



Matushka Juliana Schmemann has fallen asleep in the Lord

Matushka Juliana was born to a family of White Russian émigrés and was raised and educated in France. In 1951, she and Father Alexander moved to New York, where she began a long teaching career at the Chapin School, the Spence School and the Brearley School.

In 1977, she was appointed headmistress of Spence, on East 91st Street. A serious illness compelled her to resign in 1981, but once recovered, she joined the faculty of Brearley, where she remained until her retirement. She is warmly remembered by many generations of women whom she taught French and Russian, and to whom she was always “Madame Schmemann.” The French government awarded her the *Palme d’Argent* medal for service to French culture.

Matushka Juliana was born on October 6, 1923, in Baden-Baden, Germany, where her family, the Ossorguines, found themselves after the Russian revolution. Her son, Serge Schmemann, a member of the New York Times editorial board and for many years a Times foreign correspondent, wrote a book, “Echoes of a Native Land,” tracing 200 years of Russian history through the former estate of the Ossorguines south of Moscow. Her family soon moved to Paris, where she attended the College Sainte Marie de Neuilly outside Paris and the University of Paris-Sorbonne, where she earned a licence ès lettres degree in classics. In 1943, she married Alexander Schmemann, a priest and widely acclaimed theologian who became Dean of Saint Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, Yonkers, N.Y, and played an instrumental role in founding the Orthodox Church in America. Father Alexander fell asleep in the Lord in 1983.

In retirement, Matushka Juliana was active in Church affairs and wrote two books, “My Journey With Father Alexander” and “The Joy to Serve,” which discussed the challenges of being an Orthodox Christian in the modern world. She travelled all over the country lecturing to women’s groups.

Matushka Juliana is survived by three children: Matushka Anne Hopko, Ellwood City, PA; Serge Schmemann, Paris, France; and Matushka Mary Tkachuk, Bronxville, NY; nine grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren; and four great great-grandchildren.

Visitation will begin at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 2, at Holy Trinity Church, 46 Seymour Street, Yonkers, NY, where the Funeral service will be celebrated at 7:00 p.m. The Divine Liturgy will be celebrated at Holy Trinity Church at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, February 3. A Panikhida and interment will follow at Saint Tikhon’s Monastery, South Canaan, PA.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Matushka Schmemann’s memory may be made to the [Justin Solak Foundation](#). Justin was a beloved great-grandson who reposed a year ago.

May Matushka Juliana’s memory be eternal!