

DIOCESE OF SOUROZH  
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH  
CATHEDRAL OF THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD  
AND ALL SAINTS

67 ENNISMORE GARDENS, LONDON SW7 1NH

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# CATHEDRAL NEWSLETTER

## OCTOBER 2015

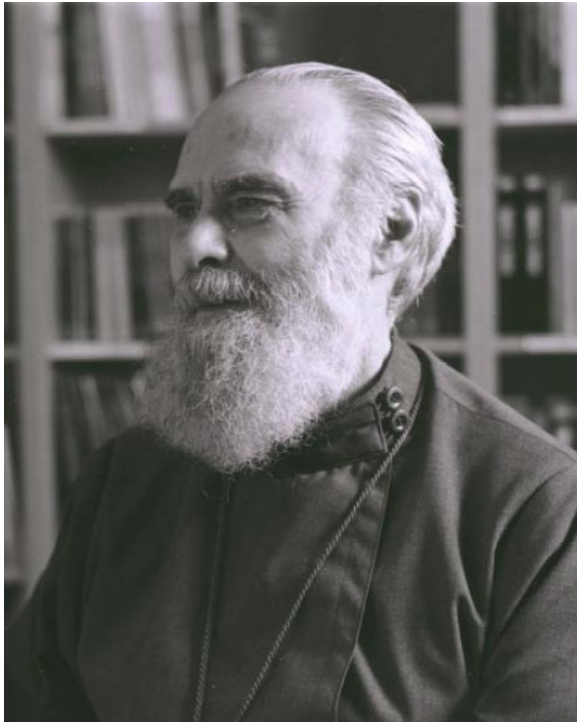


### THE FEAST OF THE PROTECTING VEIL OF THE MOTHER OF GOD (1/14 OCTOBER)

**Troparion.** *Today the faithful celebrate the feast with joy / illumined by your coming, O Mother of God. / Beholding your pure image we fervently cry to you: / "Encompass us beneath the precious veil of your protection; / deliver us from every form of evil by entreating Christ, / your Son and our God that He may save our souls."*

**Kontakion.** *Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church / and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. / Angels and Bishops worship, / Apostles and prophets rejoice together, / since for our sake she prays to the pre-eternal God.*

## THE AIM OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE



In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

Time and again we ask ourselves what is the aim of the Christian life: what can we do to be true Christians? A simple, but very realistic reply is to say "Fulfil all the commandments, and you will be a Christian".

And yet, we may fulfil all the commandments, we may feel that we are right before God, but if our heart is not in what we do, we have not done what a Christian is called to do, to be, because the commandments which Christ left us are not drilling orders. In the commandments He reveals to us what we should do if our heart were pure, if we

communed with God, if we were true to ourselves. These are the things — He says — that should become natural to you, and therefore, you can judge yourselves by comparing not your deeds to the commandments, but your heart to the inspiration that would make them natural. And so it is not simply by doing things that this is achieved, but by becoming the kind of person for whom these things are their true nature; in other words, by willing to be the true, undistorted image of Christ.

But where do we begin then? It is easy to be doers — how can we change our hearts, how can we find inspiration indeed to do it? If we think of God, if we think that God has so loved us that, to use the words of Saint Paul, He came to save us while we were still His enemies; that He gave his life that we may live free from evil; then what should be our first reaction, our first response? I think, at that level we should say, "Let my whole life be evidence to God that I have understood: understood that He believed in me and felt it was worth giving His own life for me, that He hoped that I would respond, and He loved me unto life and unto death."

If we have understood this, not only the love of God, but the faith He has in us, the hope He has placed upon us, then our first step should be to build our life in such a way as to be a joy for God; if we only could think of our lives as a way of giving God a little joy — not the exulting joy of perfect victory, but a joy which a mother, a father, a guide has when a child, a youth, a grown up man or woman says, "I do understand, I have understood, and now all my life I will strive to show my understanding". And showing our understanding of God's love, of God's faith and hope does not consist in

singing praises to Him; it consists in making all our life a hymn of gratitude, so that seeing what we do, how gradually we become new people, how our hearts, full of gratitude and of joy, make us shine with an inner light, then we will have begun on our spiritual life.

