



Saint Catherine's Vision
Building Up the Body of Christ

**Saint Catherine's Vision
Patronal Feast Day and Thanksgiving 2020 Update**

“Taste and See, that the Lord is Good!”

November 2020

Dearlly Beloved, SCV Family and Friends,

To say the least, 2020 has been filled with unprecedented events and developments. To those of our SCV Family and Friends who have experienced personal loss related to Covid-19, we extend our heartfelt condolences. Our lives may never be the same again. Nevertheless, as best as we are able, we place our hearts and hope in the Hands of the Compassionate, Lord, as we strive to move forward one day at a time.

These past months have brought about many unexpected challenges and opportunities. This has prodded us to consult with trusted advisors while reflecting our values, vision, and mission during these unprecedented times. This process has become a re-affirming blessing! It reminded us of SCV's undergirding foundation: *“Taste and See, that the Lord is Good”* (Psalm [33]34, cf. 1 Peter 2:3)! Inspired by the example of our patronal Saint Catherine of Alexandria, and our Lord's Beautiful Mother, Mary, the Theotokos (who led us to Saint Catherine!), we have strived to *“hear the word of God and keep it.”* (Luke 11:28). Over the years, our publications, conferences, educational events, retreats and *diakonimata* —have been deeply rooted in this foundation! With the above in mind, while expressing heartfelt gratitude to the Merciful Lord, we now offer this overview of our 2020 developments with you.

“Christ in the Everyday” Spring-Summer 2020 Teleconferencing Diakonima:

We are deeply inspired by the feedback we received after our Spring-Summer 2020 “maiden voyage” of our teleconference ministry! The series offered five unique SCV team-led groups on the Beatitudes. Participants expressed much appreciation for learning more about the Beatitudes within the life of the Church, as well as for their own personal lives. They especially noted the blessing of experiencing new relationships with members of the faithful from other jurisdictions and from around the world during challenging lockdown days!

Due to this overwhelming encouragement, with God’s help---we are now preparing new teleconferencing ministry offerings for Late-Winter/ Early-Spring 2021! More information will be announced soon....

Our March 2020 “Community Conversation Conference” on: “Human Trafficking and the Commodification of Human Persons” was postponed due to Covid-19...yet, God is Full of Wonderful Surprises!

Even as the Massachusetts Covid-19 lockdown forced us to postpone our collaboration with Saint Gregory the Theologian Greek Orthodox Church in Mansfield just days before the event, MUCH good has already resulted! These efforts propelled us to cultivate old friendships with Orthodox serving in theology and ministry, while beginning new ones with other Christians presently combatting various aspects of human trafficking. Not only have local Orthodox Christians been impacted through the witness of these preparations, we made numerous new friends in the community at the same time! As God blesses, we look forward to offering this conference when circumstances allow us to do so.

Perhaps our greatest surprise, is how the Conference postponement inspired, enabled, and even catapulted SCV’s team to quickly pivot to create and offer our “Christ in the Everyday” teleconferencing diakonima!

The Greek Orthodox Theological Review (GOTR) recently published SCV’s “Introductory Parameters for the Ministry of Ordained Deaconesses in the Orthodox Church”!

We are delighted that our collaboratively written Proposal offering “***Introductory Parameters for the Ministry of Ordained Deaconesses in the Orthodox Church***” was recently published in the ***GOTR*** (Vol. 62: 3-4, 2017). Our Proposal is included in the same volume documenting official statements and reports from the historic 2016 Holy Council of the Orthodox Church, held on the island of Crete.

This effort was initiated and directed under the leadership of His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios of Boston. Metropolitan Methodios invited a select team of eminent theologians

from around the world to serve as a working-group for this years-long endeavor, including, His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia and Emeritus Professor Lewis Patsavos. The original version of this document can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#).

As most of you are already aware, His Eminence, Metropolitan Methodios, together with His Eminence Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia, have been serving as SCV's spiritual fathers.

This development builds upon our previous efforts. In 2014 Saint Catherine's Vision submitted a document for consideration during the Holy Council titled: "*Call for the Rejuvenation of the Ministry of the Ordained Deaconess in the Orthodox Church*". While the "*Call*," never made it to the floor for official discussion, we were subsequently informed by one of the participating bishops from Africa, that the hierarchs representing the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Alexandria during the Holy Council carried copies of SCV's 2014 document in their packets! Due to pressing pastoral concerns in their region, they tried on more than one occasion to bring this issue to the floor. Subsequently, this earlier SCV 2014 document was published in its entirety in the *GOTR* (Vol., 59:1-4, 2014), as well. [CLICK HERE for the original document](#).

A respected, international academic journal recently published the results from SCV's "Survey of Orthodox Faithful on the Participation of Women in the Life of the Church"!

We are gratified that *The Ecumenical Review* recently published "Discerning the Ministries of Women" highlighting the results of SCV's "*Survey of Orthodox Faithful on the Participation of Women in the Life of the Church*". We thank God that the editors found our research and findings significant enough to share with their world-wide readership! Our greatest surprise was that SCV's work was included in the collection of articles dedicated to documenting the 2016 Holy Council. [CLICK HERE](#) for the article.

SCV's books: Encountering Women of Faith, Volumes I, II and III have been well-received by both spiritual inquirers and academicians, alike!

Scholars praise "Saint Catherine's Methodology", appreciating the challenges involved in developing a spiritually founded, academic discipline producing a contemporary hagiographical witness that is also responsibly researched. Each biographical submission in its own way strives to reflect the "mind of the Church" and was created through inter-personal encounter and accountability in a Pan-Orthodox Christian group context!

As the winter holidays approach, please consider how these books would make great gifts for the thoughtful reader! The books may be ordered through Amazon and Holy Cross Orthodox Bookstore.

Welcoming Your Diakonima Recommendations for 2021-22:

As we continue to prepare for our forth-coming late Winter/early Spring teleconferencing diakonima, we now ask your advice for Summer 2021 and Fall/Winter 2021-22 offerings! We seek your insights and suggestions for teleconference themes which interest you! We are also prioritizing themes for in-person conferences after these Covid-19 days are behind us. ***Kindly email your thoughts and recommendations at saintcatherinesvision@gmail.com on or before Sunday December 6, 2020.***

During this season of prayer, compassion, and generosity, please consider supporting SCV with an annual or regular, monthly donation!

Since 2007, Saint Catherine's Vision has been blessed as an officially endorsed Pan-Orthodox Christian professional organization by the Assembly of Canonical Bishops of the United States of America. Your tax-deductible donation will better enable our ongoing work of love ***“for the building up of the body of Christ”*** (Ephesians 4:12). Your financial generosity may better enable us to move forward with ministry to others! Feel free to donate through PayPal by [CLICKING HERE](#) or send your check donation directly to our office: Saint Catherine's Vision, 90 Rte. 6A, Suite 4C, Sandwich, Massachusetts, 02563, c/o Dr. Kyriaki FitzGerald.

It is a privilege to share our 2020 Update with you! We are grateful to the Thrice-Holy God for this opportunity as we celebrate the Feast-day of our patronal Saint Catherine of Alexandria, while simultaneously anticipating Thanksgiving! This is a double blessing and joy for us!

And as the Feast of the Nativity and the New Year approach, we wish for you and your loved ones, every blessing from the All-Compassionate, Thrice-Holy God! Please, continue to pray for us!

Respectfully Submitted on Behalf of Saint Catherine's Vision,

Presvytera Kyriaki FitzGerald, M.Div., Ph.D.
Co-founder and Executive Director

November 24-25, 2020
Sandwich, Massachusetts