just verified it". When he heard the word MIRACLE he immediately jumped out of his chair and kept saying repeatedly. "The Grace of the Saints is great, the Grace of the Saints is great". He then wanted to know how the MIRACLE took

place. From that moment on he became a testifying witness of the miracle. He visits us at the Church very often. He knew my heart problems first hand so he was shocked when he realized that it was a miracle that had taken place. A few days later he asked me to stop all the medication that I had been taking for the past 5 years. (I was taking 13 pills a day). From the moment I had been cured I had been begging God and Saint George not to allow for me to get ill with my heart again, because there would be those, which would start to doubt that a miracle took place. I was also begging God to send me an angel, to let me know if my request was accepted. Eight days after the miracle of my healing took place Saint Photini the Cypriot appeared in my sleep. (When this Cypriot Saint was alive, she lived an ascetic life in a cave in the area of Karpasi). I was trying to cross a street. I saw her standing inside of a bright circle. She was wearing a long gown and a hanger chief on her hair. I said to her. "I knew that you had a dark complexion. When did

you become so beautiful"? Saint Photini then answered. "I have learned that you are all well now". "The Glory belongs to God," I answered. I started to tell her that sometimes I have this uneasy feelings and she interrupted me by saying three times repeatedly. "I am not feeling good either". As she was saying that she disappeared on a Northward direction. The Priest who explained my dream to me informed me that the Saint that appeared to me was Saint Photini the Karpassiotissa. (A Saint that lived in the area of Karpasi). He told me that the reason she was sad was because the cave that she lived in while she was a hermit was now in the position of the Turks. (The Saint does not have anything personal with the Turks. She would have liked for the Orthodox to have possession of the cave she lived in, only because they know how to honor her there by holding Divine Liturgies and prayers honoring the Saint). Two or three days later I heard that an Orthodox Priest that lived in the occupied

part of Cyprus managed to bring back all of the Holy Remains of Saint Photini. I found out that the Church had taken the Holy Remains of Saint Photini to the settlement of Kolossi Limassol. I went there and honored the Saint. One of the following nights I saw this dream that I was taking a ride toward the Church of Saint George. Suddenly I felt that I had to throw up so I asked my husband to stop the car. I saw a tangle like a black ball with yellow spots come out my mouth as I bend down to vomit. I touched it. I felt like it was hairy. Then I said three times. "My Holy Mary. How could I have this thing inside me and still be alive"? I know now that Saint Photini heard my plea when I told her in my dream that I have these uneasy feelings and sometimes I am not feeling well. The dream where I vomit the illness was Her way of showing me that I was well now.

The things that I write to you come from strength that God granted me after a lot of prayer. I write these things to you in order to be of service of my

fellow human beings, in order to help you seek and find our Savior and Redeemer the Triad God of Orthodoxy.

A year after the great miracle had happened to me we were finally ready to start with the restoration of the Church. The tractor that we brought to clear the area around the Church dug out a Saints Holy Remain. (You can read in the end of this booklet how the Orthodox identifies Holy Remains, and Their significance to the Church). I immediately took some parts of the Holy Remain to our Bishop to see them. During the same afternoon Leonidas and I returned to the ancient Church of Saint George, and carefully gathered from the ground all the remaining parts of the Holy Remain that we could possibly find. Next day while standing outside the Church, I felt someone calling me to dig in the Churchyard at a certain spot in order to recover a Saints Holy Remain. I took a lath-hammer that happened to be around and started to dig. After turning up the ground a few times I

found a human skull and immediately after that I found the rest of the body. While I was doing this Leonidas kept saying from a distance. "You are under the impression that you are going to find Holy Remains buried so shallow in the ground"? I called out to him to come to see my finding. He thought that I had probably found a small part of a Holy Remain. When he saw the skull he broke up in tears. Immediately after that he took the lath-hammer from my hands and began to carefully remove the Holy Remain from the ground. After we finished carefully removing the Holy Remain from the ground we placed it in my apron and took it home. The beautiful aroma that emanated from the Holy Remain of the Saint was immense. (When aroma emanates from a Holy Remain it means that the Saint is present). We were very happy. We also notified the Bishop. A year later we found by miracle again another Holy Remain. We wanted to place the Holy Remains under the care of the Metropolis, so we brought father Stylianos to read

some prayers. After the prayers we took the Holy Remains to the Bishop. We couldn't believe our ears when we heard the Bishop telling us that we can take the Holy Remains home while the Church is being build.

Many miracles continuously take place here in the newfound Church of Saint George. After talking to some monks from the Monastery of Stavrovouni we found out that long time ago on this side there used to be a Monastery named "Council of the Lord". The Church of Cyprus use to hold their councils "symvoulia" here. In a book titled "Villages and Cities of Cyprus" there is a mention of the name of the Abet of the Monastery. His name was Theodoros. In another book is also mentioned that Saint Nicolaos and Saint Theodoros stayed here in this Monastery for an extended period of time.

