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Kazakhstan: Convent reopened after nearly 100 years



A convent closed by the Soviet authorities in 1930 has been officially reestablished by decree of the Holy Synod of the Moscow Patriarchate.

On July 15, the Synodal hierarchs resolved “to open the Iveron-Sts. Peter and Paul Convent in the village of Oktyabrskoye in the Kostanay Province of the Kostanay Diocese and appoint Nun Nika (Otroschenko) to the position of abbess,” reports Patriarchia.ru.

For many years the village church was controlled by schismatics, but in June 2023, it was returned to the Kostanay Diocese of the Kazakhstan Metropolitan District.

Global Orthodox reports on the history of the monastery:

The Iveron Monastery has a rich history connected to the founding of the city of Kustanay (now Kostanay). In 1883, settlers Anna Zhutova and Fevronia Silantyeva petitioned for the establishment of a prayer house, and in 1884, for a monastery.

However, their request was denied due to a lack of land resources.

In the summer of 1887, after a visit from Bishop Makary (Troitsky) of Orenburg, the sisters began to actively work towards creating a community. In 1889, Hieromonk Seraphim brought a copy of the miraculous Iveron Icon of the Mother of God to Kustanay, which spiritually strengthened the sisters. In 1890, they acquired a house for the community.

On May 25, 1894, the Kustanay Iveron Women's Community was officially established. By 1895, the community had grown to 80 sisters and took the blind, infirm, and sick under its care. In 1895, construction began on the monastery church and cells.

Abbess Anna and treasurer Ksenia Sadchikova made significant contributions to the development of the community. In 1895, Bishop Makary blessed the construction of the refectory church, and regular services began the same year.

In 1898, a church literacy school was opened within the community. In 1901, the church in honor of the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God was consecrated. In 1908, a second priestly position was established in the monastery.

The monastery was actively engaged in charity work. In 1915, an orphanage for girls, the daughters of soldiers, was opened at the monastery. After the 1920 revolution, the monastery was nationalized. In 1930, it was closed, and its buildings were used for storage and as a technical school. Many nuns continued to live in the city in private apartments and houses. In 1937, mass repressions began, affecting the nuns and clergy.

In 2023, efforts to revive the Iveron Monastery began. Pilgrims started coming to the village of Oktyabrskoye, helping to restore the community. Cells were arranged for the nuns, novices, and sisters of mercy. On July 25, 2024, the Holy Synod decided to open the monastery and appointed Nun Nika (Otroschenko) as the abbess of the newly established monastery.

This revival signifies a significant step in restoring the spiritual heritage and continuing the charitable and religious activities of the Iveron Monastery.

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