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Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

The “Holy Monastery Of The Holy Fathers” in Azogyre and its legend



Azogyre is located northeast from Paleochora, highly in a water-rich mountain region in the midst of cypresses, pines, plane and olive trees; you find a description of the way to the mountain village Azogyre in our leaflet No. 124-05/E. The monastery (see picture below) one reaches by turning right at the village entrance (signposted. See fig. title bar). Here, a about 600 m long time and very narrow and slender runway leads up to a „parking lot“ (at an olive press) in front of a narrow bridge; over these (through a pine alley; see picture) one reaches the monastery and the monastic within one minute footpath. Coordinates: N 35° 27039, E 23° 72102.



Half built in the rock the church *Agii Pateres* stands in the monastery area, where one of the holy fathers should have preached. Above the church a small cave sanctuary is located in the rock, in the monastic yard the tomb of a resistance fighter against the Turks. Beside the church is a small museum with remnants (Cretan traditional clothing, weapons, documents etc.) and pictures of the Cretan history from 1770 to 1945. Following pictures point to impressions from the area of the monastery. The “monastery area“ is always openly, however the buildings and the museum are usually locked; for an inspection of the church and the remaining building parts one must ask in the tavern „Alfa“.





About the legend of the “99 Holy Fathers”

Based on the legend, the 99 fathers came, under guidance of the Holy John, from Egypt, Cyprus and Turkey. The first place in Azogyre, where they established themselves, was below a large plane tree (see picture). At first the fathers slept within the cave ranges, in where today the church is located. John himself slept in a cave above the place; therefore see our leaflet at: [http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/124-05E.pdf] One day John decided to leave towards north to the peninsular Akrotiri at Chania and to live there as an eremite: therefore see our leaflet at: [http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/042-04E.pdf] and in addition the leaflet at: [http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/038-04E.pdf]. Thereupon the holy fathers moved into the “Soure cave“ (see Link above), in which their leader had past the night before. Before Johns left, the fathers swore, that as soon as one of them dies, all others would also die.

Johns lived in the mountain region on Akrotiri and protected him selves against cold weather with fur capes. A farmer discovered him in the dawning light in bent attitude and thought he was a wild animal, which ate the supplies away from him. He shot with bow and arrow at the alleged animal and hit John, who back-dragged himself heavily hurt into his cave. The next day the farmer followed the trail of blood. He found John dying at the soil of the cave and recognized that he had hit a holy man. He asked for forgiveness and John did this but only on the condition that he should go to his brothers to Azogyre and communicates that he is dying - and that they should die with him. The farmer did this - nevertheless as he arrived in Azogyre, the fathers already were died all together on the same day...!

