

St. Angelina of Serbia

At the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, August 15, we will be commemorating St. Angelina of Serbia. Her life illustrates the tumultuous times of the 15th century, as the Ottoman Empire extended its conquests throughout the Balkan Peninsula.

The saintly Мати Ангелина was born into an Albanian noble family, at a time when most of the people of Albania were Orthodox Christians. Her father, George Arianiti Komneni, distantly related to a Byzantine imperial family, led some spirited but ultimately unsuccessful campaigns against the Ottomans. Her sister Donika was the wife of George Kastrioti, better known as Skanderbeg.

Angelina was married to the exiled Serbian Despot Stephen Branković. Better known as St. Stephen the Blind, he had taken refuge in Albania after being blinded by the Turks. In the face of continuing Ottoman advances, the couple fled from Albania to Italy with their two sons, George and John. On the death of her husband in 1485, Angelina traveled to the Kingdom of Hungary, where her son George became, in effect, the titular Despot-in-Exile of Serbia.

Like their parents, George and John were known for their sanctity. In time George gave up his claim to the Serbian throne in favor of his younger brother and took monastic vows. He later became Archbishop of Belgrade. John was married but had no sons. After his death in 1503, many miracles took place before his relics.

During her last years, Angelina retired to the Krušedol Monastery, one of the many monasteries in the mountainous region of Fruška Gora. There she became famous for her learning and devout life. After her death she was interred in the monastery, alongside her sons and other members of the Branković dynasty. There her relics are still venerated.



Reliquary of St. Angelina



Krušedol Monastery

For photos and a brief article on the 2011 celebration of her feast day at Krušedol, go to http://www.spc.rs/eng/celebration_saint_angelina_fruska_gora