There is a passage in the Gospel, in which we are told, "Let your light so shine before men that seeing this light they may give glory to the Father Who is in Heaven..." What is this light which we must reveal, unveil, let freely shine around us? It is not our own light, it is not manifesting our intelligence, our human warmth, our talents; it is becoming so filled with what is God's, so transparent to His light, that His light may shine freely, and not be kept, as it were, in the darkness of our soul. Again, – it is the only way we can cast light, share light with others, because our talents, our intelligence, our hearts, may well be below those of others, while this light is life, this light is enlightenment, this light can help others to become new.

So let us begin with simply being actively grateful to God, – actively grateful: not emotionally, but in deed, to the core of our being, in every thought, in heart, in our will and action. Amen

## A DAY FULL OF PRAYER –

### A PILGRIMAGE TO ST SILOUAN THE ATHONITE

In the early morning rain on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> September, our small group of pilgrims gathered by the Cathedral of the Dormition. The bus took us to St John the Baptist's Orthodox Monastery in Essex, to attend a special service on the Feast day of the venerable St. Silouan the Athonite, who is revered by many and was a saint, a God-bearing Father and a spiritual teacher of the founder of the monastery Archimandrite Sophrony (Sakharov).

Two hours on the road flew by very quickly, thanks to non-stop prayers, reading the Akathist to St Silouan and singing Marian hymns. Pilgrims used to travel to holy places on foot while continuously praying. Nowadays, modern transport might help us conquer the physical distance; however, we still need prayer to help us achieve the right state of mind.

At the monastery we were greeted by the novices, who had been informed that there would be more guests and pilgrims than usual that day, and by Fr. Joseph Skinner who had arrived there slightly earlier. For many of us, meeting the monks and nuns of the monastery was as joyful as meeting close friends or relatives. We heartily thanked



them for such a warm welcome. Our group, together with the choir, the monks and many other worshippers praised the Lord during the Divine Liturgy, prayed that Fr Sophrony's soul would rest in peace and also offered prayers during the Moleben at the church of St Silouan the Athonite.

After the Divine Liturgy, the weather suddenly changed: from then on, it was not just the hospitality of the novices that was brightening our stay in the monastery, but the September sun too. That day may truly be called a day of prayer, full of God's grace that we received by visiting St Silouan and the monks who gave their guests such a warm welcome.

*By Julia Pliauksta*

*(Translated from Russian by Tatiana Salmon and Richard Hill)*

## **'QUESTION TIME' with Father Joseph Skinner**



A regular English talk with Fr Joseph Skinner in the Cathedral's Library was held in a different format on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September - it was a lively hour-and-a-half discussion where both English and Russian speaking parishioners were able to ask questions of concern because 'everyone has a question about the church'. Questions discussed included faith and superstitions, living together before marriage and meeting a potential spouse.

*How to overcome superstitions?*

Many churchgoers still worry about superstitions: how to handle candles, where to put them, how many to buy etc. Fr Joseph explained that the foundation of all superstitions is attempting to control the uncertainty and the fear of the unpredictable. 'It is a natural human tendency to want to make sense of life and, the basis of such understanding, to control it.'

*What is the difference between faith and superstition?*

Fr Joseph answered that with faith, there is a personal relationship involved - 'If I say, "I believe in you", it does not mean that I'm convinced that you exist, it means I trust you.' This is not the case with superstitions which are all false beliefs not attached to a specific person. Fr Joseph compared our life to an equation where there is the will of God on one side and our own will on the other. For us to be truly happy and fulfilled the two have to coincide - we have to accept the will of God and go with it. Because we are free, we are not obliged to do this, but it is in our best interest.

*Most couples live together before marriage. Is it a sin?*

The answer was that we need to start with the question what is sin. Sin, in the understanding of the Church, is not simply breaking God's rule, it is failing to become

what we are called to be. Interestingly, the Greek word for 'sin' - *hamartia* - means 'missing the mark'. Fr Joseph explained that marriage is a relationship between man and woman, blessed by God. It is a very deep and sacred thing and concerns the salvation of both partners together. But there are certain conditions for it to be possible, such as unconditional commitment, trust and fidelity.

In a relationship of people who just live together, the missing link is commitment. 'It is open-ended and it's not clear where it's going', said Fr Joseph. It is also not in the best interest of people involved, especially the woman. A question was asked whether it was possible to have a church wedding ceremony if either or both partners were over a certain age. Fr Joseph said that, in most cases, the church allows marriage if a woman is below 60 and a man is below 70.

