

HEALING OF SARCOMA BY ST. NEKTARIOS

The testimony of Maria Vacharaki

from the book *Nothing is Incurable for St. Nektarios*

I am a 23 year old mother from the island of Lesvos, Greece. When I was ten years old, I had surgery to remove a tumor from my stomach. The diagnosis was leiomyosarcoma. Ten years later, when I was twenty, I gave birth to a baby boy. After the delivery, the doctors discovered a tumor in my abdominal region; it was so big that it was noticeable through my clothing. The doctors on the island recommended I go to Athens. On December 31, 1997, I had surgery at the Annunciation Hospital for removal of the sarcoma from my pancreas. The surgeons told me that leiomyosarcoma is a rare disease, its cause is unknown, and it has no proven treatment.

Nine months after the surgery I had a CT scan, which revealed that there was a problem with my liver. I was admitted to Annunciation Hospital again for a procedure on my liver. After the surgery, the doctors recommended I start chemotherapy, without promising a favorable outcome.

In November of 1998, I had my first session of chemotherapy at Mother's Hospital. Three days later when I was discharged, me and my husband went to stay with one of my relatives who had a house in Athens. As I was sleeping that night, I had the following dream: I saw that my husband and I had entered a small chapel, within which a grey-haired woman, dressed in black, was lighting a vigil lamp to the Mother of God. The lady asked us what we wanted, and we replied that we want to see Saint Nektarios. At that moment, an elderly priest wearing a black cassock appeared before us and said, "I am Saint Nektarios. What do you need?" I replied: "We have come from Mitilini. I would like you to read me a prayer, and help me with the problem I have."

At that point, the Saint reached into my stomach and pulled out a red piece of flesh that was full of cysts, and showing it to me asked, "Do you see this?" "Yes!" I replied. He threw it away and said, "That was it. You have become well now." I thanked him, I kissed him, and from a bearded old man his face became young without a beard. He kept smiling at me until we left the chapel.

When I woke up in the morning, I related the dream to my husband and my cousin, Panagiota Papadimitriou, in whose house we were staying. My cousin told me not to fear because she felt St. Nektarios had cured me. She also recommended we visit a nearby church of St. Nektarios, in Kamariza.

When I entered the church and encountered his icon for the first time, I broke into tears and began sobbing loudly, because he looked exactly the same as I had seen him in my dream. Subsequently my husband and I decided to visit

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the tomb of St. Nektarios on the island of Aegina as well. The chapel built over the grave of St. Nektarios was identical to the one I had seen in my dream, and the woman who was responsible for lighting the vigil lamps in this chapel also bore a striking resemblance to the woman I had seen.

Ever since then, everything is well. I completed the chemotherapy without experiencing any of the side effects (such as hair loss, nausea, and vomiting) that the doctors had indicated I would. From March 1999 until today I have regular follow-up exams in Athens. St. Nektarios healed me. I am grateful to him, and I will always thank him and proclaim his miracle.