

SAINT

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is especially meaningful because many women canonized by the church have been ancient martyrs or nuns, said Carrie Frederick Frost, a professor of religion and culture at Western Washington University who studies women and Orthodoxy.

“To come here and be a part of the glorification of a woman who was a lay woman and was a mother and a grandmother and lived a life that many women have lived, it’s just incredibly appealing,” Frost said.

St. Olga’s appeal to those who have suffered abuse or miscarriage is also important, she said: “I think the church has largely failed to minister to those situations, not entirely but largely.”

There are several female Catholic saints from North America. They include St. Kateri Tekakwitha, a 17th-century Mohawk-Algonquin woman canonized in 2012.

AN ELABORATE CANONIZATION CEREMONY

Hundreds of visitors from near and far converged for her canonization — or “glorification” in Orthodox terminology.

“Thou art the glory of the Yup’ik people ... a new North Star in the firmament of Christ’s holy Church,” the choir sang. The ceremonies were replete with ringing bells, robust hymns and pro-



A detail of the official icon of St. Olga of Kwethluk, Matushka of All Alaska, is shown in June.

cessions of black-robed clerics, golden-robed acolytes, women in headscarves and other devotees in a mingling of dust and incense.

Some worshippers arrived for the glorification from nearby Yup’ik villages. Others flew in from faraway states and countries to the regional hub of Bethel, and then rode in a fleet of motorboats some 17 miles up the broad Kuskokwim River — a watershed central to the traditional Yup’ik subsistence lifestyle, marked by yearly rhythms of fishing, hunting and gathering.

Hundreds gathered at a riverbank in Kwethluk to greet Metropolitan Tikhon and other bishops at a specially made dock. Choral chants and incense began rising after they disembarked, and continued for hours in the uncharacteristically hot sun of Alaska’s long solstice eve.

About 150 devotees squeezed into the sanctuary of Saint Nicholas Orthodox Church, whose golden onion domes rise above the village’s modest one-story homes. Others listened outside as a choir sang hymns in Yup’ik, many of them composed for the occasion:

“Nanraramteggan elpet, tanqilria atawaulria cali Aanaput Arrsamquq, cali nanraraput tanqilria yuucin elpet,” said one. (“We magnify thee, O holy and righteous mother Olga, and we honor thy holy memory.”)

Prayers honored St. Olga as “the healer of those who suffered abuse and tragedy, the mother of children separated from their parents, the swift aid of women in hard labor, the comfort of all those wounded in heart and soul.”

Worshippers approached her open casket after the cere-

mony, crossing themselves and kneeling.

A FAMILY’S RECOLLECTIONS

Wiz Ruppert of Cranston, Rhode Island, returned to her native Kwethluk for the ceremony. That the grandmother she lived with for much of her childhood is now a saint seemed strange at first, “but then it was also very fitting, because she was also so kind and generous when she was alive.”

And Larson, one of St. Olga’s daughters, recalled watching women, and some men, seek her mother’s counsel. She didn’t eavesdrop, but “I used to read their faces,” Larson said.

“They’d feel heavy, by their facial expression, their body language,” Larson said. “Then they’d have tea or coffee and talk, and by the time they go out, they’re much lighter and happier.”

WHAT IS ORTHODOXY’S LINK WITH ALASKA?

St. Olga joins a growing cadre of saints with strong ties to Alaska — widely deemed an Orthodox holy land, even though only a fraction of the state’s population are adherents.

It’s here that Orthodoxy — the world’s second-largest Christian communion — gained a foothold in the present-day United States with the 18th and 19th century arrival of Russian Orthodox missionaries to what was then czarist territory.

Several Orthodox monks and martyrs with ties to Alaska have already been canonized in the Orthodox Church in America, the now-independent offspring of the Russian Orthodox Church.

St. Olga is the third with Alaska Native heritage, emblematic of how the faith has grafted in with some Indigenous cultures. Most of the state’s Orthodox priests, serving about 80 parishes, are Alaska Natives. More than a dozen are from Kwethluk.

A DEBATE, NOW RESOLVED, OVER OLGA’S REMAINS

In November 2024, priests exhumed Olga’s body. Her remains are currently kept in an open casket in Kwethluk’s church, where pilgrims can venerate her shrouded relics.

