

ORDO SANCTI CONSTANTINI MAGNI



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IN MEMORIAM

Give rest, O Lord, to the souls of Thy departed servants

GOCM

Jorma Ahonen

Exarchate of Finland

1946 – 2021

KCM

Esa Eerola

Exarchate of Finland

1945 - 2021

KCM

Matti Elonheimo

Exarchate of Finland

1931 - 2021

GOCM

Aarno Strömmer

Exarchate of Finland

1927 - 2021



Do not be afraid;

I am the First and the Last.

I am He who lives.

Dear Dames and Chevaliers 2021

We are still living with the coronavirus-pandemic. It has been going on for almost two years and hundreds of thousands of people have died. Many million persons have diseased in that infection. In many countries the health care system is not able to take care of all patients. I am sure that our Order has not been able to run its normal activities. I hope, however, that every exarchate has kept in mind our principles, e.g. the charitable work.

Fortunately scientist have done excellent work. The vaccines have been developed very fast. In fact it is a wonder, that the vaccines are available in less than one year

Time after the pandemic started. The only way to win the pandemic is to vaccinate more than 70 percent of adult population. In Finland the figure is now about 50 % and hopeful at the end of summer the target of 70 % is reached. Again the real problem is how to have vaccines to the developing countries. Africa lacks vaccines, health care personnel and an organization. So I do stress again the importance of education. One very important target of our Order's activities is support for Patriarchate's work in Africa, especially running schools. In that way one can fight against e.g. pandemics.

I hope that everybody has been in good health, have been able to avoid covid-19 and has got the vaccination. I wish a beautiful summer.

Toivo Salmi
Chancellor

In memoriam

The former Secretary General of Ordo Sancti Constantini Magni, Jorma Ahonen, has passed away 9.3.2021. Jorma was a member of our order since 1990. He was a very active member of the Bailiwick of Eastern Finland and the Bailie of it before nomination to Secretary General. He was in this position more than ten years. About one year ago he decided to be retired. Quite soon after that had diagnose of severe illness.

As a Secretary General he was excellent. He was always helpful, when some problems in organizing activities in our Order's function. He had learned the constitution of the Order perfectly. He had good contact to all Exarcates and he visited many of them during the investitures. The meetings of the international government of the order were fine organized and very effective.

Jorma's civil position was to be the head of Easter Finland's police district. Before that he served as the head of Police Academy, as police chief of the ministry of internal affairs in Finland. Jorma had also a high position in the international police organization.

On behalf of the OCM we tell the condolence to Jorma's family and thank him for excellent work in our Order.

Attached to this memoir are three photos of the investiture in the Czech Republic on June 20, 2015 where Jorma knighted and handed out promotions and medals

Osmo Suominen
secretary general

Toivo Salmi
chancellor





In memoriam

GOCM, Archon, Member of the Court, Knight Brother Aarno Strömmer is gone. He was born into a priest's family in Tornio on September 6th, 1927 and died in Oulu on March 16th, 2021. He participated in our last wars in orderly and anti-aircraft job. He was a member of OCM since year 1985.



From 1948 to 1963, Aarno Strömmer worked as a civil servant and researcher in the Västöliitto (the Family Federation of Finland), in Tilastokeskus (Statistics Finland) and in the National Planning Office. From 1963 to 1973 he was the mayor of Tornio and from 1973 to 1984 he was the director of the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland. He also served as a minister in the 1975 civil service government.

Ten years as mayor of Tornio coincided with the city's years of growth: the municipal alliance with Alatornio and Karungi was realized, and Outokumpu Oy decided to establish a steel plant in the region.

He was an ASLA Fellow in the US from 1954 to 1955. The dissertation was accepted in 1969, and he was awarded the title of Professor in 1983.

The family and the Strömmer Society, founded in 1951, were particularly important to him. Communicating with members of the family through the genealogy fulfilled his youthful dream as he was to become a journalist. "I noticed the funds needed for my studies and took a job at Statistics Finland," Strömmer has said. The statistics took the man as he went.

After his actual working life, a significant new career opened up for Strömmer: working in war veteran work in an effort to improve the esteem and living conditions of veterans. He served as Chairman of the Northern Ostrobothnia Veteran District from 1990 to 2015 and as Honorary Chairman thereafter.

Strömmer played a key role in reforming the Finnish War Veterans Association to meet the current needs of society and its members, and in bringing out traditional work to remind them of the work and values of the veteran generation when serving on the association's board and council 1995–2012. For the last four years he was chairman of the union and its council.

