

# Saint John of Rila, pray for us!


This is the famous Rila Monastery in Bulgaria.



The Children's Word is a weekly bulletin for Orthodox Christian young people. Copyright 2022 Alexandra Houck.  
Email is [orthodoxchildrensword \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:orthodoxchildrensword@gmail.com). Find it each week at [myocn.net](http://myocn.net).

# The Children's Word

"Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them, for to such is the Kingdom of Heaven." Mark 10:14

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## Growing...in Christ



**Did you ever wonder what you'll** look like when you are all grown up? Or what you'll be? Or how you'll spend your time? Maybe you've wondered what kind of person you'll grow up to be.

Today we hear the parable of the sower, the man who planted seeds. He probably wondered how these seeds would grow. He probably hoped they would grow up to be strong and healthy plants, don't you think? Some of those plants didn't do so well, but some of them grew and grew. They grew into strong and healthy plants with lots of grain to be picked.

We can learn a lot from this story, but most of all we can learn how we can make *ourselves* grow. Right now, you are just starting to grow! You are just starting to grow into a strong and healthy Orthodox Christian. You probably know that you have a lot to learn and do. But did you know that you'll be learning about our Lord, and doing things for our Lord *all* your life? When you are a Christian, you are always growing. You are growing closer to God, and you're becoming a strong and healthier Christian.

Let's remember that growing doesn't stop when we're done with Sunday School, or even when we grow up and leave home. As Christians, we can always be growing. We can grow by doing good things for other people, reading the Bible, going to Church, learning about the saints, and more!

## WORD SEARCH

Can you find these words in the jumble?

Bulgaria  
Faith  
Growing  
Learn  
Monastery  
Prayer  
Rila  
Saint  
Sower

H	K	R	F	G	O	J	V	W	P	I	Q	D	G	B
Z	H	L	R	A	U	G	D	D	R	H	Y	R	G	Z
Y	K	U	C	N	I	D	W	S	A	R	I	B	J	J
B	C	W	Z	P	U	T	S	I	Y	R	W	V	F	M
I	M	O	H	R	A	E	H	P	E	U	S	K	O	I
X	I	X	C	O	F	H	G	P	R	P	R	N	B	R
D	T	B	D	V	R	N	I	B	K	U	A	I	M	D
W	S	Q	V	W	I	G	Y	R	I	S	Q	M	W	O
T	L	M	K	W	O	T	I	P	T	M	E	O	K	C
G	L	K	O	B	Q	L	N	E	W	H	F	Y	R	R
U	Q	R	F	V	A	U	R	I	G	C	U	S	V	E
D	G	X	P	Z	A	Y	L	E	A	R	N	J	N	W
M	I	U	B	G	I	R	X	E	E	S	A	A	R	O
J	H	T	X	A	I	R	A	G	L	U	B	H	R	S
Q	Z	C	N	M	M	J	A	K	D	S	N	F	G	N

## WHAT'S IN AN ICON?

An icon on a coin!

Here is an icon of Saint John of Rila on the Bulgarian coin (1 lev). It is worth about 50 cents.

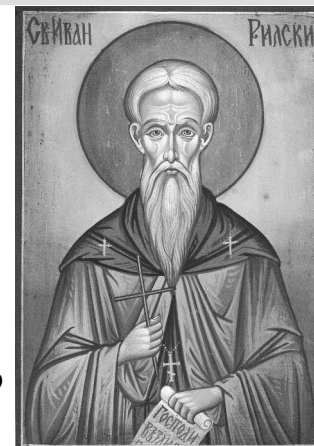
You can see that Bulgaria really loves Saint John!



## BULGARIA'S FAVORITE SAINT

### SAINT JOHN OF RILA

**Do *you* have a favorite saint?** A holy person who loves God very much? Maybe you pray to him or her more than to any other. Well, the people of the country of Bulgaria have a favorite saint. They name their churches after him, they put his icon on their money, they pray to him because he was one of them!



Saint John of Rila was once a simple cowherd, who lived near what is now Sofia, Bulgaria. John loved God so much that he wanted to find a way to grow closer and closer to Him. So he moved to the Rila mountains, to the wilderness. He wanted to live all alone so he could pray and fast and love God's beautiful world. That was Saint John's plan, but people began to find out about this holy man, and they wanted to be close to him too! Soon, more and more people would visit him, asking for his prayers and his advice.

Once, even King Peter of Bulgaria came to see him. John was so humble though, that he refused to meet the king. Instead, they bowed to each other from far away. He gave away most of the gifts the king gave him, and he told the king that he needed it more—so the king could help the poor.

For many years, the people of Bulgaria had a hard time as Christians. But they have always loved Saint John, and many people still pray to him as one of their real heroes!

**We celebrate St. John on Wednesday, October 19th (OC: November 1st).**