*How does the church view contraception?*

In principle, the Church does not approve of contraception. Marriage is about the relationship between husband and wife which should reflect the love between God and us. 'This love is designed to be fruitful and to go beyond itself, to be literally life-giving', said Fr Joseph. If we try to block that life-giving aspect of the relationship, we are not fully participating in the divine mystery of love. There can be cases where contraception can be justified or at least tolerated but it should be discussed with a spiritual father.

*How to meet the right spouse?*

Fr Joseph emphasized that young Christians were most likely to meet suitable spouses in their church communities because this is where they can meet people of the same faith and values. Interestingly, speed dating was invented by a Rabbi in the late 1990s to help Jewish singles in Los Angeles to meet each other. The concept was to put young people of the same faith together and this is what happens, or could happen, in church communities. In response to the question, Fr Joseph reminded the audience that the Church does not bless to marry a non-Christian although it can be a non-Orthodox Christian. This is because the ultimate aim of marriage is the spiritual union and joint salvation of husband and wife.

*Archpriest Joseph Skinner is a priest of the Cathedral. The next talk in English will be on 27<sup>th</sup> October at 19.30, TBC.*

*By Tatiana Salmon*

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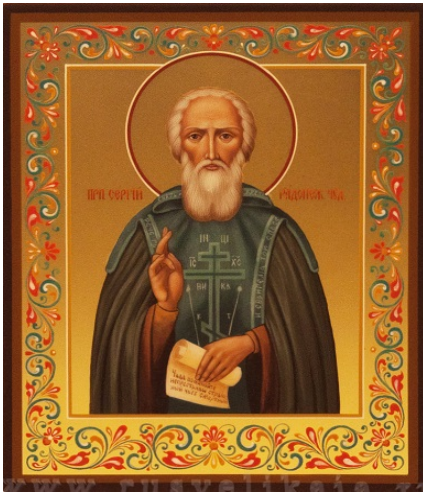


The soul that loves God has its rest in God and in God alone. In all the paths that men walk in the world, they do not attain peace until they draw nigh to hope in God.

(St. Isaac the Syrian, Homily 56, 89)

## RUSSIAN ORTHODOX SAINTS

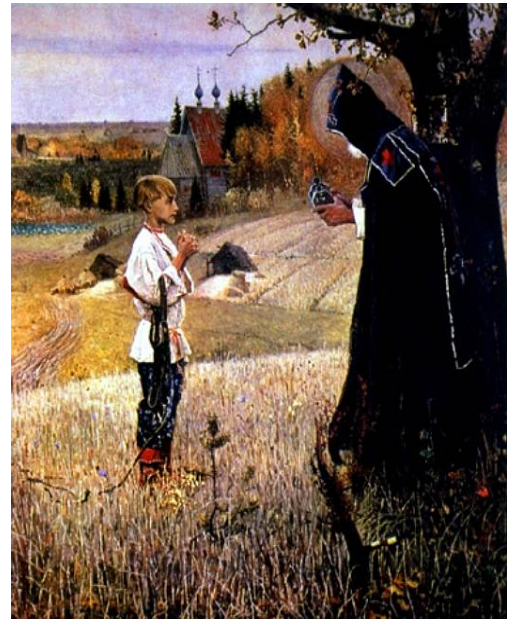
### St Sergius of Radonezh



Venerable Sergius, Abbot and Wonderworker of Radonezh (14 May 1314-25 September 1392, commemorated on September 25<sup>th</sup>/October 8<sup>th</sup>) is one of the most beloved Orthodox saints of Russia. His life for countless generations of pious Orthodox, both young and old, served as a source of spiritual nourishment. And so it can for us, if only we read it not so much with our minds, as with our hearts.

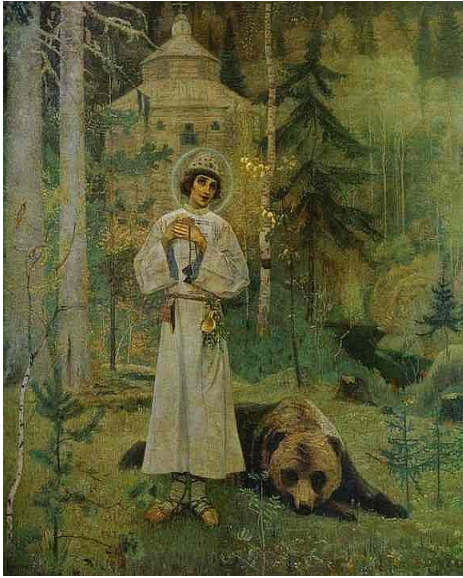
St. Sergius was born in 1314 in Rostov of devout Orthodox parents. Even before his birth, God worked a miracle upon the future saint: while still in his mother's womb he cried aloud three times during the Divine Liturgy.

