

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

DIOCESE OF SOUROZH

CATHEDRAL OF THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

67 ENNISMORE GARDENS, LONDON SW7 1NH



# *Souroz h Messenger*

November 2017, No 5

*The 100th Anniversary of the Restoration of the Patriarchate in the Russian Orthodox Church*



*Troparion*

*Tone 3*

*Chosen by God in a turbulent time, thou didst glorify God in complete holiness and love; / thou didst attain greatness through humility / and show forth the power of God through simplicity and piety; / thou didst lay down thy life for the Church and her people. / O Holy Confessor and Patriarch Tikhon, / pray to Christ God, with Whom thou wast crucified, // that He now save the land of Russia and thy flock,*

*Kontakion*

*Tone 2*

*A gentle manner adorned thee, / thou didst show kindness and compassion to those who repented; / thou wast firm and unbending in confessing the Orthodox Faith and in loving the Lord, / O Tikhon, Holy Hierarch of Christ. / Pray for us that we may not be separated from the love of God // which is of Christ Jesus, our Lord.*

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*Dear Readers,*

*We are happy to inform you that the Media and Publishing Department of the Diocese of Sourozh now has an online store, Sourozh Publications, where you can obtain the publications of the diocese. You can subscribe to the English or Russian editions of Cathedral Newsletter, and purchase the diocesan journal 'Sourozh' and the Diocesan Calendar and Lectionary. For prices and full information please visit the store at <https://sourozh.myshopify.com>.*

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*Message of His Holiness KIRILL, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Archpastors, pastors, deacons, monastics and all faithful children of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Occasion of the 100th Anniversary of the Local Council of 1917-1918*

*Most Reverend Archpastors, honourable presbyters and deacons, pious monks and nuns, dear brothers and sisters!*

*This year marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the work of the Local Council of 1917-1918, which became a most important landmark in the history of Russian Orthodoxy.*



The All-Russian Council 1917-1918

*Notwithstanding the past century that separates us from the events of that era, the significance of the Local Council of 1917-1918 has not yet been fully understood and appreciated by church people. I am deeply convinced that its legacy requires serious and thoughtful examination and that many of the ideas that were expressed then would prove to be useful and necessary today. Great effort is currently being put into the dissemination of knowledge about the activity of the Council: in particular, the first thorough scientific edition of the Council documents is in preparation, something which is extremely important for preserving the memory of this truly great event that took place at the turn of the century.*

*The Council had a prolonged period of preparation during which information was gathered and the opinions of hierarchs, theologians, canonists and historians on a wide range of questions concerning church life were sought. The most vital and controversial subjects were discussed in both the ecclesiastical and secular press. Many articles were published, setting the tone and determining the course of the subsequent discussions.*

*Several years before the Council a special organ was established, the Pre-Conciliar Presence, the purpose of which was to gather*

*together the essential data required for the proper organisation of the discussion of topical matters. The currently functioning Inter-Council Presence of the Russian Orthodox Church is a spiritual heir of this organ, which by its very nature was an expression of the conciliarity (sobornost) of the Church. Not only hierarchs, but also clergymen and lay people participate in its work. The documents prepared by the members of the Inter-Council Presence with the help of a wide public discussion are presented for further consideration by the Holy Synod or the Bishops' Council, signifying thereby the evident triumph of the spirit of conciliarity in the life of Russian Orthodoxy today. For various reasons by no means all of the decisions that were taken a century ago were implemented. The most obvious hindrances were the Civil War that unfolded after the revolutionary events and the following unprecedented persecution of the Church and its faithful people.*

*We now carry out our service under completely different historical conditions. By the mercy of God the majority of our fellow citizens do not bear the experience of persecution for confession of faith. Today we can prayerfully consider the results of the conciliar activities and give an answer to the question of why, in the face of multiple impediments, certain resolutions were implemented and found their place in the life of the Church, whereas others on the contrary turned out to be unworkable and were not assimilated by the church consciousness.*

*Many of the participants of the Council witnessed to their fidelity to the Gospel by a martyr's death, or by the spiritual feat of confession of the Faith, thereby giving us, their descendants, an example of steadfastness and courage in the face of trials. It is for us act in accordance with the words of Scripture that call us to honour those who laboured before us in the Lord's field, considering the outcome of their lives, and to imitate their unflinching trust in Christ (Heb. 13,7), to the end that we should not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but should be firm in faith, rendering glory to God (Rom. 4,20).*

*Amen.*

*+ KIRILL*

*PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA*

*Moscow*

*Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God 2017*

**ENGLISH VERSION OF  
PATRIARCH KIRILL'S  
BOOK "THE MYSTERY OF  
REPENTANCE" PRESENTED IN  
LONDON**



On September 22, 2017 Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate Department For External Church Relations (DECR) presented the English version of the book by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia entitled ‘The Mystery of Repentance’, at the residence of the Russian ambassador to Great Britain.

Among the attendees were the Russian Ambassador to Great Britain A. Yakovenko, Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain (Patriarchate of Constantinople), Metropolitan Kallistos of Diocleia (Patriarchate of Constantinople), Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh; Bishop Angelos, head of the British diocese of the Coptic Church; Metropolitan Mor Athanasius Dakkama (Syriac Jacobite Church), Archbishop Joseph Adams, Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain;

Bishop Jonathan Goodall of Ebbsfleet; clergy of the Local Orthodox Churches, and representatives of public and scientific, cultural and business circles.

Opening the presentation, Metropolitan Hilarion noted that the book by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, ‘The Mystery of Repentance’, has been published in English for the first time. It contains the Patriarch’s sermons on the Four Gospels and the Passion Week. ‘His Holiness Patriarch Kirill is an outstanding master of the spoken word. In these sermons he never repeats himself – each time the subject is expounded anew’, His Eminence pointed out.