In addition to war veteran work, Strömmer made an impact in numerous national and local organizations and communities with his characteristic thoroughness.

To counterbalance the versatile activities, Aarno liked to spend time in Kuorevesi Halli in his cottage on the island.

We knight brothers get to know the basic features of Aarno: patriotism, honesty, punctuality, sense of humor, correctness and ability to cooperate. He was always elegant and cheerful - in a word, a really old-fashioned gentleman.

Osmo Suominen

Secretary - General

A long-time personal friend of Aarno

Three churches – three masters

In Central Finland, a set of three old wooden churches stand at a distance of some 20 kilometres from each other. They are regarded as the gems of the 18th century Finnish rustic church architecture. Built in 1763-1765, Petäjävesi Old Church has been on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List since 1994. In the Church, European construction styles are combined with peasant building tradition. Completed in 1758 and referred as the Picture Church, Keuruu Old Church in is the oldest preserved church building in Central Finland. The paintings in the Church represent faith and hope, the ideals of 18th century. Pihlajavesi Old Church was built in 1780. The atmospheric Church rose to the lap of the forest with the help of a small number of parishioners. Sooty and wet clothes of the church people have created ghostly figures on the walls of the Church.



Built in 1763–1765, Petäjävesi Old Church has been on the UNESCO World Heritage Site List since 1994. The belfry was completed in 1831. In the church, European construction styles are combined with peasant building tradition. Photo: Antti Bilund 2005.

Finland's oldest preserved wooden churches date back to the 17th century

Old churches are the most visible part of the Finnish building and cultural heritage. The 13th-century stone churches in Åland Islands are among the oldest preserved church buildings in Finland. Unfortunately, wooden churches dating back to the Middle Ages have not survived. However, wood has been the most used church building material in Finland throughout the centuries. The best available building material i.e., pine logs, were used for churches and other value buildings. Wooden churches were built in great numbers in the 17th century. Many of them have been destroyed or demolished to make way for a new church. Only 15 of the nearly 250 churches built then still remain. Karuna Old Church is now in the Seurasaari Open-Air Museum in Helsinki. All the others are at their original locations.

Some of the churches are pretty well preserved in their original outfits, but others only have log walls covered with newer board lining, and almost no original is visible anymore.



Completed in 1758 and referred as the Picture Church, Keuruu Old Church in is the oldest preserved church building in Central Finland. The paintings in the Church represent faith and hope, the ideals of 18th century. Photo: Antti Palsola 2009.

The construction of churches continued throughout the 18th century. New chapel churches or preaching rooms were established especially in the large parishes inland to overcome long and difficult church journeys. Several churches built in the 17th century were also replaced by new and larger ones. In the 18th century, a total of 11 stone churches and 130 wooden churches were completed in Finland. Churches were turned into either cross churches or long churches with a belfry. In particular, the late 18th century was a golden age of cross churches.

Church builders were self-taught masters in the 18th century

In the 18th century, the construction of wooden churches was usually carried out by self-taught church builder masters. Many of them had qualified for the profession through work experience. Church builders moved over a large area in the countryside, according to where work was available. They had little to say about urban construction because church builders were not usually counted as belonging to bourgeois craftsmen. Many 18th-century church builders were of peasant origin i.e., mostly sons of farmers and crofters.

Church building was usually funded and commissioned by a local parish. According to the client's order, the church builders carried out the building design and supervised the implementation of the work on the site. Church builders were also often commissioned to repair and reform churches. The parish usually started preparing the construction work well in advance of the arrival of the church builder master. Farmers brought in the necessary amounts of various construction materials, above all large pine logs. Money was also raised for essential building needs, such as nails and window panes, as well as the salaries of a church builder and his assistants.

After the church was completed, paintings of human characters were often made in the interior walls and ceiling of the church. The subjects of the paintings were often Old Testament Accounts and events related to the life and suffering of Christ. Paintings of the interior of churches decreased at the end of the 18th century, shades of colour lightened and the altarpiece could be replaced by a wooden cross alone. Since 1776, the construction of churches and all other public buildings was overseen by the Chief Curator's Office in Stockholm. The reform stifled the peasant church-building style.