Baptized with the name Bartholomew, the growing boy was a poor student, unable to learn how to read. He often prayed to God in secret: "O Lord, give me understanding of learning!" One day he met in the fields a holy elder of angel-like appearance who asked, "What are you seeking, my child?" The boy replied that he wished most of all to read and write. Assuring him that for his faith the Lord would give him learning, the elder at the boy's entreaty accompanied him to his parents' house. They all went into the house chapel and the elder told the boy to read aloud from the Psalter. "Father, I do not know how," Bartholomew said. But after the elder commanded him to "Speak the word of God without doubt," the boy began to read easily. Then the elder foretold to the parents that their son would be a dwelling of the Holy Trinity, that he would be great before God and man, and that he would direct others thanks to his virtuous life.



After Bartholomew's parents died, he abandoned the world and, together with one of his brothers, went deep into the forest to build a cell and a small church, dedicated to the Holy Trinity. His brother was unable to remain long with him, so Bartholomew continued in the forest alone. At the age of 23 he received the monastic tonsure with the name Sergius.

Late one night when the Saint was praying, he heard a voice calling 'Sergius'. Opening the window of his cell he beheld a marvellous vision: an extraordinary radiance shone



in the heavens and a multitude of beautiful birds filled the air. He was troubled by wild animals - especially bears. One bear in particular would come to the Saint. Seeing that the animal came only to get some food, the Saint would place a small slice of bread on a log. Sometimes the Saint would give his only slice to the bear.

St. Sergius worked at grinding grain, baking bread, cooking food and making candles, as well as making shoes and clothing for the other monks. Over time, other monks started coming to him to settle in the wild forest.

Each built his own cell and planted his own vegetable garden. All of them gathered in the church for a common prayer. Once after prayer before an icon of the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, he beheld the Most Pure One, together with the Apostles Peter and John. The bright light of the vision was unbearable, and he fell to the ground. But the Mother of God, touching him, promised that she would be with his monastery during his life and afterwards, protecting it.

The older his body grew, the stronger grew his fervour. With the approach of death (which he foreknew) he gathered his flock and delivered a final exhortation. St Sergius passed to the Lord in the year 1392, on September 25, being 78 years of age. After his death the Saint's body gave off an ineffable, sweet fragrance. His face shone white as snow. The Mother of God has kept her promise to St. Sergius. His monastery is one of the last to remain open under the Soviet Yoke, and countless pilgrims still come to venerate his holy and incorrupt relics.

Full article is available here: <http://www.st-sergius.org/life1.html>

*The Holy Trinity Lavra or Troitse-Sergiyeva Lavra (Trinity-Sergius Monastery) is the most important monastery in Russia and the spiritual center of Russian Orthodox Christianity. Founded in 1345 by St. Sergius of Radonezh and containing his relics, Holy Trinity is located in the city of Sergiyev Posad (formerly known by the Soviet name Zagorsk) about 45 miles northeast of Moscow. UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Site in 1993, calling it "a fine example of a working Orthodox monastery."*



*Prepared by Elena Kuzina and Tatiana Salmon*

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## THE SUN IS JERUSALEM

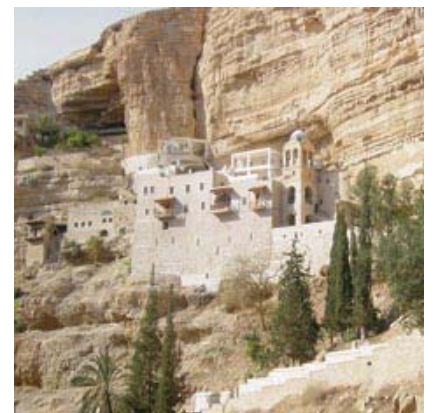
*In 2005, a priest of the Cathedral Fr Dimitriy Karpenko visited the Holy Land. Every year a group of our parishioners goes on pilgrimage to Jerusalem. We are publishing Fr Dimitriy's account in view of the forthcoming trip which will be organized in early November.*



