

Father Gregory N. Eliades (1859-1952)

Father Gregory N. Eliades followed his countrymen from Asia Minor to two other continents and helped establish Greek Orthodox churches there. He was born in Semendre in central Asia Minor, where he lived with his wife Soteria and four children. In 1900 he was ordained into the priesthood.



During the turbulent years of the early 20th century, Greek Orthodox from this region left their homeland and resettled in Greece and America. In 1923, a treaty ending the Greco-Turkish War of 1919-22 required that almost all Greek Orthodox living in the new Turkish state and Muslims living in Greece renounce their faith or abandon their homes. Most of the Greek Orthodox of Semendre chose to flee. A number of them settled in northeastern Greece, where they renamed their new home Neo-Semendre. In 1924 Father Eliades founded a church there for the refugees.

Another large group from Semendre traveled to America, where they settled in Pontiac, Michigan. After the death of his wife, Father Eliades was called in 1927 to this community and became the founding priest of Saint George. He served the parish several times over the next decade, finally retiring in 1940.

Two of his four children followed him to the United States. He lived alternately with his son and daughter and their families (photo). Personal items that belonged to Father Eliades were donated to the Saint Photios Shrine and are on display in another room.

(Photo courtesy Elizabeth Bisbikis)