According to Church history Theodoros later became the Bishop of Paphos. Bishop Theodoros

was also the first person to write the biography of a great Cypriot Saint named Saint Spyridonas. We hope and pray to God that we will soon be able to rebuild the Great Monastery Council of the Lord soon. I thank the Triad God of Orthodoxy and Saint George the Triumphant, who helps us through His grace every time we come across difficult circumstances. Saint George helps us by being our mediator to God when we are in need, and especially helps us in those trials where we are called to save our souls.

The humble servant of the Lord
Eleni

● There is a Sunday Mass "Divine Liturgy" here at the Church of Saint George every "last Sunday" of the month starting at 0700 hrs.

● Every Sunday starting at 1800 hrs there are prayers held here in the presence of a priest, for those who are in need.

● Saint George's Church is opened to visitors all day long.

NOTE : The Holy Remains of three Holy Fathers of the Church were found recently in the immediate vicinity of the new found Church of Saint George the Great Martyr. Many faithful have already gotten revelations related to the lives of these Saints. With the help of God and when the time is right their names will be revealed.

For contributions: All those who want to help with the restoration of the Monastery of Christ of Symvoulas may do so by contributing to the Bank of Cyprus account number : 0334-00-009246

For information
LEONIDAS - ELENI SKOURU
TEL : 25 39 15 01

English speaking persons can
call Constantinos TEL : 99 87 33 90
during the following hours.
(08.00-12.30)- (15.00-20.00)

THE HOLY REMAINS

It is a world wide Orthodox Monastic Tradition to exhume the bodies of the monks 5 years after they die. The Church is looking to see if the Remains of our monks show signs of holiness, and this is the reason they do this. The monks are actually looking to see if the Remains have acquired a honey gold color. They are also looking to ascertain if a beautiful distinctive aroma (that reminds an exotic flower) emanates from the Remains. The Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church explain that these signs of holiness are begotten as a result of an actual physical transformation that takes place on a person's body during their natural life. Continuing, they explain that this transformation is accomplished ONLY as a result of the presence of the Holy Spirit (God) in the body of a monk. In order for the Holy Spirit to make a person His place of residence, a person must first clean their selves from all their sins and all their passions. They do

this by Church Mass attendance, by Confessing their sins, by taking Holy Communion for the forgiveness of their sins, by Praying, and by Fasting. Orthodoxy is a way of life delivered by the Apostles and the Saints of the Orthodox Church that has as aim to clean man from all those things that are undesirable to God, enabling in this manner the Holy Spirit (God) to make their bodies HIS place of residence. This Christian Tradition of exhuming the bodies begun in the early years of Christianity as early as the time the twelve Apostles were preaching Christianity to the world. The fact that the Orthodox Church today is a custodian of Holy Remains of the Apostles verifies the "age" of this custom. The first Christian families use to exhume the bodies of their loved ones, and then exhibited their Holy Remains with pride in a visible part of the house for all to see. This Tradition was practiced in early Christianity when most of the people in the cities and the villages, would obey the Church, and would live a way of

life in and out the Church that would lead to their Salvation (Sainthood). As time went by, the people in the cities started to deviate from the temperate way of life that lead to the Heavenly Kingdom. A few Christians decided then, to move way from the cities in remote areas, to practice undisturbed the Traditions and Practices of the Church passed down from the Apostles that would lead them to Salvation. Because they lived far way and lived alone, they were called (μοναχοί=alone) monks. Today's Orthodox Monks that live in far away places, follow the same Tradition, are in pursuit of the same spiritual life, and have the same spiritual objectives as their forefathers. The Church of Cyprus was founded by Paul (Saul) and Saint Barnavas (Acts 13, 4-5), so today our Cyprus Orthodox Church enjoys Apostolic Succession. Cyprus is also called the island of the Saints and the number of the villages here that are named after Saints testify not only to the Saints names but also to their numbers. It is not hard to understand why

the Orthodox feel, that the real treasures of Orthodoxy are not the Monasteries, the land, or the gold artifacts. The real treasures of the Church are the Holy Remains of the Saints that certify beyond any reason of a doubt, that Orthodoxy is definitely the correct road to Sainthood (Salvation). The Saints are simply those who followed obediently the Tradition of the Church as left behind by the Apostles and the Holy Fathers, were transformed with the Grace of God, and now live with Jesus in the heavenly Kingdom. The Holy Remains of the Holy Fathers of the Church are a worldwide declaration of man that Jesus sacrifice has not gone in vain. Holiness constitutes the only possible means of Salvation for mankind. The Holy Remains are our only unquestionable guarantee that we have achieved that. Orthodoxy is not a philosophy but a therapeutic way of life with an aim to return man to the "ancient beauty," in a state where a person can see and know God like Adam and Eve did. This state is also known by the Holy

Fathers as the Supernatural state, Salvation, or Sainthood. There are twenty Orthodox Monasteries today on Athos Mountain in Thessalonica Greece which you can visit, (look them up on Internet), that are custodians of Holy Remains of the Apostles, and thousands of Saints, as we know them from the Holy Bible and the history of the Church. They are also custodians of Holy Remains of Great Martyrs like Saint George, who has pleased our Heavenly Father with His life, and now dressed in heavenly glory acts as our mediator, in the presence of God

It is considered a great blessing from God to have in our Saint George "Symvoulas" Church, Holy Remains of Holy Fathers of Orthodoxy.