Every man has his native country. It is above all the place where you were born and grew up. Then it is the place where God gave you the opportunity to develop as a person in this life. Sometimes the first of these coincides with the second, but not always. But every Orthodox Christian has, besides his little place of birth, a heavenly place of birth and its name is the Holy Land with the Holy City of Jerusalem. The Holy Land is located in that place on the globe where the state of Israel is now to be found. This land is holy because the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ took place there. And each path, each pebble, reminds us of those holy and great days.

To visit Jerusalem is the dream of every Orthodox Christian. And when this opportunity presents itself, then pray to God that this was not the last time. In Hebrew language one does not say "come" to Jerusalem, but one always says "go up to Jerusalem," and this is important. The most holy place in Jerusalem is the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which is identified as the place both of the crucifixion and the tomb of Jesus of Nazareth. One must not go up to it by car. One must go up by narrow streets through rows of Arab merchants, who continually press you to come into their little shops.

And behold the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. The church is divided into three Christian confessions: Orthodox, Catholic and Armenian. Each has its time for the conduct of the service, but the central altar of the Resurrection of Christ is Orthodox, it is the pulpit of the Jerusalem Patriarch. Some Russian pilgrims are exasperated by the fact that the Russian Church does not have its own separate side-altar, not understanding that we do not need it at all, because we are of the same faith as the Greeks, namely the Jerusalem Church. Entrance to the grotto of the Lord's burial place is preceded by an angel's side-chapel in which there is a throne, on which Divine Liturgy is celebrated and the Lord's grave serves as an altar on it. Countless men and women try to touch this great holy object, and ask the Lord about the most sublime things.





We are often disturbed at the service by some “distracting factors”: someone is not standing properly, is not bowing properly, says something aloud, rustles a package and that is already enough for not even a trace to be left of our “prayerfulness”. The Holy Land teaches patience and attention to the main thing. Often during divine service there suddenly begins a Muslim prayer, which through amplifiers spreads throughout the Old City. And this is a fact which everyone has to accept, even the Jerusalem Patriarch, and through which you begin to understand that one needs to be able to pray everywhere and not just in “comfortable” circumstances.



The main difference between our inhabitants and those of Jerusalem, and indeed the whole of present day Israel and Palestine is that the latter are practically wholly religious. Respect for religious feelings applies to everyone. When a group of our pilgrims make a journey along the Saviour’s way of the cross, which mostly goes along all the same innumerable rows of shops, they do not become an object of ridicule for the completely non-Orthodox inhabitants of Jerusalem. So the experience of the Holy Land tells us that

we undoubtedly do not have the right to mix up our faith with whatever happens, but that does not mean that our attitude towards people of another faith and nationality must be disdainful.

One wants to take something special from the Holy Land, which will always remind you of it. Many people for this purpose collect innumerable stones and other holy objects, but the main thing is a special spiritual state, which one cannot buy at any price, and which is simple: either it is or it is not.

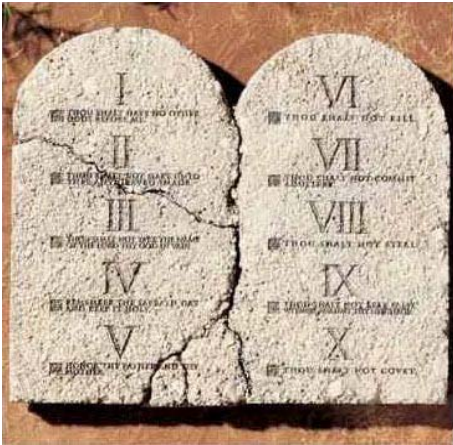
And still more important: the Mother of all Orthodox Churches - the Holy Jerusalem Church - is located among foreign and other faiths. And this does not give it cause to get mixed up in the contemporary world. Due to the numbers of its congregation, the “little” church bears a special purpose of Christian witness in the outside world. Here everything secondary, alien, unnecessary, is rejected so that one concentrates on the chief duty of any Orthodox man - the salvation of his own soul.

