

New Catechumens and a Baptism at the Church of St. John the Baptist in Cedar Rapids, IA

On Sunday, October 15, 2012 (Old Style), at the Church of St. John the Baptist in Cedar Rapids, IA, shortly before the Hierarchical Liturgy in which Father Joshua Vander Plaats was ordained to the Diaconate (see a report on Father's Ordination under "Annals>[America](#)"), Archimandrite Akakios received an entire family into the Catechumenate: Kyle (now Kyros) Lantzer, his wife Hannah, and their three children, Uriah, Symeon, and Annalyce. Former Protestants, the family was introduced into Orthodoxy by Father Joshua, then a Subdeacon, and attended their first Orthodox services at the Cedar Rapids parish. Mr. Lantzer, having visited the St. Gregory Palamas Monastery with Father Joshua in late September, returned home and, after discussing the matter with his family, decided to request entry into the Orthodox Church. A former teacher and, like his wife, now a registered nurse, he and his family, after they are baptized, will attend the Holy Archangels parish in Romney, IN.

While in Cedar Rapids, Father Akakios also performed the Baptism of a young woman, Charlotte (now Rebecca) Ruddy. Distinguished by her humility and sweetness, she has been attending services at the St. John the Baptist parish for some time. Rebecca was reared a Methodist, but found herself attracted to the spiritual life of the Orthodox Church. She attended Syracuse University and the renowned French Pastry School of Kennedy-King College at City Colleges of Chicago, and supports herself by supplying small markets with artisan bakery products..

See, below, the newly baptized Rebecca with Father Akakios and her Godmother, Presbytera Xene Abraham, wife of Father John Abraham, who serves at the St. John the Baptist parish.