‘In this book, His Holiness the Patriarch expounds the Church’s teaching on the spiritual struggle that the Orthodox faithful wage during their lifetime, especially during Lent. I am sure that the book will be of benefit to all readers’, the Metropolitan stressed.

The English translation of the book was made by Archpriest Christopher Hill. It was published by the Department





the Moscow Patriarchate with the support of the St. Gregory the Theologian Charity and the Russian World Foundation.

Concluding the presentation, Metropolitan Hilarion expressed special gratitude to all who participated

in the publication of this book. After the presentation, there was a reception in honour of the participants.

***DECR Communication Service:***

***<https://mospat.rulen/2017/09/23/news-news150399/>***

### **DECR CHAIRMAN SPEAKS AT INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON CHRISTIAN FUTURE OF EUROPE**

On 22 September 2017, an international symposium on the Christian Future of Europe was held at the residence of Russia's Ambassador to Great Britain. The meeting was organised by the Embassy of the Russian Federation to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Mr. Alexander Yakovenko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Great Britain, delivered an opening address.

On behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, presented Mr. Yakovenko with the Order of St. Sergius of Radonezh, 3rd class.

Metropolitan Hilarion delivered the keynote speech. Bishop Jonathan Goodall also addressed the participants in the meeting, noting that even as



the minority Christians are called to transfigure the world around them.

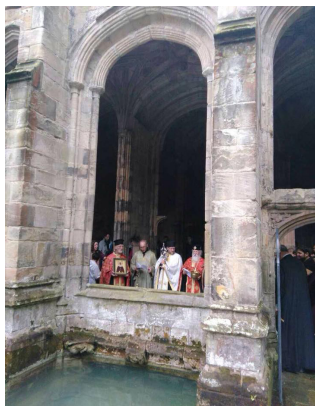
During the discussion that followed Metropolitan Hilarion and Bishop Goodall answered questions from the audience.

Among those in attendance were Archbishop Gregorios of Thyateira and Great Britain (Patriarchate of Constantinople), Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia (Patriarchate of Constantinople), Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh, Bishop Angaelos, General Bishop of the Coptic Church in the United Kingdom, Metropolitan Mor Athanasius Touma Dakkama (Syrian Orthodox Church), Archbishop Edward Joseph Adams, Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain, as well as diplomats and scholars.

***DECR Communication Service***

***<https://mospat.rulen/2017/09/23/news-news150374/>***

## Diocesan News



### CELEBRATIONS IN HONOUR OF HOLY MARTYR ST WINIFRED

On 7th October, services of celebration were held at the chapel of St Winifred (+630) situated above her holy spring at Holywell in North Wales. Traditionally, on the first Saturday of October, Orthodox clergy of the Local Churches represented in the north of England celebrate the Divine Liturgy and take part in a procession with the holy relics of St Winifred. With the blessing of the



Dean of the parishes of the Diocesan Region of Northern England and Wales, Priest Dmitry Nedostupenko, the Russian Orthodox Church was represented in the celebrations by Deacon Anatoly Vikhrov together with a group of pilgrims from the stavropepic parish of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin in Manchester.

### PATRONAL FEAST IN MANCHESTER

On 14th October, the stavropepic parish of the Intercession of the Holy Virgin, Manchester marked its patronal feast. The Divina Liturgy was led by Archbishop Elisey of Sourzh. Concelebrating with his Eminence were, Priest Dmitry Nedostupenko, Dean of the Diocesan Region of Northern England and Wales,





(Antiochian Patriarchate), clergy of the Diocese of Sourozh, Archpriest Michael Gogoleff, Archpriest Andrew Louth, Archdeacon Vadim Santsevich, Deacon Paul Wood, Deacon Sergei Sokolovsky and Deacon Anatoly Vikhrov. Numerous parishioners of Manchester and other cities of the

North of England prayed at the divine service.

At the end of the service, a procession around the church took place. In his sermon afterwards, Vladyka Elisey particularly highlighted the protection of the Holy Mother of God that extends over all people. The Priest-in-Charge of the church, Father Dmitry, thanked Vladyka for his visit and the special solemn and holy atmosphere of the episcopal liturgy in which all participants had shared. At the end of the service, a festive table was laid in the refectory of the church. During the meal, children from the parish Sunday school presented a concert of folk songs and recitations of Russian poetry.

## *Cathedral News*

### **FR VADIM ZAKREVSKY TRANSFERS TO THE DIOCESE OF KORSUN**

At the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, 5th November, Archbishop Elisey announced that Archpriest Vadim Zakrevsky would henceforth be serving in the Diocese of Korsun, which covers the territories of France, Spain and Portugal. Vladyka Elisey thanked Fr Vadim on behalf of the clergy and laypeople for the faithful service to God and people which he had been carrying out during the last ten years at the Dormition Cathedral. Fr Vadim said that he would have warm memories of his time serving in the Diocese of

Sourozh, in remembrance of which he was presented with an icon of the Most Holy Trinity that had been blessed on the Lord's Tomb in Jerusalem.





## *Notes on the Church calendar*

### **COMMEMORATION OF THE KAZAN ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD AND THE DELIVERANCE FROM THE POLES**

**October 22/November 4**

The Commemoration of the Deliverance of Moscow from the Poles by the Kazan Icon was established in gratitude for the deliverance of Moscow and all Russia from the incursion of the Polish in 1612. The end of the sixteenth and beginning of their seventeenth centuries is known in Russian history as “the Time of Troubles.” The country suffered the onslaught of Polish armies, which scoffed at the Orthodox Faith, plundering and burning churches, cities and villages. Through deceit they succeeded in taking Moscow. In response to the appeal of His Holiness Patriarch Hermogenes (May 12/25), the Russian people rose up in defence of its native land. From Kazan, the wonderworking icon of the Mother of God was sent to the army headed by Prince Demetrius Pozharsky.

