

Journals of a mother about Daniel #1

Evening of June 14 2017 Daniel's 4th day

Written Tuesday evening on the plane, enroute to London, perhaps 7pm Texas time:

(See <http://www.orthodox.net/daniel> for more journals from Daniel's mother.)

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Written Wednesday evening (*June 14*), 9:30 pm Berlin time

We had a lovely stroll down Knesebeck Strasse, looking for a place to eat dinner. The evening was beautiful, perhaps 68 degrees, leafy green trees, people walking and riding bikes down the very wide sidewalks. Every other address was a restaurant with sidewalk seating, and conversations in any of a dozen different languages could be overheard. I could see why Daniel fell in love with this city. I think all of us felt uplifted enough by the events of the day that we felt just a little able to relax, and take in the loveliness. Again, God is good. So good.

We talked about the journal entry, and FS suggested I add in a little more detail about Fr Andre, and he is right. FS was going to serve the Pannakhida himself, but when it was time to start he just couldn't. He was overcome with emotion. Fr Andre nodded, and said, "We will do this together." He got his epitrachil and simply began. When it appeared that FS had collected himself sufficiently, Fr Andre nodded toward him, and FS continued the next part. And so they went back and forth, sometimes in English, sometimes in Slavonic. We were very touched by his kindness and gentleness. May God bless him and his family.

I sent the first journal entry to Fr Sergius at the West Virginia monastery, as he requested. He read it, and responded immediately, asking permission to share it with others at the monastery. I said, "As Father Seraphim (the archimandrite) blesses." And so he did. The following is what he wrote back a short time later.

"Okay. At our lunch, I shared some of the things with the brotherhood. When I mentioned that the Spree River is under the protection of the Mother of God, the brothers also noted that *that* Sunday was the commemoration of the "Surety of Sinners" Icon of the Theotokos!

"I am the Surety of sinners for My Son Who has entrusted me to hear them, and those who bring me the joy of hearing them will receive eternal joy through me."

The "Surety of Sinners" Icon is commemorated on May 29 o.s. (the day of Daniel's repose) and on Thursday of the week of All Saints (tomorrow). It seems pretty obvious that the Mother of God is protecting and accompanying Daniel and your whole family.

There is even an interesting connection between the Protection of the Mother of God and the Surety of Sinners Icon. It is believed that the Surety of Sinners Icon is derived from the Akathist to the Protection of the Mother of God in which we chant: "Rejoice, Thou Who offerest thine hands in surety for us to God!"

Also of note is that our very own St. John Maximovitch built a [cathedral in Shanghai](#) dedicated to the Surety of Sinners Icon. Holy Hierarch and Wonderworker John pray to God for Daniel!"

Isn't God so good? Someone I know told me they hoped somehow they or someone would see a sign of some sort to reassure them of God's mercy specifically to Daniel's soul. I don't know if this person would feel this story does this for them, but it does for me. I came with such dread, such anguish, such utter loss, and I feel warm healing welling up in me. Oh, God is good.

Tomorrow will be a difficult day, but by God's grace we will get through it, as He has brought us through this day. What the devil meant for evil, God has used for good!

More tomorrow or Friday.

Journals of Daniel's mother. All words are from Marina Holland except lines in Italics (such as this).

Marina Holland mmarinaholland@yahoo.com

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