

BRINGER OF LIGHT

Slavic soil was largely pagan until the ninth century, when the light of Christianity pierced through the blackness. One of the most instrumental people in this conversion was PINCESS OLGA.

As an important principality in the 9th century, Kiev had contact and trade with the religious hub of Constantinople. Slowly Christianity began to filter in among the Slavs. Olga began to learn about Christian values and was met with love and solemnity. During a state visit to Constantinople in 957, she made the move that would have a profound influence on not only her but also her people. Recognizing the truth of Christianity, she decided to be baptized and embrace the faith.

Olga began her missionary work upon her return to Kiev. She lived for approximately 12 years after her conversion, but accomplished a life-time of work for the Gospel. She is said to have built churches, baptized people, and organized a women's community. For all her labors for Christ, the Church has bestowed upon her the name "Equal-to-the Apostles." She died in the year 969, at the age of 90.

Of vital importance is the influence St Olga had on her grandson, Prince Vladimir. Tradition tells of Vladimir's search for the true religion for his people. Those who argued for the Orthodox Church told the prince: "if the religion of the Greeks had not been good, you grandmother Olga, who was the wisest of women, would not have embraced it." The weight of the name of Olga overcame whatever doubts that remained in the mind of Prince Vladimir.

Olga acts as a prime example for Christians today. We all have an opportunity to render our service to Christ. God grant that people will be found today to carry on this wonderful tradition of apostolic labor for the Church.