Saint Demetrius of Rostov (September 21/October 4), in his Discourse on the Day of the Appearance of the Icon of the Mother of God at Kazan (July 8), said: “The Mother of God delivered from misfortune and woe not only the



*The Kazan Icon of the Mother of God*

righteous, but also sinners, but which sinners? Those who turn themselves to the Heavenly Father like the Prodigal Son, who make lamentation beating their bosom, like the Publican, who weep at the feet of Christ, like the Sinful Woman washing His feet with her tears, who offer forth confession of Him, like the Thief upon the Cross. It is such sinners whom the All-Pure Mother of God heeds and hastens to aid, delivering them from great misfortunes and woe.”

Knowing that they suffered such misfortunes for their sins, the whole nation and the militia imposed upon themselves a three-day fast. With prayer, they turned to the

Saint Arsenius (afterwards Bishop of Suzdal) and said that if Moscow were to be saved, then people must pray to the Most Holy Virgin. Emboldened by the news, Russian forces on October 22, 1612 liberated Moscow from the Polish usurpers. A celebration in honour of the Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Theotokos (October 22/ November 4) was established in 1649. Even in own day this icon is especially

revered by Russian Orthodox people. The Kazan Icon is also commemorated on July 8/21.

*Source: <https://oca.org/saints/lives/1999/10/22/1103037-commemoration-of-the-kazan-icon-of-the-mother-of-god-and-the-del>*



*The Poles surrender the Moscow Kremlin to Prince Pozharsky in 1612  
(by Ernst Lissner 1938)*

### *For reflection*

The Lord does not show Himself to a proud soul. The proud soul, no matter how many books it reads, will never know God, since by its pride it does not give place for the grace of the Holy Spirit, while God is known only by the humble soul.

**(St. Silouan the Athonite, Writings, III.11)**

## THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. TIKHON'S ELECTION AS Patriarch

In 2017, we mark the centennial anniversary of the tumultuous events that would radically alter the historical course of the Orthodox Church throughout the world, particularly in Russia and North America. The main cataclysmic event that precipitated these changes was the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in late 1917.

The key historical figure for Church life in both North America and Russia at this time was Saint Tikhon the Confessor, Patriarch of Moscow, Enlightener of North America. During his archpastorate in North America from 1898 to 1907, he tirelessly travelled throughout the continent and always made time to meet with local clergy and laity to discuss the most pressing issues of Church life. Out of these gatherings arose the idea of an assembly of clergy and laity from throughout the North American diocese. Held in 1907, this assembly, which would later become known as the First All-American Church Sobor (Council), focused its deliberations on the theme "How to Expand the Mission" and made crucial decisions regarding the administration. This Council was the prototype for the All-American Councils, which continue to be regularly convened as the highest legislative and administrative authority within the Orthodox Church in America.



*Patriarch Tikhon*

Saint Tikhon also laid out a vision for a local, administratively united, autocephalous Orthodox Church in America ministering to all ethnicities. For a decade after Saint Tikhon's departure to Russia, it was only the Russian Church that continued to have hierarchs residing in North America. It was, in part, the events of 1917 in Russia that led to the appointment to North America of hierarchs from other Orthodox Churches throughout the world and the establishment of the various jurisdictions that exist today. While the administrative unity of all the Orthodox in North America has yet to be achieved, there are various efforts towards this goal being undertaken, and the Orthodox Church in America remains steadfast in embracing Saint Tikhon's vision of unity.

After leaving America, Saint Tikhon led the ancient Diocese of Yaroslavl for nearly seven years before he was transferred to Vilnius, Lithuania. After the fall of the Czarist Regime in early 1917, the election of diocesan hierarchs by dioceses was instituted; up to that point, hierarchs were appointed by the Czar upon the recommendation of the Holy Synod. Saint Tikhon, then residing in Moscow after evacuation from Lithuania due to the ravages of World War I, was elected Archbishop of Moscow by a diocesan assembly in June 1917. He was raised to the dignity of Metropolitan in August of that year at the opening of the All-Russian Church Council, which was finally able to convene. This Council had been in preparation for more than a decade, but its convocation was opposed by the Czarist regime. Saint Tikhon was elected chairman of the Council. The most important decision of the Council was the restoration of the patriarchal system of Church governance that had been abolished by Czar Peter the Great two centuries earlier. Saint Tikhon was elected by lot on November 5/18, 1917 to be the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus and was enthroned on November 21/December 4. By then, the Bolsheviks had toppled the moderate provisional government and seized power. Saint Tikhon and the Russian Orthodox Church were soon faced with unspeakable persecution by the new government. He humbly endured the repression

of the Church, but guided it through all difficulties with grace, dignity and wisdom. Although most of the ground-breaking decisions of the All-Russian Council to restructure many elements of Church governance could not be implemented in Russia after the Bolshevik Revolution, the spirit of these decisions continues to influence the structure of Church life within the Orthodox Church in America.

The events of 1917 also would soon create dire consequences for the Church in North America. Communication between the North American Church and Church authorities in Russia became extremely difficult, and even impossible. Funding for the Church in North America from Russia was cut off. The North American Church was left to govern itself. The Second All-American Sobor was convened in 1919 to elect a new ruling hierarch for the North American Diocese. This election of Archbishop Alexander [Nemolovsky] was subsequently confirmed by Saint Tikhon, as was the election of Metropolitan Platon [Rozhdestvensky] three years later. Saint Tikhon continued to take a keen interest in the life of his former diocese in North America and provided fatherly direction to the North American Church to the extent that circumstances would allow.

