

GOMONA CHURCH NAME SUBMISSION FORM

Each person (no age limits) in a GOMONA stewarding household had the opportunity to submit one name with a brief explanation of why this name should be the name of our Church. The following is one of those explanations.

What do you think the name of our Church should be? *(submit one name)*

St. Gerasimos

Why? St. Gerasimos was born to a well to do family in the Peloponnesus and was reared in piety by them. At an early age he visited many monasteries and finally settled at Mt. Athos for a number of years. He visited the Holy Land where he was ordained as a priest, and then continued his travels until he came to Cephalonia, where he found a church that had fallen into disrepair. He undertook, with his own hand, the rebuilding of that Church and offered spiritual guidance to locals that had no priest for years. (This was during the time of the Turkish occupation when priests were scarce.) Once the church was finished, the locals flocked to hear him teach. Soon a religious life sprung around this church and a convent was founded.

The building of an Orthodox Church in Flagstaff was and is a burning need and desire of the faithful that traveled many miles to settle here. However, this work has been met with some turmoil over the years, and three times that faithful have held fast, started over and rebuilt the church. St. Gerasimos came upon a church not in use and would not let it go, like the Orthodox faithful will not let go of our work to keep a church in Northern Arizona

Date this Saint or Feast Day is celebrated Oct. 20.

From the Synaxarion

The Monk Gerasimos was born in the village of Trikala in the Peloponessus. Upon reaching maturity he withdrew to the island of Zakina for a monastic life. On the Holy Mountain he became a schema-monk and studied with the ascetics of Athos. Having received blessing from the elders, the monk set off to Jerusalem to worship at the Lifebearing Grave of the Saviour. Having made the rounds of the holy places, visiting Mount Sinai, Antioch, Damascus, Alexandria and Egypt, he returned to Jerusalem where he became a candle-lighter at the Sepulchre of the Lord. The monk was ordained by the blessed Patriarch of Jerusalem, Germanos (1534-1579), to the diaconate, and then to the priesthood. The Monk Gerasimos did not slacken in deeds of prayer. For quietude he withdrew to Jordan, where he spent 40 days without respite. Having received the Patriarch's blessing for a life of silence, the monk Gerasimos withdrew to Zakynthos. He dwelt there in solitude for 5 years, nourishing himself on vegetation. At an inspiration from above he went to the island of Cephalonia and on to Omali, and having restored a church he founded a women's monastery at which he dwelt for 30 years in constant toil, vigil, and prayer on bended knee stretched out upon the earth. For his exalted life he was vouchsafed of God a miraculous gift -- to heal the sick and cast out unclean spirits. The Monk Gerasimos, aware of his impending end for several days, gave his blessing to the nuns and peacefully expired to the Lord on 15 August 1579, at 71 years of age. When his grave was opened two years later, his holy relics were found undecayed and exuding fragrance, and were curative.