Petäjävesi Old Church is the beauty of its time

Petäjävesi Old Church was built between 1763 and 1764. The Church was designed and built by **Jaakko Leppänen**, a peasant church builder from Vesanka village of Laukaa parish. The church has maintained its original layout and décor exceptionally well. It is accompanied by a belfry built in 1821 by Jaakko Leppänen's grandson **Erkki Leppänen**. The Church is now a popular wedding church, and services are held there on Sundays in the summer. Since 1994, it has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Church was originally built as a chapel church for the local community at Petäjävesi, at that time a remote village of large Jämsä Mother Parish. In 1728, the Petäjävesi people had already received permission from the Crown to build a cemetery and a small village church at their own expense, because the journey to the Mother Church in Jämsä was long. However, construction was delayed for decades. The Church is located on a small peninsula in the strait between Lake Jämsänvesi and Lake Petäjävesi. The place is typical of an old rural church. It was chosen so that parishioners could easily reach the site by boat in summer or by ice in winter.

The Church is a symmetrical cross church in shape. The length of both cross arms is about 17 meters and the width is about 7 meters. The construction technique was traditional. The walls were built with horizontal corner joints, whereas the ceiling has a vaulted board structure. The roof structures have decorative paintings made with red ochre paint. They were probably painted about a year after the Church was completed. In other respects, the Church is unpaved in its interior. The outer roof is made of wooden shingles. The Church's



Pibljavesi Old Church was built in 1780. The atmospheric Church rose to the lap of the forest with the help of a small number of parishioners. Photo: Joonas Iivonen 2007.

high and steep-caped wooden shingle roof refers to the old Gothic church architecture. The Church was not inaugurated until 1778, just over ten years after completion.

In 1821, a new belfry was built in Petäjävesi Old Church, which was connected to the church with a covered, board-built corridor. The entrance to the Church was changed to take place via belfry, and the old ornate entrance door to the sacristy on the southern wing remained in occasional use. The windows of the Church were changed to rectangular shape and their size was increased. The sacristy was moved from the northern wing to the extension of the eastern wing. The fence around the apsis was demolished, and the pulpit was moved to the north wall. On both sides of the altar, new door-ways were opened to the sacristy. All the modifications were carried out under the leadership of church builder Jaakko Leppänen's grandson Erkki Leppänen. In 1827, the belfry was painted multicolored from the outside, and the work was renewed in 1865.

Polish-Austrian art historian understood the value of wooden churches

The Church was abandoned in 1879 when Petäjävesi New Church, built on the opposite shore of the strait, was completed. However, the Old Church's belfry and cemetery were still used by the congregation. **K.K. Meinander**, a Finnish art historian and museum expert, the future chief curator of the Finnish National Museum, first visited the Church in 1901 and understood the value of the old church. In 1913, architect **Elsi Borg** was assigned to make dimensional drawings of the Church. **Josef Strzygowski**, a Polish-Austrian art historian, visited the old churches of Petäjävesi and Keuruu in 1923 and wrote an admiring article about them after his trip. According to Elsi Borg's preliminary plans, the Church was first repaired for the parish's 200th anniversary celebrations in 1928.

In late 1940s, the State Archaeological Commission issued a statement to the Petäjävesi Parish stressing the importance of the Old Church for Finnish building art. **Lars Pettersson**, an art historian began researching and drawing up a renovation plan for the Petäjävesi Old Church in 1949. In the same year, the building conservator **Thorvald Lindquist** made new dimensional drawings of the Church. In the early 1950s, due to a lack of funds, the State Archaeological Commission called on the Church roof to be repaired with wooden shakes for the time being. Work was undertaken, but it proved insufficient in terms of results.

In 1952, the Petäjävesi congregation received an allowance from the National Church Council for renovating the wooden shingle roof. In 1953, the roof of the Church and the roof of the intermediate corridor between the Church and the belfry were renewed. New, more accurate dimensional drawings were received in 1955. Repair and care of the Church as a building memorial began under the supervision and support of the State Archaeological Commission in the late 1950s. The building conservator conducted building history studies in the Church in the 1960s and 1970s. In 1977, the Old Church and its

surroundings were protected by a master plan, and at the end of the decade a corrective action plan was finally adopted.

UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1994

Repair work began in the early 1980s. Initially, decayed and damaged parts were replaced. Then the church vault was repaired and the roof was renewed. The work continued over several years mainly with the support of the Church's Central Fund. At the end of the decade, it was belfry's turn: the pole and the top of the cupola were removed for renovation. In 1990, the Petäjävеси Old Church was proposed for the World Heritage Site List. In 1993, the National Board of Antiquities designated Petäjävеси Old Church area of as a nationally significant built cultural environment, and the following year the Church was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the renovation of the Church continued, partly with national and partly European Union support. In 2005, an indicative management plan was



Decoration of the pulpit with human characters in the in Petäjävеси Old Church. Photo: István Kecskeméti, 1996, FINNA.

established for the Church, and in the following year, a management committee was set up. In 2013, the Church's protective area was confirmed in the town plan. In 2014, the Church received a new management plan. Nowadays, the National Church Council's construction grant enables the continuous renovation of Petäjavesi Old Church.

