

FEATURE PAGE

New York Church Completes Iconography Project, Dedication

RYE, N.Y. – More than 50 years since its founding, Church of Our Saviour accomplished a long dreamed of major milestone, the completion of its iconography that transformed its bare white walls into a powerful witness to Orthodox Christianity.

With strong support from 100 families of the parish, the \$1.3 million project took wing three years ago and culminated June 21 with the dedication and anointing of the more than 100 icons created by iconographer Dimitri Mourlas of Athens, Greece.

Archbishop Demetrios anointed the icons at the Archieratical Divine Liturgy.

Previously, only the Pantocratora in the dome and the Platytera behind the altar were present in the church when Fr. Elias Villas arrived as the pastor several years ago.

Now, almost every inch of the nave is covered with icons.

The project was completed in three phases. Phase one produced 65 six-foot high full-figure icons of the major saints that surround the congregation. Above them, completed in phase two, are icons depicting the life of Christ. Phase three

included the Old Testament prophets and, in the dome with the Pantocratora, the icons of the four evangelists.

The iconography project was archived in an 18-minuted video underwritten by parishioners Michael and Robin Psaros and directed by Mark Brody, formerly of 60 Minutes. It can be viewed online at www.artofbelief.org

With the Church of our Saviour in Rye, as the focal point, PISTEVO “I believe” chronicles the journey of a congregation through a multi-phased campaign to complete the Holy Tradition of iconography in their church.

The film features interviews with key stewards who brought it to life. Its compelling, almost ethereal visuals provide the backdrop to highly personal, often emotional interviews about what iconography means to their faith.

In today’s fast-paced technology-driven world, it is unusual to find things that make a group of people stop in their tracks.

At every opportunity, the iconography in the Church of Our Saviour does just that for its congregation and visitors who have that experience.



Dimitri Panagos photos
Archbishop Demetrios, assisted by Fr. Elias Villis, anoints the icons that fill the Church of Our Saviour in Rye. (at right) Michael Psaros introduces the video about the project.

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