



■ An extraordinary way of reading the New Testament

The Astonishing Story of an Unknown Saint of Our Times*

The Blind Aspasia

In a small town in northern Greece there lived a blind girl named Aspasia.

She was an orphan, destitute, and abandoned by all, which is why she grew up without an opportunity to learn to read.

When she was around 18-20 years old, an itinerant preacher from the Metropolis of Peripharia noticed her, took her with him, and placed her in a school for the blind in Thessalonica, where she was taught braille. When she had learned to read well, the preacher gave her a copy of the New Testament written in braille.

The girl thus began to read it with her fingers, and the more she read, the more she learned who Christ was and what He did for her personally and for the entire world. And the more she learned, the more her turbulent heart grew calm and peaceful.

Not only was the pain of so many years of suffering assuaged by Aspasia's reading of the New Testament, but she also came to be filled with gladness and peace. She was overflowing with happiness. "I have found joy," she would say. "Now that the eyes of my soul have opened, I do not mind that I am lacking bodily vision. With the eyes of my soul, I can see the entire world."

She beheld the Light of God at every Divine Liturgy and rejoiced.

* * *

It so happened, however, that she was struck





by a terrible dermatological disease that also affected her hands, with the result that her fingers lost their sense of touch. She could no longer read the Holy Scriptures or any other holy book using her fingers.

Her grief and pain were indescribable. She wept night and day. She had lost the ability to receive strength and joy from the Holy Bible. What did remain to her, however, was the prayer “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me.”

She prayed a great deal that our Lord Jesus Christ might grant a solution.

And God answered....

One day, Aspasia took up the New Testament with great devotion and brought it to her mouth to kiss the words which transmit to us the wisdom of God, redemption, and salvation.

That was when she discovered something extraordinary: she could read the braille with her lips! Aspasia's life once again filled with joy from reading the word of God. And by means of this remarkable way of reading, there followed glorification, thanksgiving, and fervent prayer!

She would read and then pray with tears for all those who had physical disabilities and illnesses, and especially for those who were blind in soul from sin.

By means of prayer, she beheld the Throne of God, and beseeched Him and supplicated on behalf of the poor, the orphans, the unemployed, the homeless, and all of the infirm. For the good and for the bad, for the simple and for the deceitful, for the just and for the wronged, but also for all those who wrong others, for the rulers and those who are ruled, she prayed that they be enlightened and that they all might see the true Light, Christ, the Savior of the world!

* * *

At one point, Aspasia fell gravely ill. She confessed a final time and communed of the Immaculate Mysteries. She asked for the New Testament and told them to hold it open for her so that she could touch it with her lips.

Aspasia stretched out her hands and held the book firmly, despite her exhaustion. By Divine Providence, those close to her had opened it to the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John.

Repeating again and again the words: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” Aspasia gave up the spirit and her soul flew to Heaven, as the room filled with an ineffably sweet fragrance!



She is counted among the unknown Saints!



(* Protopresbyter Stephen K. Anagnosopoulos, *Steps in the Christian Journey* [in Greek] (Piraeus: 2011), pp. 68-69.