The oppressive burdens of patriarchal ministry under the totalitarian Soviet regime undermined the health of

Saint Tikhon, and he reposed in the Lord at the age of 60 on March 25/April 7, 1925. It is significant to note that despite controversies and divisions that enveloped the Church in the 20th century, Saint Tikhon was the one uniting figure who was considered irreproachable; he was respected and venerated by all sides. He was glorified among the saints by the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia [ROCOR] in 1981. During the Millennium celebrations of the Russian Orthodox Church held in Moscow in 1988, Metropolitan Theodosius, Primate of the Orthodox Church in America, in an address to the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, urged the Russian Church to officially recognize Patriarch Tikhon as a saint. Some in

Russia, including hierarchs, criticized Metropolitan Theodosius for this public pronouncement, because they felt that the mere mention at that time of the possible glorification of Saint Tikhon by the Moscow Patriarchate could be perilous for the Church in the Soviet Union. However, less than 18 months later - in October 1989 - conditions for the Church in Russia had changed and Saint Tikhon's glorification took place in Moscow.

May the example of Saint Tikhon's holy life and vision continue to guide the Church in the 21st century.

O Holy Father Tikhon, pray unto God for us!

***<https://oca.org/history-archives/100th-anni-st.-tikhons-election-enthronement>***



*Emperor Nicholas II being accompanied by Archbishop Tikhon of Yaroslavl and Rostov in Spassky Monastery (image source - [www.afanasiy.net](http://www.afanasiy.net))*



## *Legacy of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh*

### **PRAYER TODAY**

#### **(A talk with the young people)**

*Metropolitan Anthony's answer to a question asked at Taizé, France, by a group of young people: What value has prayer today for young Christians living in the midst of a secularised world, and what is the concrete way to carry out this prayer? (A rough translation from the French)*

Life and prayer are completely inseparable. A life without prayer is a life which is unaware of an essential dimension of existence. It is a flat life, without depth, a two-dimensional life in space and time. It is a life that is satisfied with the visible, with our neighbour, but with our physical neighbour, in whom we fail to discover the immensity and eternity of his destiny. The value of prayer consists in discovering, affirming and living in accordance with the fact that

everything has a dimension of eternity and of boundlessness.

The world in which we live is not a profane world; it is a world which we know only too well how to profane, but in itself it comes from the hands of God, it is loved by God. The value which God attaches to it is the life and death of his Son, and prayer manifests our recognition of this fact, our discovery of the fact that in the eyes of God every person around us, every thing around us has a sacred value and, being loved by God, becomes precious to us. Not to pray is to leave God out of our existence, - not only God, but all that He signifies for the world He created, the world in which we live.

Now we often think that it is difficult to coordinate life and prayer. This is a complete mistake, resulting from a false idea of life as well as of prayer. We think that life consists of being on the move and that prayer consists in going off somewhere into retirement and forgetting all about our neighbour and our human situation. This is untrue! It is a slander against life and a slander against prayer itself.

In order to understand prayer one must first get into solidarity with the whole reality of man, with his destiny and that of the whole world: assume it totally. This is the essential act which God accomplished in the Incarnation. This is the total aspect of what we call



*Orthodox Youth Camp in Wales.  
Annoushka Carrau, Andre Singer,  
Metropolitan Anthony,  
Elizabeth Reh binder. 1967*

intercession. Ordinarily when we think of intercession we think that it consists of politely reminding God of what he has forgotten to do. Intercession consists of taking a step which brings us to the heart of tragic situations - a step which has the same quality as the one taken by Christ, who became man once for all. It means stepping into the heart of situations from which we can never find our way out again; a Christian, Christ-like solidarity which is simultaneously oriented towards two opposite poles. Christ incarnate, true man and true God, has total solidarity with man in his sin when he turns towards God, and total solidarity with God when he turns towards man. It is this double solidarity which makes us in a sense a stranger to both sides and at the same time united with both sides. This is fundamentally our Christian situation.

You ask, 'What shall we do?' Prayer arises from two sources: either from our wonder at God and the things of God - our neighbour and the world around us, in spite of its shadows; or else from the sense of tragedy, our own, and especially other people's. Berdyaev said: 'When I am hungry it is a physical fact; if my neighbour is hungry it is a moral fact.' That is the tragedy as it appears to us at every moment. My neighbour is always hungry: he is not always hungry for bread, he is sometimes hungry for a human gesture, a glance of affection. And this is where prayer begins, in this

sensitisation to the wonders and the tragedy. As long as this lasts, everything is easy: in wonder we pray easily, just as we pray easily when we are in the grip of a sense of tragedy.

But otherwise? At other times life and prayer must be made one. For instance, get up in the morning, stand before God and say: 'Lord, bless me, and bless this day that is beginning', and then treat the whole day as a gift of God and consider yourself as God's envoy in this unknown which is the new day. This simply means something very difficult - that nothing which happens today will be alien to the will of God: everything without exception is a situation in which God will have placed you in order that you should be His presence, His love, His compassion, His creative intelligence, His courage. And on the other hand, every time you encounter a situation, you will be the one whom God has put there to perform the office of a Christian, to be a particle of the body of Christ and an action of God.

If you do that, you will easily see that at every moment you will have to turn to God and say: 'Lord, clarify my intelligence, strengthen and direct my will, give me a heart of fire, help me.' At other moments you may say: 'Thank you, Lord!' And if you are wise and know how to be thankful, you will avoid the folly that is called vanity or pride, which consists of imagining that one has done something that one could have left undone. It is God who

has done it. It is God who has given us this marvelous gift of having that to do. And when in the evening you present yourself again before God and make a quick examination of the day, you will be able to sing His praises, glorify Him, thank Him, weep over others and weep over yourself. If you begin to connect your prayer to life in this way, the two will never again be separated, and life will be like a fuel which at

every moment is feeding a fire that becomes richer and richer, more and more burning, and which little by little will transform you yourself into that burning bush that is told about in Scripture.