When the bishops of the Orthodox Church in America authorized St. Olga’s canonization in 2023, there was talk of moving her body to Anchorage as a more accessible location.

But bishops answered the pleas of village residents, who didn’t want to lose the presence of their spiritual mother.

Now Kwethluk, inaccessible by roads, will become one of the American church’s most remote pilgrimage destinations. The diocese is working with the village on plans for a new church, hospitality center and cultural center.

WORSHIPPING IN YOUR OWN LANGUAGE

The village provided a taste of such hospitality for the glorification. Pilgrims stayed in a local school or in residents’ homes — amply fed by home-prepared meals of Alaska specialties such as walrus meat and smoked fish.

Nicholai Joekay of nearby Bethel — who is named for St. Olga’s late husband and grew up attending church events with her family — was deeply moved by the glorification.

“In church, up until today, we sang hymns of saints and holy people from foreign lands,” he said in a written reflection shared with The Associated Press. “We have had to learn foreign concepts that are mentioned in the Gospels referencing agricultural terms and concepts from cultures that are difficult for us to understand.

“Today, we sang hymns of a pious Yup’ik woman who lived a life that we can relate to with words that only we can pronounce properly,” he wrote.

“Today,” he added, “God was closer to all of us.”

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**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

Sealed Bids for the **2025 Sanitary Sewer Manhole Rehabilitation Project** will be received by the Paducah - McCracken County Joint Sewer Agency (JSA) until 2:00 PM local time on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at which time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read aloud. All Bids submitted shall include one original set of the Bid Documents.

The Work is located in multiple locations around McCracken County, KY. The Work consists of the rehabilitation of approximately 75 manholes throughout the Paducah-McCracken Joint Sewer Agency system.

Bids will be received for a **SINGLE** prime Contract. Bids shall be on a **UNIT PRICE BASIS** as indicated on the Bid Form. The Contract Times for the Work are set forth in the Agreement.

The Issuing Office for the Bidding Documents is:

Lynn Imaging, 11460 Bluegrass Parkway, Louisville, KY 40299, (502) 499-8400 or ([www.lynnimaging.com](http://www.lynnimaging.com)) and click on plan room for a non-refundable price of reproduction for each full set of plans and documents. Bidding documents may also be obtained electronically from Lynn Imaging. Potential contractors must purchase plans and be on the plan holders list at Lynn Imaging for the ability to Bid the project. Bids submitted by Bidders not on the list of Bidding Documents (Plan) Holders with Lynn Imaging will not be opened.

Bidding Documents may be examined at the following location:

Paducah-McCracken County Joint Sewer Agency – 621 Northview Street, Paducah, KY 42001

Bid security and proof of qualifications to perform the Work shall be furnished in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders.

The Paducah-McCracken County Joint Sewer Agency reserves the right to waive informalities and to reject any and all bids. No bidder may withdraw his bid for a period of ninety (90) days after the closing time scheduled for the receipt of bids.

The Paducah-McCracken County Joint Sewer Agency is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

The City of Paducah is issuing a request for proposals for a cable television franchise as defined by Chapter 22-Cable Communications in the Paducah Code of Ordinances. The deadline to submit a sealed hand-delivered or mailed proposal is 3 p.m. CT Tuesday, July 15, 2025, to the City Clerk’s Office, 300 South 5th Street, Paducah, KY 42003. Additional information including the Cable Communications ordinance can be found at <https://paducahky.gov/request-bids-or-proposals>.

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**0100 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Towers, LLC proposes to build a 170-foot monopole communications tower at the approx. vicinity of 7120 Kentucky 3520, West Paducah, McCracken County, KY 42086. Lat: 37-3-57.29, Long: -88-45-6.87. Public comments regarding potential effects from this site on historic properties may be submitted within thirty days from the date of this publication to: Trileaf Corp, Madelyn Schmidt, m.schmidt@trileaf.com, (314) 997-6111.

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**PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

West Kentucky Allied Services, Inc. would like to inform the public that the WKAS Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Monday, June 30, 2025 at 1:00 P.M.. This meeting is open to the public and may be attended in-person at WKAS central office located at 328 E. Broadway, Mayfield, KY 42066 or virtually [athttps://zoom.us/j/5819039899](https://zoom.us/j/5819039899) or by calling 312-626-6799 meeting ID 581 903 9899 passcode 1234."

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