

For those of you that are not aware, I, Christopher Adams, went on a trip to Greece in early March as part of a service trip held by the national Orthodox Christian Fellowship. This particular trip consisted of myself, 13 other Orthodox college students and Fr. Vasilieos Flegas. Our mission was to visit several monasteries in Greece and to perform service work for the monks and nuns living there. However, although we did do service work, this trip turned into something more like a pilgrimage. Even from the airport, where Sister Ignatia greeted us, we were embraced and loved by the most humble and spiritual people I have ever met. Our first stop, which turned into a “home away from home”, was the Holy Cross Monastery in Thiva. We performed some service work there for the nuns that would’ve taken them months to complete, but what the nuns gave us in return was worth years of work. We held nightly discussions with each other and the nuns and monks there and their stories of how they got to where they are and the wisdom they passed on was incredible and spiritually filling. These nightly “tea and discussions” continued as we traveled to Red Monastery in Karditsa. Here we were again greeted with love by even more nuns, and continued our service by clearing out a large cluttered

basement as well as the main courtyard. As before the nuns gave us something priceless, with their wisdom and spiritual thoughts. The next couple days Fr. Chrysostom was our guide as we visited some monasteries nearby, including the ones built into rock formations known as Meteora, as well as the all-male monastery Petras, which houses a miraculous icon of the Theotokos. Here the stories, hard work and beautiful iconography all lead up to a very spiritual tonsure service at St. George’s in Karditsa. A tonsure service is a rarely seen service where nuns are tonsured to the next step in their monastic life. Among the four nuns tonsured was Sister Ignatia. It was very special not only for her, but also for us, as we had grown quite fond of her over that week. This, along with all of the other spiritual experiences over that week, came to be the most beautiful and spiritual thing I have ever experienced.

I want to thank all of the members of St. George for donating money for my trip, and allowing me to partake of this very special and meaningful opportunity. If you do have questions pertaining to this trip, feel free to ask me at any time.