*Source: <http://masarchive.org/Sites/texts/1967-09-02-1-E-F-T-EW00-004TalyzeMeaningOfPrayerInLifeOfYouth.html>*

## *Sacraments of the Church*

*We are printing a series of short texts about the Sacraments of the Church. They are copied from 'An Orthodox Online Catechism', which is based on the book 'The Mystery of Faith' by Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev). They are presented here by the kind permission and blessing of the author.*

### **PART 9. MONASTICISM**

In the Orthodox Church the rite of monastic tonsure has a sacramental character. It is called a 'sacrament' ('mystery') by Dionysius the Areopagite and other early Christian authors. It is also called a 'sacrament' in the rite itself. Like Baptism, it is death to fleshly life and a birth into a new, spiritual mode of existence. Like Chrismation, it is the seal and sign of being elected by God. Like Marriage, it is the betrothal with the Heavenly Bridegroom, Christ. Like Priesthood, it is a consecration for ministry to God. Like the Eucharist, it is union with Christ. As in Baptism, so in monastic tonsure the person receives a new name and has his sins forgiven. He rejects the sinful life and



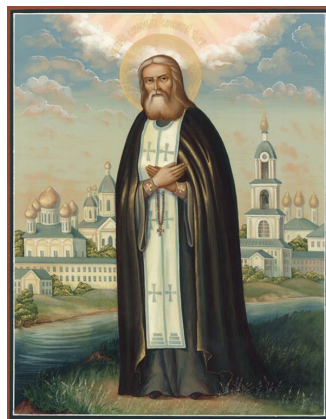
gives vows of faithfulness to Christ; he takes off a secular robe and puts on a new garment. Being born again, the person assumes infancy anew in order to attain 'to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ' (Eph.4:13).

The main goal of monasticism is the imitation of Christ whose way of life as described in the Gospel was altogether monastic. He was not married, was free from earthly bonds, had no roof over His head, travelled from place to place, lived in poverty, fasted, and spent nights in prayer. Monasticism is an attempt to

come as close as possible to this ideal. It is the quest for sanctity, a search for God as the ultimate goal, the rejection of everything that binds one to earth and prevents one from ascending to heaven.

Monasticism is an unusual and exceptional way of life: not many are called to it. It is a life entirely and integrally given to God. The monastic renunciation of the world is not a hatred of the world's beauty or of the delights of life; it is rather renunciation of sins and passions, of fleshly desires and lusts, in short, of everything that entered human life after the Fall. The aim of monasticism is a return to that primordial chastity and sinlessness which Adam and Eve possessed in Paradise. The church Fathers called monasticism 'a life according to the Gospel' and 'a true philosophy'. As philosophers sought perfection along the paths of intellectual knowledge, so monks pursue perfection along the paths of ascetical struggle in imitation of Christ.

The entire philosophy of monasticism is expressed in the following words of Christ: 'If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me' (Matt.19:21); 'If any man would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever will save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it' (Matt.16:24-25); 'He who loves father and mother more than



*St. Seraphim of Sarov*

Me is not worthy of Me' (Matt.10:37). Monasticism is for those who want to be perfect, to follow Christ and to give their life for Him, to sell everything in order to have heavenly treasure. Like a merchant who goes and sells all his possessions in order to buy a pearl, a monk is ready to deny everything in the world in order to acquire Christ.

Monasticism was a part of the Church's life from very early times, but it came to the fore in the fourth century, when persecutions ceased. While during the first three centuries all adherents to Christianity were potential martyrs, in the fourth century the new faith virtually became the state religion of the Roman Empire. Now the quest for martyrdom and sacrifice led people into deep deserts, where ascetics created their 'state within the state'. The deserts of Egypt, Syria and Palestine, once fruitless and lifeless, were watered and populated by monks.

*To be continued.*

## *British and Irish Saints*

### **VENERABLE ILLTYD, ABBOT OF LLANTWIT MAJOR IN WALES AND THE TEACHER OF THE WELSH**

**Commemorated November 6/9**



*A stained glass image of St. Illtyd*

*(All photos in this article are taken from  
[www.orthochristian.com](http://www.orthochristian.com))*

St. Illtyd (better known as Illtud, and also Eltut) lived in the 5th - early 6th century. He knew very well both the Old and New Testaments, as well as all kinds of philosophy and other sciences, and was one of the most learned figures of his age. He was probably born in the first half of the fifth century. His father's name was Bicanus, and his mother's name - Rieingulid. According to one version, he was the

son of a Breton princess and a noble soldier, but according to another, more reliable, tradition his birthplace was Glamorgan in South Wales. Though Illtyd is one of the most venerated saints of Wales throughout its history, few genuine facts about his life survive. The earliest written evidence of him can be found in the life of St. Samson of Dol, one of his spiritual children, and this was composed in c. 600 AD. There is also a medieval life of Illtyd, written in the twelfth century, though it is not a trustworthy source.