*By Archpriest Dimitriy Karpenko (Translated from Russian by John Phillips)*

*Published in number 5-6 of “Noviy Kovcheg” journal for 2005.*

# The Ten Commandments

## The Moral Foundation of Society



The commandments of God can be likened to a bright star which guides us to the Kingdom of Heaven. Among the innumerable ethical laws and rules that regulate human behavior the most concise, clear and important are the Ten Commandments. Although they were written many thousands of years ago when social conditions were drastically different from ours, their importance and authority has not diminished. To the contrary, the more our lives are entangled with

contradictory opinions about what is right and what is wrong, the more we need the clear and unambiguous guidance of our Creator and Law-Giver.

Morally sensitive people have always regarded God's commandments with great esteem and considered them to be an inexhaustible source of wisdom and inspiration. *"Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies ... Great peace have those who love Thy law, and nothing causes them to stumble,"* we read in the book of Psalms (Excerpts from Psalm 119:1, 77, 97, 98, 165).

When comparing the commandments of God to the laws of nature, we can discern some interesting similarities and differences. They both originate from the same Divine Source and complement each other. The difference lies in that, while the laws of nature are compulsory, the moral laws appeal to the will of a free and intelligent spirit. This moral freedom of choice gives us an opportunity to grow spiritually, perfect ourselves and even to become like our Creator. On the other hand this freedom places on us great responsibility and may become dangerous if misused.

A conscious violation of God's commandments leads humans to moral degeneration, spiritual bondage, suffering and even to complete social destruction. A well-known tragedy occurred in the life of mankind when our ancestors Adam and Eve violated God's commandment regarding the tree of knowledge. Because of their transgression, human nature became sinful, and the life of their descendants became filled with crime and misfortune. In other catastrophes, such as the deluge during Noah's time and the devastation of the perverted cities of Sodom and Gomorra, historians strived to find external causes but the Bible reveals to us that the ultimate cause was in the moral degradation of the people. Moral laws are eternal because they reflect the perfection of the Creator, who is eternal and unchanging.

**The reception of the Ten Commandments** is one of the most significant events of the Old Testament. With this event is connected the very formation of the Jewish nation and the beginning of the covenant with God that ultimately led to the creation of the New Testament.

The book of Exodus (chapters 19-20 and 24) tells us that, in approximately 1500 B.C., following the great miracles performed by Moses in Egypt, the pharaoh was compelled to free from slavery the Hebrew people. Led by Moses, the Hebrews miraculously crossed the Red Sea and went south across the desert of the Sinai Peninsula, setting their course towards the promised land. On the fiftieth day after the exodus from Egypt, the Hebrews arrived at the foothills of Mount Sinai and encamped nearby. As Moses ascended the mountain, God appeared to him and said, "*Thus you shall tell the children of Israel: "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My Covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine. And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."*" When Moses repeated to the people what God just said to him, they answered, "*All that the Lord has spoken, we will do*" (Exodus 19:5-8).

Then the Lord instructed Moses to prepare the people for the receipt of the commandments by abstinence, fasting and praying. Moses again ascended to Mount Sinai. On the third day, as a dense cloud covered the mountain, it started shaking. After this, bright lightning flashed, thunder roared and the loud sound of trumpets was heard. All the people from far away observed these events with trepidation.

It was during this awesome appearance that the Lord proclaimed to Moses His Ten commandments and inscribed them on two stone tablets. After descending from the mountain, Moses gave these commandments to the people, and they promised to observe them because they all witnessed the glory and power of God. Then the covenant between God and the Hebrews was established: the Lord promised the Hebrews His mercies and protection, and they in turn promised to Him that they would live righteously. The two stone tablets with the commandments were placed in the "Ark of the Covenant" (a gilded chest depicting cherubim on the lid) as an everlasting reminder of the covenant between God and the Israelite people.

Here is the text of the Ten Commandments:

- 1. I am the Lord your God ... thou shalt have no other gods before Me.**
- 2. Thou shalt not make for thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor serve them.**
- 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.**
- 4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days thou shalt labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.**
- 5. Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and that thy days may be long upon the earth.**
- 6. Thou shalt not kill.**

**7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.**

**8. Thou shalt not steal.**

**9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.**

**10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, nor his field ... nor anything that is thy neighbor's.**

**The Significance of the Ten Commandments.** The Old Testament books contain many laws. With the beginning of the New Testament, the majority of these civil laws as well as many religious rituals had lost their significance and were discarded by the Apostles at their council in Jerusalem (see Acts chapter 15). However, the Ten Commandments, which contain the most fundamental principles of moral life, without which the very existence of human society becomes impossible, were retained and even reinforced in the New Testament. It was because of such importance and inviolability that the Ten Commandments were written not on paper or some other perishable material but on stone.