Jaakko Leppänen – church builder and carpenter

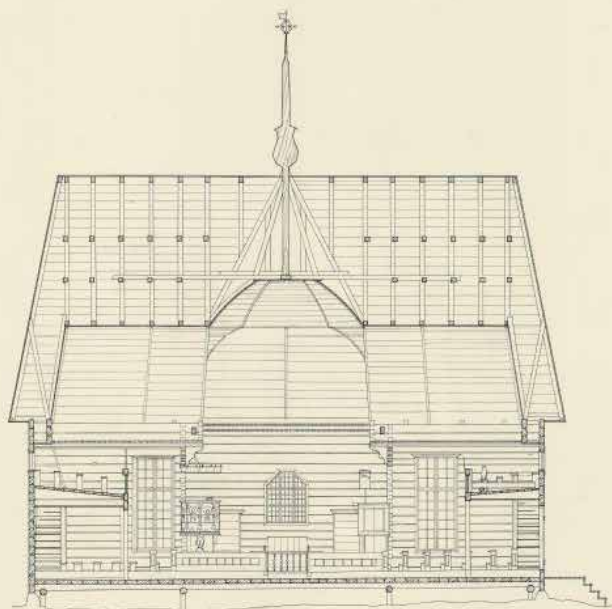
The Petäjavesi Old Church was designed and built by carpenter Jaakko Leppänen from 1763 to 1765. No precise information on Leppänen's ancestry is available. It is obvious that Leppänen's instructor was **Arvi Junkkarinen**, a church builder who moved widely in Central and Eastern Finland. Professor Lars Pettersson, who has studied Leppänen's work, assumes that Jaakko Leppänen was already an elderly man when he came to Petäjavesi and that he was born in the early 18th century, at the latest during the Great Hatred (1700-1721). Leppänen was mentioned in 1757 in Jämsä, where he led making of the roof of the Mother Church, built in the 1680s. The following summer, he made the roof for the belfry. In 1761, Leppänen repaired a church in Laukaa, built in the late 1670s. After the completion of Petäjavesi Old Church in 1765, he moved to Korpilahti to complete the unfinished church built by Arvi Junkkarinen in 1753. In Jämsä, Leppänen worked twice, first in interior design in 1765 and then in erecting a belfry in 1768. After this, he disappears.

Jaakko Leppänen is remembered above all as the builder of the Petäjavesi Old Church. The church is a masterpiece of Finnish wooden church architecture. Jaakko Leppänen's son and grandson were also church builders. **Jaakko Leppänen Jr.** (1741-1805) built a church in Jyväskylä in 1775 that resembled Petäjavesi Old Church. The belfry next to it was completed five years later. Before that, Jaakko Leppänen Jr. erected a belfry in Korpilahti in 1777. Grandson **Erkki Leppänen** (1776-1856) is known as the builder of the Petäjavesi belfry, completed in 1821.

Keuruu Old Church has been called the most beautiful wooden church in Finland

Built between 1756 and 1759, Keuruu Old Church is a long church with short cross arms and a belfry. Painted with red ochre paint, the Church with wooden shingle roof is well represented by the wooden church architecture of the 18th century. **Antti Hakola**, a self-taught church builder from Alahärmä, designed the Church and supervised building work. The original features of the church have been well preserved. The construction of the Church began in 1756, and roof ridge was reached in the following year. The belfry, interior vault and windows were completed in 1758, and the Church was inaugurated in September of the same year. The finishing touches to the Church were completed in 1759, when open porches were made to protect the stairs of both exterior doors. The Church was first tarred in 1765, and again in 1768. The belfry was tarred in 1773.

PETÄJÄVEDEN VANHA KIRKKO



LEIKKAUS A-A 1/50



Dimensional drawings on Petäjävesi Old Church by Pekka Pietarila in 1959–1960. Cross section towards the altar 1:50. Photo: Aalto University, FINNA.

