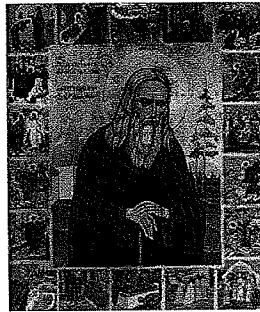


The Olive Shoots  
St. Symeon Orthodox Church  
December 9, 2012  
+St. Herman of Alaska+  
(Feast Day on December 13, 2012)



“God is there, as God is everywhere!”

~ St. Herman

#### Upcoming Events

Wed. December 12, 6:30 pm ~ Vespers for St. Herman  
Thurs. December 13, 6:00 am ~ Liturgy for St. Herman



*Merry Christmas!*



*Visit us at our website-[theoliveshoots.webstarts.com](http://theoliveshoots.webstarts.com)!*



### **Troparion - Tone 4**

O blessed Father Herman of Alaska,  
North star of Christ's holy Church,  
The light of your holy life and great deeds  
Guides those who follow the Orthodox way.  
Together we lift high the Holy Cross  
You planted firmly in America.  
Let all behold and glorify Jesus Christ,  
Singing his holy Resurrection.

### **Kontakion - Tone 3**

The eternal light of Christ our Savior,  
Guided you, O blessed father Herman,  
On your evangelical journey to America,  
Proclaiming the Gospel of peace.  
Now you stand before the throne of Glory;  
Intercede for your land and its people  
Peace for the world and salvation for our souls!

### **This Week's Bible Verse**

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with  
all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."

~Luke 10:27

## St. Herman

**Saint Herman** was born in Serpukhov, **Russia** around the year 1756. He became a **monk** at the age of 16; first at the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Hermitage and then later at the **Valaam** Monastery. In 1793 Metropolitan Gabriel of Novgorod and St. Petersburg asked Igumen Nazarii to choose a group of monks from Valaam Monastery who would form a **missionary** team. The task of this mission team was to travel across Russia and Siberia and to begin evangelization of Russian America (Alaska). Other members of this missionary team were Archimandrite Joasaph, who was the priest-in-charge, Hieromonks Juvenaly, Macarius, Athanasius, Stephen and Nectarius, Hierodeacons Nectarius and Stephen, and Monks Joasaph and Herman. On September 24th, 1794, after journeying for nearly a year, the group of eight monks arrived on **Kodiak Island**. A bilingual school (Russian and Aleut) was established for the natives. Some of the team traveled to other parts of Alaska taking the **Gospel** to the people who lived in these other areas. So at times it was necessary for Father Herman to keep charge of the Kodiak Mission and administer the school. Between 1808 and 1818 Father Herman left Kodiak in order to live on **Spruce Island**, which he called New Valaam. He remained on Spruce Island for the remainder of his blessed life, where he cared for orphans, ran a school for native children and continued his missionary work. Father Herman wore the simplest of clothes under his cassock and ate very little living a strict **ascetic** life. Father Herman devoted all of his free time to **prayer** and singing of services. When asked if he was lonely on Spruce Island, Father Herman replied, "No, I am not alone there! God is there, as God is everywhere." **Father** Herman was once invited aboard a ship that had docked in Kodiak and during a conversation with those on board he asked them what it was that would bring them the most happiness. Some wanted wealth, others wanted a top ranking job in the Navy another wanted a beautiful wife. "What could be better, higher, more worthy of love and more splendid than Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who created the world, adorns, gives life, sustains, nourishes and loves everything - Who is Himself love. Should we not love God above all things, and wish for and seek Him?" The reply was, "Why that's obvious, how can we not love God?" And Father Herman responded "I, a poor sinner, have been trying to learn how to love God for more than 40 years, and I cannot say that I yet love Him properly. If we love someone, we always remember them, we try to please them continually. Day and night we are concerned about them. Our mind and our heart is concerned with the object of our **love**. How do you love God? Do you turn to Him often? Do you always remember Him? Do you always pray to Him and keep His commandments?" The crew admitted that they did not. "Then, for our good and for our happiness, let us all make a vow: at least from this day, this hour, this very minute, we should strive to love God above all else and do His will!" Father Herman reposed on **December** 13th, 1837. Although he was revered as a saint by the native people of Alaska he was officially glorified as a saint in the Orthodox Church on **August** 9th, 1970. His relics remain to this day in Holy Resurrection Cathedral on Kodiak Island. A Pilgrimage is held every year in August to celebrate St. Herman of Alaska.