As we shall see, the Ten Commandments follow a specific plan. They start with the most important and obvious and go to the less important and less obvious. The first four define duties towards God, while the following five define duties towards other people. The last commandment speaks of controlling one's thoughts and desires.

Some similarities can be found between the Ten Commandments and laws of ancient nations and are due to the fact that the moral law is ingrained by God into the human soul, so human beings, even when they don't know God, have a good natural feeling of what is right and what is wrong. If our nature were not corrupted by primordial sin, it is most likely that just the voice of conscience would be sufficient to regulate our personal and social life.

The Ten Commandments express moral duties in a minimal and most general form, thus allowing maximum freedom in the arrangement of one's life's affairs. They are aimed at setting those boundaries which, when transpassed, can damage family and community life. Our Lord Jesus Christ in His sermons often referred to the Ten Commandments and explained their deep spiritual meaning.

*By Bishop Alexander (Mileant).*

*Abridged material from the website <http://www.fatheralexander.org/>*

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*In the following issues of the Cathedral Newsletter, we shall turn our attention to each commandment successively and Bishop Alexander's comments on them in the light of the New Testament.*

## BRITISH SAINTS

### Saint Paulinus of York



*St Paulinus, Rochester Cathedral*

St. Paulinus (feast day is October 10<sup>th</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>), a member of St Augustine's mission to the Anglo-Saxons who became the first bishop of York, died on 10<sup>th</sup> October 644 and was commemorated as a saint on this day. Bede's 'History of the English Church' gives us a wealth of fascinating detail about Paulinus' missionary work in Northumbria after he accompanied Ethelburga, daughter of the king of Kent, when she went to marry the pagan King Edwin.

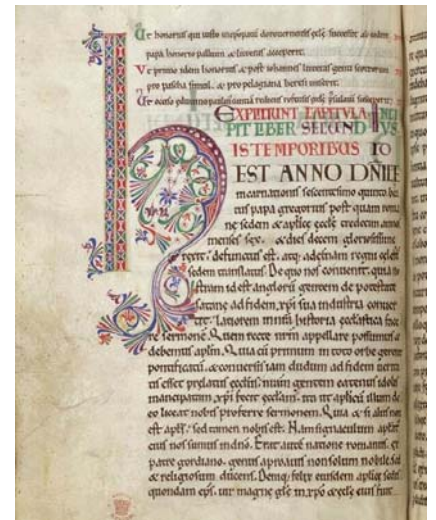
"The king... answered [to Paulinus] that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which he taught; but that he

would confer about it with his principal friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be cleansed in Christ the Fountain of Life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of the new doctrine, and the new worship that was preached? To which the chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered, "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has, as far as I can learn, no virtue in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now if the gods were good for anything, they would rather forward me, who have been more careful to serve them. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we immediately receive them without any delay."

Another of the king's chief men, approving of his words and exhortations, presently added: "The present life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the room wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your commanders and ministers, and a good fire in the midst, whilst the storms of rain and snow prevail abroad; the sparrow, I say, flying in at one door, and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry storm; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, into the dark winter from which he had emerged. So this life of man appears for a short space, but of what went before, or what is to follow, we are utterly ignorant. If, therefore, this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by divine inspiration, spoke to the same effect.

But Coifi added that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God whom he preached; which he having by the king's command performed, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "I have long since been sensible that there was nothing in that which we worshipped; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason I advise, O king, that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." In short, the king publicly gave his licence to Paulinus to preach the Gospel, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ: ...

King Edwin, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of the incarnation of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April, in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, which he himself had built of timber, whilst he was catechising and instructing in order to receive baptism. In that city also he appointed the see of the bishopric of his instructor and bishop, Paulinus.



*A page from Bede's History of the English Church*

So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire of the washing of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen to the royal country-seat, which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechising and baptizing: he instructed the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving word; and when instructed, he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen. Paulinus, for the space of six years from that time, that is, till the end of the reign of that king, by his consent and favour, preached the word of God in that country.