The completion of the interior of the Church began in 1776. **Matti Pärnä-Åkerblom**, a recognized church builder, made the pulpit and a frame for the altarpiece. The altarpiece, Christ Washes the Feet of his Disciples, painted by painter **Johan Backman** from Alaveteli, was hanged up in the early 1760s. Paintings of interior walls and vaults by painter **Johan Tilén**, as well as paintings in pulpit and railings, were completed in the 1780s. The roof was tarred and windows were regularly repaired every few years at the end of the 18th century. The proper maintenance of the Church continued at the beginning of the 19th century. Windows and stairs were repaired and the Church was tarred at regular intervals. In 1819, wooden shingle roof was tarred, log walls of the belfry were covered with vertical boarding, and the windows were equipped with weatherboards. In 1824, the congregation received a donation, The Last Verdict, a painting by **Carl Gustaf Söderstrand** made Turku in 1820. The painting was placed in the church. Today, both the altarpiece and the painting are in the National Museum, and copies of the works are replacing the original ones.

Axel Gallén-Kallela captured the inner atmosphere of the church

Between 1831 and 1832, the Church was renovated. In 1832, an octagonal sacristy connected to the apsis was built at the eastern end of the Church. It replaced the original one in the north side wing. At the same time, the windows of the Church were also extended. The log wall separating the old sacristy from the Church hall was demolished, and the space was equipped with benches. Proper care of the Church continued throughout the 1830s and 1840s. Windows and doors were painted, stairs and rain gutters were refurbished, and the roof and belfry were tarred. The foundation of the sacristy was rebuilt in 1845, and its wall joints to the church were reinforced with iron bars. In 1850, the western gallery used by male and female farm laborers was divided into two partitions.

In the following decades, all that was done in the Church was the necessary renovations. In 1871, the need for a new church was first discussed and it was agreed that no further significant repairs would be made to the church. In 1889, the painter **Axel Gallén-Kallela** immortalized the church's interior atmosphere in his painting Girl in Keuruu Old Church. When the new church was completed in 1892, the Old Church abandoned in 1895. The congregation decided to ask Porvoo Diocese for permission to sell the church, but the application was not filed at that time. The application was made only in 1901 and asked for permission to demolish the Church in order to create more space for the cemetery. In 1902, the altarpiece and painting were in poor condition and they were donated to the collections of the State Historical Museum, now the National Museum. Architect **Armas Lindgren** visited the church in 1905 and proposed that Porvoo Diocese would not grant a demolition permit. After that, the Church was deserted: the glass panes in the windows were repaired and the doors were latched in-side. In 1910, the Seurasääri Foundation tried to buy a Church for an open-air museum to be established in Helsinki.



Dimensional drawings on Keuruu Old Church by G. Juslén in 1913-1914. Four original sketches by Axel Gallen-Kallela: Top of Belfry, Door of Sacristy, Southern Entrance & Gateway. Photo: Aalto University, FINNA.

Interest in preserving the Church arose

However, interest in the Old Church began to arouse. In 1912, the collection of museum artefacts was launched. The congregation received a church boat as a donation, which was displayed in the park of the Old Church. Art historian **Josef Strzygowski** visited Keuruu Old Church in 1923. Later, he wrote an article in magazine praising the old wooden churches from the 1700s in Keuruu and Petäjävesi.

The renovation of Keuruu Old Church began in 1924-1925. The foundation was repaired; the sunken eastern end of sacristy was raised; the wooden shingle roof was renewed to on line with the old model; the decayed rain gutters were renewed; roofs and porch floors were tarred; the shattered windows were refurbished to the same way as before; the worn outer lining, weatherboards, doors and stairs were repaired; walls and window frame-works were painted; the columns were repaired and the decayed roof trusses of the porches was renewed. In 1926, state grants were received for repairs, which enabled the work to be continued at a later date. In the same year, the Church is made into dimensional drawings. Wall and ceiling paintings were restored in 1929. Next, the roof came on repair duty; it was renewed in 1931.

The Church was surveyed in 1935 and then left on its own for almost two decades. Minor interior repairs were carried out in 1950. The time for a major renovation was again in 1954, as the Church's 200th anniversary approached. The roof was tarred; the Church was painted from the outside; the rain gutters were repaired; a new gate was made in the gateway on the west side; the exterior walls were restored and the walls of sacristy were covered up with similar boards as the Church; the walls of the church hall and sacristy were cleaned; and benches and the floor were repaired.

