

Elder Ephraim communicates in English without a translator

—The testimony of Seraphim W.—

I first met Elder Ephraim at Philotheou Monastery on Mt. Athos in 1989 and was able to confess to him there. We had several serious conversations during my short stay at the monastery and he promised to pray for me and stay in touch.

A year later, it became known that Father Ephraim would be visiting his spiritual children in New York. There was an informal phone chain announcing his visits, locations, and times, etc. During his visits, I more often than not, had the opportunity to confess to him with the help of a translator. That person was Fr. Emmanuel Gratsias.

Elder Ephraim was visiting New York in late 1991 or early 1992, I don't remember exactly. However, I arranged to visit the church where he'd be hearing confessions. Fr. Emmanuel had to step out for something, but I was next in line to go into the room and speak with Father Ephraim. I didn't want to miss this opportunity, so I went in expecting to receive a blessing and be on my way.

However, what happened was something incredible. I went into the room, took Elder Ephraim's blessing and kneeled next to him as usual for confession. We began speaking and I confessed my sins and he gave advice and read the prayer of absolution. I left the room, and once I did only then did I realize Father Ephraim didn't speak English and I didn't speak Greek. But, he understood me and I understood him and the advice he gave following my confession. To this day, I'm not sure what language was spoken in that room.

In Christ,
Seraphim W.