



Venerable St. Antipas of Valaam **10/23 January**

Venerable St. Antipas of Valaam (secular name Alexander Georgievitch Lukian) was born in Bessarabia (Moldova) in 1816. He began his ascetic struggles in Wallachia, in the South of Romania. Later, he moved to Mt. Athos. For about 4 years, Fr. Antipas worked in the kitchen of the Greek monastery of Esphigmenou. Then he was tonsured into the schema, and began to live as a solitary. About this time, a Moldovan skete was being established, and it was there that Fr. Antipas was ordained to the priesthood and became a cellarer. However, the ascetic's life on the Holy Mountain came to a close when Abbot Niphont gave him the obedience of being ekonomos [steward] at the Athonite/Moldovan monastery in Iasi, Moldova. From that point on, the Elder's life was linked with Russia. Abbot Niphont of the Athonite monastery took Fr. Antipas with him on a trip to collect donations in Moscow and St. Petersburg. Afterwards, Fr. Antipas expressed the wish to remain in the Monastery of Valaam, where he had found that prayerfully focused calm he had so yearned for after leaving Mt. Athos. Venerable St. Antipas reposed in 1882, at the age of 66. In accordance with his will, he was interred outside the walls of the skete, so that the pilgrims and spiritual children who revered him would have unfettered access to his grave. In 1960, locals opened Elder Antipas' grave with the intent of looting it. Signs of that disinterment remained over the years prior to the restoration of monastic life in Valaam. In 1991, the relics of the Venerable One were uncovered, and were found to exude a powerful sweet fragrance. A reliquary housing the relics of Venerable St. Antipas was installed in the lower church of Venerable Sts. Sergius and Herman of Valaam.

Source: <http://www.stjohndc.org/Russian/english.htm>