In 1974, a survey by the National Board of Antiquities was carried out in the abandoned church, which recorded immediate repair needs including the renewal and tarring of the roofs of gateways. In 1988, a plan was drawn up for the necessary repairs, which was refined into a restoration plan for 1992-1994. Between 1993 and 1996, the wooden shingle roof and its supporting structures were renovated; the roof trusses of belfry were reinforced; the outer lining of the south wall of the belfry was renewed; all windows were refurbished; the external stairs were repaired; the church and gateways were painted with red ochre paint and the interior paintings were conserved. The work received a conservation grant from the Church's Central Fund. In 1995, the congregation received grant funds for the refurbishment of interior paintings under the European Union's pilot programme for architectural heritage. Keuruu Old Church is now a popular venue for weddings, baptisms and funerals. In the summer on Wednesdays, evening prayers are held in the Church. In summer, the Church also has concerts because of its good acoustics and a unique atmosphere.

South Ostrobothnian church builder Antti Hakola

The builder of Keuruu Old church was Antti Hakola. He was born in 1704 at Hakola farm in Alahärma. His first job was to build a small chapel in Alajärvi between 1749 and 1750. Even before the chapel was completed, Antti Hakola's brother **Matti Hakola** (1703-1762) had started the construction of the Alahärmä Church. Antti Hakola completed it in 1752. The church became a rectangular long church with a narrow belfry on the west side. It had been visibly influenced by Uusikaarlepyy Church, built between 1708 and 1710 by **Elias Brenner**. Alahärmä Church was the first one in the series of three similar churches built by Antti Hakola. Two others were built in Kauhava in 1755-1756 and in Keuruu in 1756-1759.

Alahärmä Church burned down in 1898 and Kauhava Church in 1921, so all that only Keuruu Old Church is remaining. It is often mentioned as one of the most beautiful wooden churches in Finland. It was made into a steep-roofed long church with a belfry at the west end. On either side of the Church there are short cross arms, which at least on the inside could be considered as the elements of the cross church. After Keuruu Old Church, Hakola moved on to building regular cross churches. All corners of Evijärvi Church are rectangular. A similar church was made in Purmo. Although there is no information on the builder, Antti Hakola is widely assumed to be the one.

However, Hakola built his most handsome churches in Virrat and Kuortane. Built between 1773 and 1774, Virrat Church was made into a cross church, all of whose cross arms ended in a polygon with 20 corners. Completed in 1776, the inner corners in Kuortane Church were beveled, thus producing a view of a 24-corner church. Thanks to this church, Hakola became a major renovator of traditional log construction. In the autumn of 1777, Antti Hakola started laying the foundation of Nurmo Church. The church was designed as a cross church with its inner corners beveled. However, Hakola drowned in the ice hole of the river in the spring of 1778 before the work interrupted for the winter was resumed. Hakola's son Kaapo continued the work, and the church was completed in 1779. Antti Hakola, who was illiterate, was one of the last church builders with a genuine peasant background. Hakola designed the churches he built himself. He had acquired all his capabilities and knowledge in practical work.

Pihlajavesi Old Church stands in wilderness in the middle of the forest

Built between 1780 and 1782, Pihlajavesi Old Church is located in Keuruu. The Church was designed and built by church builder **Matti Pärnä-Åkerblom**. The Church is a long church shaped like a cross church. There's a belfry at the west end of the Church. The Church is not entirely in its original outfit, as some of the structures were used for a new church built in the 1870s. However, the walls and the roof were left in place, and the

Church was restored to its current outfit in the 1930s. The Church hosts services and concerts in the summer. The Church is also popular as a wedding church.

In 1778, ten farms and four crofts of Pihlajavesi community proposed Keuruu Congregation the construction of a church in the village. The villagers appealed for their long church journey. However, permission to build the church was not granted, but the villagers were given permission to build a preaching room. The Mother Church refused to fund the project. The inhabitants of the village became independent and sold grain and tar to raise funds. In 1780, Matti Pärnä-Åkerblom, a church builder from Eräjärvi, was hired as the builder of the preaching room. He was working on the construction of the Kuru and Kuorevesi churches at the same time. The resemblance of the three churches is obvious. The preaching room was completed in 1782, and the Vicar of Keuruu, **Abraham Indrenius Jr.**, reported to the Diocesan Chapter in Turku that it had been completed.

After requesting further information, the Diocesan Chapter came to the conclusion that the building was a church rather than a preaching room and gave Reverend Indrenius a notice of breach of duty. The Diocesan Chapter complained to the Provincial Governor of Vaasa in order to put an end to similar arbitrariness elsewhere. Because of the controversy, the Church was not inaugurated until 1787. The inhabitants of Pihlajavesi community had got their own church. In the 19th century, the Church was regularly tarred, approximately every ten years. Already in the 1830s, it was found that the Church had become overcrowded for parishioners. In 1842, large window openings were made on both sides of the altar, and in 1845 burglar bars were purchased for the windows in sacristy. In 1850, the Senate ordered the congregation to build a new church on the other side of Lake Pihlajavesi.