When Edwin was killed in battle on 12 October 633 (or 634), Paulinus and Ethelburga had to flee back to Kent. While Ethelburga went to Lyminge, Paulinus was made Bishop of Rochester; "and held it until he departed to heaven, with the glorious fruits of his labours."

St Edwin, the first Christian King of England, is commemorated as a martyr on Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> / 25<sup>th</sup>. Material was taken from <http://aclerkofoxford.blogspot.co.uk/>

**Diocese of Sourozh has a community dedicated to St Paulinus in Newark, Nottinghamshire at St Mary Magdalene, Market Place, NG24 1JS. The Rector is Fr Gennady Andreev.**

## CATHEDRAL NEWSLETTER 30 YEARS AGO

### Orthodox Youth Journal October 1985 (Newsletter No.179)

It is one of the more unpalatable facts of our parish life that for many of our young people the Church is an irrelevance and an obscurity to be sloughed off once they can safely ignore parental authority. On any given Sunday most of our youth will not be present at the Divine Liturgy and the presence of any at the Vigil is a rarity. Certainly, after adolescent rebellion and self-discovery many will return into the Church; but many will not. The fact is, as I say, unpalatable - but it is so.

Against this background, the publication of an Orthodox Youth Journal by the young people of our diocese is to be welcomed as a weapon to fight minimal commitment and understanding. The journal originates from an idea suggested at the Bristol Youth Conference in December and reflects the two concerns felt strongly at that meeting: education, and mutual support through contacts and information.



The first two issues of the paper are efficiently produced and include several articles which would be of interest to a wider readership than young people alone (Should there not be copies of the journal on sale at the back of our parish churches? At present circulation is by subscription alone.)

In particular, Irina Sokolova's interview with Fr. Kyrill Argenti raises issues touching us all: ecumenism, the divided Russian Church in the diaspora, the theory

and practice of Pan-Orthodoxy. And Margaret Crockett's impressions of the Effingham Conference are admirably perceptive and forceful (you do not have to be a youth to agree with her observation that some meetings feel 'a little too controlled.')

But one point Margaret makes is worth pursuing: she writes of the feeling among the 'younger youth' at Effingham that their spheres of interest were insufficiently heeded. Here I think the Youth Journal also falls down.

We live in a parish some of whose young people cannot name the major mysteries of the church or the orders of priesthood, who cannot give a coherent account of who Jesus is and was. In that context Peter Scorer's telling them that they live in an 'epicletic' community or that Orthodox theology is never 'disincarnate' assumes a level of theological education which simply does not exist. More generally, the paper reads as a well-prepared publication written by - and for - intelligent and well-informed sixth-formers. A broader approach is surely essential for the future.

That said, the Journal is in its early days and its very existence is an indicator of a new enthusiasm which is to be praised and encouraged.

*By Patrick Palmer*

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS



An evening talk (in English) with Sister Vassa Larin – the host of the popular show "Coffee with Sr. Vassa" and author of many scholarly articles on Byzantine liturgy and theology – will be on **Friday October 16<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 p.m.** (all talks are held in the Cathedral's Library). The topic is 'the Word of God in Liturgy and Life'. Everyone welcome!

May we remind you that a regular general meeting of the parish will be on **Sunday October 18<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.** It will consider various questions about the current life of the parish.

A regular English talk with Father Joseph Skinner will be on **Tuesday October 27<sup>th</sup>** after the evening service. The topic is to be announced.

A pilgrimage to the Holy Land will be organised from **3 to 10 November 2015**. To join the pilgrimage to Jerusalem group, please contact Archdeacon Dmitry Nedostupenko on his mobile number 07943711175 or by email: [pilgrimages@sourozh.org](mailto:pilgrimages@sourozh.org).

Next Church Slavonic classes taught by Mikhail Sarni will be on **Mondays, October 19<sup>th</sup> and November 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 7.30 p.m.** New students will be given the summary of the previous sessions and can join at any time. The classroom language is Russian.

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**As you will be aware, the restoration and refurbishment of the Cathedral continues. Any donation, however small, is welcome and will help to maintain and beautify the Cathedral, which is our common spiritual home. You can donate by:**

- Cash to the church collection boxes
- Online via the diocesan website [www.sourozh.org](http://www.sourozh.org) (click «Donate»)
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