In his youth the future saint obtained a brilliant education. His parents wished to dedicate their son to literature - it was said that he had an excellent memory and was very eloquent from a very early age. He chose a military career in his youth, becoming a soldier (according to medieval sources). It is also known that before taking up monasticism, Illtyd was married to a very pious woman called Trynihid. After some years of happy marriage, the couple, following a miraculous event, decided to separate and dedicate the rest of their lives to the service of the Lord. Illtyd's wife probably became an anchoress in the Welsh mountains and lived in holiness, establishing a nunnery and a refuge for women, while her holy husband became one of the



founding fathers of Welsh monasticism. St. Illtyd is referred to in many sources as a disciple of St. Germanus of Auxerre (possibly a distant relative), who instructed and trained him either during one of his two visits to Britain or (which is less probable) in Gaul, where Illtyd came to gain experience in monastic life. St. Illtyd later became a monk and was ordained to the priesthood by Germanus, together with a number of other future saints. In the following years he founded many churches, monasteries and schools in Wales, the most famous of which was the monastery in Llantwit, named Llanilltud Fawr in Welsh, or Llantwit Major in English, literally meaning “the great church of Illtud”.

It was an angel who more than once directed Illtyd to the location of this monastery - in a beautiful wooded valley. The monastery was situated in Glamorgan in the south-east of Wales and today it is in the Vale of Glamorgan county borough. Illtyd became the first abbot of the



*Former monks' dovecote  
in Llantwit Major (14th century)*

monastery and ruled it for many years. Most of the saints of that period came from it. Hundreds of monks lived in Llantwit Major simultaneously and one early source says that at various points altogether some 3,000 brethren led the ascetic life there under the holy abbot Illtyd. Monastic life in this great centre flourished until the Norman Conquest, and it gained fame for teaching Greek, Latin, theology, philosophy, grammar, poetry, rhetoric and mathematics. Indeed, it was one of the finest educational centres in Western Europe at that time and possibly the first centre on such a scale in Britain. At the monastic church under St. Illtyd prayer never ceased - 100 monks prayed and held vigil inside the church day and night.

St. Illtyd was venerated in his lifetime as a great wonderworker on whom the Lord also bestowed the ability to foresee future events. As was the case with many other Celtic saints who imitated the Egyptian, Syrian and Palestinian



*The restored Galilee Chapel  
in Llantwit Major*



*Llantwit Major - inscribed Celtic stones  
in Galilee Chapel*

and to repeat the Lord's Prayer there till the morning. As his life records, the holy abbot of Llantwit devoted his time to manual work, fasting, abstinence, watching, kneeling and praying. He fed the hungry, clothed the naked, healed the sick and visited prisoners. He was filled with hospitality, compassion and humility, and he had no pride in spite of his numerous talents. It was said that solitude was dear to his heart and he spent almost three years absolutely alone in a secluded cave in prayer.

Among the disciples of St. Illtyd we can mention such illustrious early Church Fathers of Wales as St. David of Mynyw, St. Samson of Dol, St. Gildas the Wise, St. Tudwal, St. Paul Aurelian, and St. Maglorius. Many of his disciples later moved to enlighten Brittany and other Celtic regions like Devon and Cornwall. The great abbot-bishop St. Deiniol of Bangor can also be regarded as one of his disciples. A large number of spiritual children of Illtyd were to become celebrated

teachers and missionaries. A multitude of young men from all over Wales, south-west England, Brittany and other regions of France, flocked to his monastery to study and live a holy life, with several princes among them. According to some sources (though they are not always chronologically correct), among close friends and spiritual companions, or perhaps rather spiritual descendants, of this great saint of God were such important figures as St. Cadoc (with whom Illtyd led the ascetic life in seclusion for some time) and Dyfryg (Dubricius). The noted bard of that era, named Taliesin, reputedly went there as well.

The Life of St. Samson, mentioned above, describes St. Illtyd as "the most prominent teacher of the Britons and of the whole of Britain." This is a



*Stained glass image of St. Illtyd*

very important testimony and indeed the influence of this saint greatly contributed to the formation of monastic life, culture, education and learning in the Wales of that era. St. Illtyd closely communicated with wild animals. Thus, once he rescued a stag from King Meirchion who was hunting it. This stag became tame and even delivered timber for the saint on a cart in order to build his church. According to one version, Illtyd reposed in Brittany where he had sent ships with corn in order to support the local population suffering from famine. However, the Welsh tradition claims he reposed in Wales, in his main Llantwit Monastery. Whatever the truth is, the saint had numerous disciples not only in Wales, but also in Brittany. The year of his death is sadly unknown: researchers suggest the early sixth century (either



*St. Illtyd's Church on Caldey Island*



*The stone of a leper in Llanriediana,  
Gower peninsula*

c. 505 or c. 530) as the time of his demise. The saint has been venerated on November 6/19 since then - the day of his departure to the Lord.

Countless churches, chapels, settlements and other objects across Wales were named in honour of Illtyd after his death.

Most of these churches are concentrated in south or south-eastern Wales. One of the very few ancient places dedicated to Illtyd outside the southern districts of Wales is Llanelltyd in Gwynedd in north-west Wales, where there is a twelfth-century St. Illtyd's church near the ruins of Cymer Abbey. A 103-kilometer-long route known as "St. Illtyd's Walk" exists in South Wales in memory of Illtyd. This saint is also venerated in Brittany where he is commemorated by many churches and place names.

Holy Father Illtyd of Wales, pray to God for us!

*Dmitry Lapa*

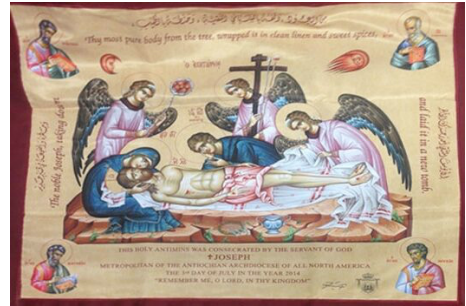
*This article is abridged; you can read the whole text following the link: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/87874.html>*

## EXPLANATION OF THE DIVINE LITURGY - PART 4

*Continued from August issue.*

The last petition of the Augmented Litany refers to those who are active and do good works in the holy, local church (parish), those who minister in it, those who chant and read and serve and the people present who await God's great and abundant mercy. Those who bring offerings and do good works for the church are those faithful who provide the church with all that is necessary for the divine service (oil, incense, prosporas, etc.), those who contribute to the needs of the church and parish with their monetary gifts and with their material goods for the beauty and decoration of the church, and those who help poor parishioners and provide help for other common religious and moral needs as they arise.

