



■ Snapshot from the missionary field

Blessed Fruits of the Humble Witness in Christ of the Holy Diocese of Stockholm, Sweden

By the Grace of our Lord, the witness of the Small Flock of our Church in Sweden is drawing ever more interest from well-intentioned brethren who come seeking the Light of the Truth.

At the parish dedicated to Saints Constantine and Helen, a catechism class is held every fifteen days, overseen by Father Alexander Hahr, in cooperation with Father Anders Åkerström. Up to three dozen people take part, among them parishioners who wish to deepen their understanding of the Faith; sixteen have already received the *Prayer for Enrollment among the Catechumens*.



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On the Saturday before the Theophany, January 4, 2026 (Old Style), Father Anders and Father Alexander celebrated the baptism of our sister in Christ Maria. The story of her spiritual journey is yet another manifestation of the loving Providence of God.



From a Roman Catholic family in Northern Ireland, the newly-illuminated Maria moved to Sweden for work purposes a decade ago. At a particularly difficult time in her life, her father shared with her a YouTube short featuring an

excerpt from a homily by Metropolitan Demetrius of America. His message on the healing of the soul through repentance resonated deeply with her, and she began listening to his homilies regularly.

After two years, convinced in her heart that Orthodoxy is the true faith, she searched online for an Orthodox church in Stockholm and eventually reached out to Father Anders. He invited her to visit our parish of Sts. Constantine and Helen. Over the next two years, she deepened her knowledge and understanding of the Orthodox Faith and its liturgical richness.

Maria's parents and several heterodox friends were present at her Baptism, and afterwards expressed both their emotion and their interest in visiting our parish again.

It is certainly not "by chance" that her Baptism was celebrated on the eve of the Holy Theophany, when the Gospel is read whose message first spoke to her heart: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."



The newly-illuminated Maria took part in the solemn *Agrypnia* of the Great Feast, clothed in her baptismal gown and with her heart overflowing with the Grace of the Mystery.

Glory to our Lord, Who blesses the missionary seed sown in the good soil of well-intentioned hearts! For "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."