

## Pre-revolutionary St. Nicholas icon returned to Belarusian Church



A late 19th-early 20th century icon of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker was recently returned to the Belarusian Orthodox Church.

The icon was preserved throughout the soviet years by the family of a former teacher of the spiritual school in the city of Orsha, in northeastern Belarus. Following the fall of the USSR, the icon was given to dealers by members of the family who were leaving Belarus and was then sold to an antique dealer from Russia, reports the [Belarusian Church](#).

Now, decades later, the icon was returned to Orsha by the famous Belarusian historian and collector Vladimir Likhodedov, the winner of the Presidential prize “For Spiritual Revival” in 2006.

The solemn transfer of the icon was held at the Holy Protection Church, attached to the local Holy Theophany Monastery, where the icon is believed to have originally been located.

Likhodedov explained that he bought the icon back in the 1990s, together with photos and postcards of the city of Orsha. The icon was housed either in the Holy Protection Church or in the house church of the spiritual school, where the people who preserved the icon used to teach.

Despite going through both world wars and the years of persecution, the icon has been preserved in good condition, especially the face of St. Nicholas, Likhodedov noted.

A moleben to St. Nicholas was served in the Holy Protection Church on the occasion of the return of the icon. Archimandrite Sergei (Brich) explained that a great monastery once stood in this place and expressed hope that the return of the icon would mark the revival of the spiritual life there.

After the transfer, the local faithful came to venerate the holy icon.

Last month, 12 icons stolen by Nazis during WWII were returned to the Pskov Cave Monastery.

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