Painter Axel Gallén-Kallela understood the value of the Church

In 1870, the floor, the original board vault and interior decoration of Old Church demolished, except for the pulpit, for the needs of the new church. The two bells of Old Church were moved to a new belfry when the new church was completed. The conversion of the Old Church into a primary school was proposed in 1887. The painter **Axel Gallén-Kallela** visited the Church in 1900. He also made drawings on the Church and wrote an article in favor of preserving the Old Church. The dimensional drawings were obtained in 1910. The decision on new roofing and painting of the Church and renovation of gates and stone fences was made in 1912. At the suggestion of the vicar of the neighboring parish, a service was held in the decayed Church.

In 1919, a decision was made to sell and move the church to Virrat for the Prayer Room Association to be established at Killinkoski. However, the project collapsed. In the early 1920s, only minor repairs were made to the Church. However, the congregation rejected

the takeover bids of both industrialist **Gösta Serlachius** and the residents of Haapamäki railway community. The Church began to be renovated in earnest in the mid-1920s. A new floor and barrel vault were made and temporary benches were acquired. In 1929, a repair committee for the Old Church was appointed with a responsibility of re-decorating the church.

Restoration continued throughout the 1930s. The pulpit, old-fashioned benches and altar were rebuilt. The walls, stairs and doors of the Church hall were repaired. The foundation was partially re-laid, and the decayed portions of the walls were patched up. The Church got a new wooden shake roof that was tarred. In the 1950s, a windmill and a church boat were brought next to the church. Decisions to take proper care of the Old Church were made in the 1960s. The roof was renewed between 1966 and 1968 and tarred in 1981; the work was renewed in 1989. Between 1996 and 1998, a plan was drawn up to repair the Church. Systematic rehabilitation work has continued throughout the 21st century with the help of restoration grants.

Tavastia County Builder Matti Pärnä-Åkerblom

Matti Åkerblom is one of Finland's most prominent church builders in the second half of the 18th century. He built wooden churches in Southwest Finland and Tavastia. The churches by Åkerblom tell of centuries of tradition. Matti Pärnä-Åkerblom was born in Eräjärvi in the Pärnä croft of the Koppala manor in 1740. At the age of 20, he moved to Turku in 1760, where he first worked as an assistant to manufacturer **Hans Henrik Wechter**. Carpenters' Profession was established in the city in 1759, whose leading figure at the time was the famous church builder **Antti Piimänen**. Åkerblom was accepted as an apprentice in 1763, and after five years he became a journeyman. He made a contract to build Angelniemi Church. The church was built between 1772 and 1774. It is long church with a belfry at the west end of the church, according to the model invented by Antti Piimänen. At the same time, Åkerblom built the belfry of Halikko Church without a permission from the Profession. However, it was approved by the Profession in 1773 as a masterwork on condition that Åkerblom would refund the inspectors' trips to Halikko and back. Åkerblom was admitted as a master into Turku Carpenters' Profession.

During his active years, Åkerblom was responsible for the construction of ten churches and five belfries. His first work in Tavastia was the Orivesi Church, which was made from 1774 to 1775, but which burned during interior paintings in 1779. Apparently, the Church was already associated with the model used by Antti Piimänen, where the belfry was turning into a west tower, the southern side wing was partially or completely merged into the main space, and the sacristy filled only part of the northern side wing. According to this model, Åkerblom later built three still-preserved churches in Kuorevesi in 1779, Kuru in 1781 and Pihlajavesi in 1780-1782.

In these, the hallmark of the southwestern Finnish belfry – onion – took on even more flighty shapes. Kuru Church in particular has been considered perhaps the most beautiful example of this type of church. Åkerblom proposed a similar church to the Ruovesi Parish Assembly in 1776, but when the cross church was voted on, the supporters of the cross church won. Between 1777 and 1778, Åkerblom built a cross church in Ruovesi, which in its details represented the southwestern Finnish tradition, for example, in terms of ceiling dome, but which as a whole was very close to some of the cross-churches in Ostrobothnia. Åkerblom himself proposed beveled inner corners, and when it was finally decided that the outer corners of the cross arms would also be beveled, a so-called 24-corner cross church was born. It is a matter of not accepting the drawings in Stockholm, but by the time the King's decision finally arrived in Ruovesi, the Church had already been built.

