

St. Basil of Ostrog

Where Heaven meets Earth in the stunningly beautiful majestic mountains of Montenegro people come in the tens of thousands each year to the monastery of St. Basil of Ostrog on pilgrimage. This is the place, a monastery set on a steep cliff, where people encounter God through the prayers and numerous miracles of His servant, St. Basil of Ostrog. It was here some 300 years ago that St. Basil came to live a life of asceticism and spend his life in constant and fervent prayer for his flock. His prayers continue to this day as miracles still happen for those who come to pray at his relics.

St. Basil was born into a devout and pious Orthodox Christian family and soon became interested in following the monastic life. He took on more and more ascetic practices as he grew older, so that he could remove more and more of the passions from his life. In this way, he was able to better help those who came to him struggling with their own passions in their lives. Eventually because of his spiritual wisdom, he was ordained bishop of Zahumlje and Skenderija, even though he greatly preferred remaining a simple monk. When the Turks destroyed the monastery he was living at in Tvrdoch, he moved to Ostrog and lived out his days as a spiritual father in a cave monastery where he was sought out by many for his great spiritual insights.

Immediately after his death, people began coming to pray before his grave, just as they had come to him seeking his spiritual guidance while he was alive. Many miracles began occurring for those who came to pray before his grave and eventually it was decided to open his grave and when it was opened his body was found to be incorrupt. In this way, God is showing his people a foretaste of the Resurrection of the dead at the end of time in His servant, St. Basil. St. Basil is ready to rise at the sound of the Archangel's voice and God's trumpet to meet his Lord when He returns. His relics remind everyone who comes to pray before them that God is all powerful and can overturn the very rules of nature, since He is its Creator. And to this day God continues to work miracles through St. Basil's intercession for those who seek his help in their lives. So, today on this his feast day, if we can't go on pilgrimage to Ostrog physically, let us at least go spiritually and seek St. Basil's prayers on our behalf, that we may receive healing in the Lord like so many pilgrims and God's great peace and mercy which surpasses all understanding. Holy St. Basil pray to God for us!