

Repose of Rasophore-nun Maria in Sofia, Bulgaria

On February 5, 2013 (Old Style), Rasophore-nun Maria from the Convent of the Protection of the Mother of God in the Knyazhevo district of Sofia, Bulgaria, reposed at the age of ninety-three. She was the last of the original six nuns tonsured by St. Seraphim (Sobolev) when the convent was founded, just before his repose in 1950: Abbess Seraphima (Princess Olga Livén, in the world), Mother Seraphima (Yastrebova), and, in addition to Nun Maria, the Rasophore nuns Anastasia (†1968), Ioanna (†2002), and Eupraxia (†1957). The large Protection Convent is a monastic pillar of our Sister Old Calendar Orthodox Church of Bulgaria, under the *omophorion* of His Eminence, Bishop Photii of Triaditza. His Eminence and the sisterhood hold a special place in the hearts of the clergy and faithful of our Exarchate in America.



The newly reposed Nun Maria was born in Sofia in 1920, where she lived and became a bank clerk. Having had great respect for St. Seraphim, whom she met in her youth, as well as for Abbess Seraphima, at thirty years of age she made a decision to enter the monastic life, dedicating herself to the angelic path. In describing Sister Maria's monastic vocation, one of the sisters of the Protection Convent wrote the following to us:



One of her most eminent characteristics was her profound repentance for every transgression, wrong word or thought, a virtue which she maintained to her last days, asking forgiveness for her smallest wrongdoings. She fulfilled her obediences at the convent with great fervor, diligence and precision, although she was of feeble build. For a long period of time, she was in charge of the daily services, singing and reading on the *kleros* [or *kliros*, from κλήρος (Greek) and клиросъ (Slavonic), the place where the chanters stand—*Editor*]. And for another period, after the fall of the communist régime, she received visitors to the convent, many of whom were totally ignorant of their Orthodox Faith.

Sister Maria's funeral service took place the day after her repose and was conducted by the convent's clergy.

Вечная память! Memory Eternal!