The Litany for the Catechumens is then chanted. In it we ask the Lord to have mercy on those preparing to join the Church and to establish them in the true Faith. During this litany the priest unfolds the antimins on the Holy Table, afterwards the catechumens are told to depart from the church building, and the Liturgy of the Faithful begins. The institution of the catechumens has now largely fallen into disuse, but the litany still remains to remind us of the vows we made at Baptism. It also reminds us of our apostolic duty to help others to join the true Church.



The antimins which means “in place of the table” is a special cloth depicting the burial of our Savior that is blessed and signed by the bishop for the performance of the Liturgy. It recalls the time of the persecution of Christians when the Church had no permanent abode and could not carry the Holy Table from place to place. Instead, the antimins was taken to the place where the Liturgy was to be performed. Without it the Liturgy cannot be performed.

### **The Liturgy of the Faithful**

This third part of the Liturgy is the Liturgy of the Faithful. It is so called because only the faithful (those already baptized) are allowed to be present during its celebration. It can be divided into the following sections: 1) the transferring of the honourable Gifts from the Table of Preparation to the Holy Table, 2) the preparation of the faithful for the sacrifice of the Gifts, 3) the sacrifice (changing) of the Gifts, 4) the preparation of the faithful for Communion, 5) Communion, and 6) the thanksgiving after Communion and the Dismissal.



Two short litanies are proclaimed after the catechumens are told to depart from the church:

During these litanies the priest prays: *“Again and oftimes we fall down before Thee and pray unto Thee, O Good One and Lover of mankind, that looking down upon our supplication Thou wouldst cleanse our souls and bodies from all defilement of flesh and spirit; and grant us to stand blameless and uncondemned before Thy holy altar. Grant also to those who pray with us, O God, growth in life and faith and spiritual understanding. Grant them always to worship Thee blamelessly with fear and love, and to partake without condemnation of Thy Holy Mysteries and grant that they may be accounted worthy of Thy Heavenly Kingdom.”*

Then the Cherubic Hymn is chanted. This hymn reminds the faithful that they have now left behind every thought of daily life: offering themselves as a likeness of the Cherubim they are found close to God in Heaven, and, together with the angels, sing the thrice-holy hymn of praise to God. During the Cherubic Hymn, the deacon performs a censuring. The priest in private prayers asks the Lord to purify his soul and heart from an evil conscience and, by the power of the Holy Spirit to make him worthy to offer to God the Gifts which have been offered. Then the priest and the deacon quietly say the words of the Cherubic Hymn thrice.

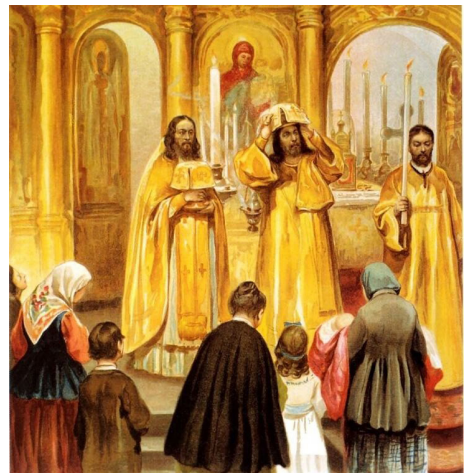
*Let us who mystically represent the Cherubim and chant the thrice-holy hymn unto the life-giving Trinity, now lay aside*

*all earthly cares. That we may receive the King of all who cometh invisibly upborne by the angelic hosts. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

The words of the original Greek for upborne mean literally, “borne aloft as on spears.” This refers to an ancient practice in which a nation desiring to glorify its king would seat him upon their shields, and raising him up, would carry him before the army and through the city streets. The shields were held up on spears, so it seemed that the triumphant leader was carried by spears.

The priest and the deacon then proceed to the Table of Preparation to transfer the precious Gifts to the Holy Table. This procession is called the Great Entrance.

The deacon, with the aer (the large veil) on his left shoulder, carries the diskos on his head, while the priest carries the chalice in his hands. Leaving the altar by the north door (while the choir chants “Let us lay





aside all earthly cares ...”), they come to a stop on the ambo, facing the people. They commemorate the Patriarch, the local ruling bishop, the clergy, monastics, the founders of the church and the Orthodox Christians who are present. They then turn and enter the altar through the Royal Doors, place the precious Gifts on the Holy Table, on the opened antimins, and cover them with the aer. As the choir finishes the Cherubic Hymn, the Royal Doors and curtain are closed.

The faithful stand during this time with bowed heads and pray that the Lord remember them and all those close to them in His Kingdom. After the priest says the words *“and all of you Orthodox Christians, may the Lord God remember in His Kingdom,”* the people reply softly, *“And may the Lord God remember thy priesthood in His Kingdom, always, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.”*

The Great Entry symbolizes the solemn passing of Jesus Christ to His voluntary suffering and death by crucifixion. The priest places the holy chalice and the bread representing the Body of Christ on the Holy Table as if in the grave. The Royal Doors are closed as if they were the doors of the Lord’s tomb. The curtain is drawn as if it were the guard stationed before the Sepulchre.