After Ruovesi, Åkerblom built even more conventional cross churches in Orivesi between 1780 and 1781 (to replace the burnt one), Kuhmoinen in 1784-1785, Teisko in 1787-1788, Nurmijärvi in 1793 and Tyrväntö in 1799-1800. Orivesi Church burned down for the second time in 1958; the others have survived. Matti Åkerblom was assisted by his nephew Matti Åkergren (1752-1839), who later became a church builder. **Matti Åkerblom** died in Orivesi in 1819.

Pekka T. Rajala

We Congratulate

Many members of our Order will, in the near future, celebrate their birthday. We congratulate them and wish them many happy years to come.

93 v

Jäppinen Kyösti 11.8

92 v

Heikkilä Harri 29.12

90 v

Vikström John 1.10

85 v

Kettunen Ilkka 12.9

Leino Arno 13.12

80 v

Mahrberg Teuvo 5.7

Kero Pentti 29.7

Soininen Kari 16.8

Marttinen Erkki 17.8

Pääkkö Erkki 26.8

Svedberg Olof 30.8

Modin Sven 13.10

Kvist Hans-Olof 27.10

Ehrnrooth Martti 2.11

Numminen Antti 11.12

75 v

Anttila Juhani 21.7

Riekkinen Wille 21.7

Vaiste Heikki 17.8

Mikkola Tapio 20.9

Sistonen Juhani 8.10

Rosenholm Jarl 20.11

Davenport Peter 26.11

70 v

Martens Johannes Josef 10.7

Meade Charles 15.9

Sarho Antti 19.9

Junttila Rauli 25.9

Kongler Wolfgang 20.10

Salumäe Tiit 25.12

60 v

Barattini Eugene 6.7

Meyer Robert 29.8

Pynnönen Mika 6.10

Räsänen Antti 1.12

Salminen Markku 31.12

50 v

Langes-Swarowski Diana 9.9

Mouzakis Dionysos 13.9

Bister Jan Fredrik 7.10

Asikainen Pekka 8.10

Mannermaa Kari 24.12



COMING OCM EVENTS

- 24-25.9.2021 Investiture and annual meeting of Exarchate of Sweden in the city of Nyköping
- 11.9.2021 General Assembly and Knights Day of Bailiwick of Austria at Reichersberg Abbey in Upper Austria
- 14-15.2022 National Knights' Day of Exarchate of Finland in the city of Kouvola
- August 2022 International Convention, Exarchate of USA
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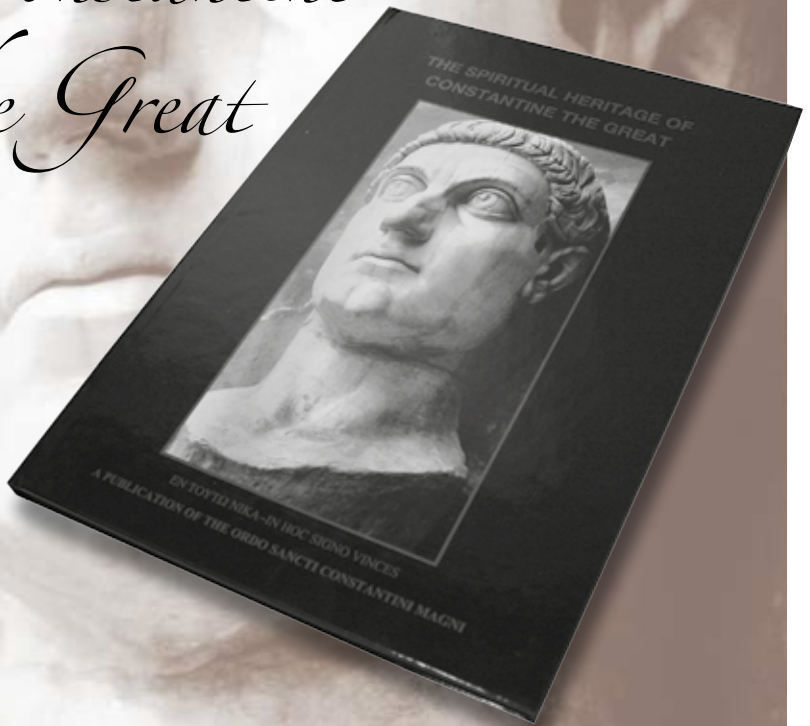
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