



198. Oct. 25/Nov. 7, 1975 Martyrs Marcian and Martyrius

Categories : [Letters](#)

Date : October 1, 2016

Dear Brother in Christ, Thomas,

Greetings in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you for your letter, in which we see your sincere desire to serve Christ, God willing in the monastic life.

You are welcome to visit us for some time and see our life at first hand. After this we could talk about your staying to become a novice. I don't know what kind of tales you have heard of us, but actually our life is not too different from that in the other monasteries in our Russian Church Abroad, the main differences perhaps being in our isolation from the world, especially in the winter, and our somewhat primitive living conditions, which can be a little difficult in winter. Our winter is usually not terribly cold, but there is usually quite a bit of snow. Also, I should tell you that we do not have the Divine Liturgy often, as we have no priest living with us. Our confessor visits us several times a year, and occasionally some other priest or one of our two bishops on the West Coast will visit us and serve Liturgy; but sometimes we have to go out to receive Holy Communion at the nearest church (200 miles away).

The first and most important thing in monastic life is trust, which is acquired by experience. From your visit (if you still want to come) you will be able to see whether you can place your trust in us to guide you in monasticism, according to the teachings of the Holy Fathers.

You are welcome to bring your icons and books, but I don't know whether there will be a place for an icon shelf or not, as you might not have a regular cell at first.

To get to us you will have to go by Greyhound to Redding, 230 miles north of San Francisco and 40 miles from us. You will have to write us (or send a mailgram) several days in advance to make sure we will know when you are coming (we have no telephone), and we will come to pick you up.

If after all this you still wish to visit us, it would be good for you to stop on the way to us at the Sepulchre of Archbishop John Maximovitch, a true holy place (in the basement of the San Francisco Cathedral on Geary Blvd.) and pray to him to guide you aright in the path of salvation. He is our powerful intercessor before God.

Please let us know your plans, and write of any questions you may have.

With love in Christ,
Seraphim, monk