Commemorating these events, the priest prays: *“The noble Joseph, having taken down Thine immaculate Body from the tree, wrapped It in pure linen and anointed It with spices, and laid It in a new*

*tomb. In the tomb with the body and in hell with the soul, in paradise with the thief and on the throne with the Father and the Spirit, wast Thou, Who fillest all things, O uncircumscribed Christ. More life-giving, and more beautiful than paradise, and truly more radiant than any royal chamber is Thy tomb, O Christ, the fountain of our resurrection.”*

Following the Great Entry is the preparation of the faithful so that they may be worthy to be present during the sacrifice of the Gifts that have been prepared. This preparation begins with the Litany of Supplication:

At this time the priest prays privately:



*“O Lord God Almighty, Who alone art holy, Who acceptest the sacrifice of praise from those that call upon Thee with their whole heart. Accept also the supplication of us sinners, and bear it to Thy holy altar, enabling us to offer unto Thee gifts and spiritual sacrifices for our sins and for the errors of the people. Make us worthy to find grace in Thy sight, that our sacrifice may be acceptable unto Thee, and that the good Spirit*

*of Thy grace may rest upon us and upon these Gifts here offered, and upon all Thy people.”*

In order to be present worthily at the celebration of the Holy Mysteries, the following are absolutely required: peace of soul, mutual love, and the Orthodox (true) Faith, which unites all believers.

After the Litany of Supplication, the priest blesses the people and the deacon exclaims, *‘Let us love one another that with one mind we may confess’*: to which the choir responds, *‘Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: the Trinity, one in essence and undivided’*. The deacon exclaims, *‘The doors! The doors! In wisdom let us attend!’*

The curtain behind the Royal Doors is opened and the celebrant lifts the aer from the precious Gifts, and gently waves it over them in expectation of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

“The doors! The doors!” in ancient times reminded the doorkeepers to watch carefully at the doors of the church, that none of the catechumens or unbelievers enter. These words remind the faithful to close the doors of their souls against the assault of thoughts. The “doors” also reminds us that from this point until the end of the Liturgy no one is to leave the church. The Fathers condemned the transgression of this requirement, writing in the ninth Apostolic Canon, *‘All faithful who leave the church ... and do not remain at prayer until the end, introduce disorder into the church, should be separated from the church community.’*

The words “In wisdom let us attend!” indicate that we should be attentive to the truths of the Orthodox faith as set forth in the Symbol of Faith (the Creed), which is now chanted. In many places it is the custom for all the people to sing it together. This Symbol of Faith was formulated by the First (325 A.D.) and the Second (381 A.D.)



Ecumenical Councils as the framework of truth for the Christian believer. It summarizes the basic dogmas from the vast treasures of Divine Revelation. The belief in the Holy Trinity is confessed in the first eight articles; the remaining four articles refer to the destiny of man related to God’s desire for salvation.

*Adapted from [www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/liturgy\\_e.htm](http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/english/liturgy_e.htm)*



## *Newsletter 30 years ago*

### **NOVEMBER, 1987 HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH**

At the half-yearly meeting of the London parish which took place on November 1st, a number of subjects of importance in the life of the parish were raised. It was good to have Metropolitan Anthony back after his illness, taking the Chair at the meeting. He gave an account of preparations for the millenium celebrations in Russia, the welcome cooperation between church and state, and the proposed activities in this country - Vespers in Canterbury Cathedral during the Lambeth Conference, festive services, lectures, concerts, etc.

The Metropolitan invited Pegeen O'Sullivan to report on the preparation of souvenir items, some of which are already in production - mugs and plaques.

Fr. Michael then spoke about the needs of the choir, saying that a choir twice the size of the usual cathedral

one would be necessary for singing in Canterbury Cathedral and other special occasions. He urged anyone who could sing to offer their services.

The most exciting part of the agenda was the dealt with, first by the Metropolitan, then by Fr. Alexander. The parish has long felt the need of a parish hall, or meeting room that is bigger than the present vestry. There is now a plan to build a hall in the East end of the garden, combined with one or two meeting rooms, a book and record shop, and improved accommodation for Metropolitan Anthony. The parish was shown architectural drawings (by Mikhail Mandrigin) and a small model of the proposed building, so that those present were able to get a clear picture of the project. There remain of course a great number of problems to be solved, but the feeling of those present was of great enthusiasm and hope for the future, even though this is only the first step in a long process.

*Anna Garrett, Churchwarden*

### *For reflection*

You must love every man with your whole soul, but put your hope in the one God, and serve Him alone. For as long as He is protecting us and our friends (the angels) are helping us, our enemies (the demons) cannot inflict evil upon us. But when He forsakes us, the also our friends turn away from us, and our enemies receive power over us.  
**(St. Maximus Confessor, Chapters on Love, 4.95)**

## “THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION DID NOT COME UNEXPECTEDLY”

A talk with Prince Zurab  
Chavchavadze

### Part 2

*- In Soviet times the country achieved many things, beginning with the spread of electricity to homes and buildings (gas pipes to homes, it's true, lag behind) and ending with space exploration and everything else. We can be proud of all this. Could it be that these achievements were made possible by the Soviet government? Sure, it cost many lives as they say, but perhaps these sacrifices were justified?*

- No matter what we think of the Soviet regime it is hard not to recognize the objective successes that it managed to achieve. Those who are fixed on hatred for that regime often say that those successes weren't at all achieved thanks to the Soviet regime but in spite of it, meaning that the people's talents, will, industriousness and enthusiasm did the job despite the helpless government authorities. Nevertheless, it is hard to imagine how we could have completed the daunting task of the “State Commission for Electrification of Russia”, or, let's say, atomic and space programs, without the participation of government authorities.

In my opinion, we need to talk not about the Soviet government's



Prince Zurab Chavchavadze

lack of achievements, which were undoubtedly demonstrated, but about what achievements Russia might have made by, say, 1930, if the revolution had never happened in 1917; meaning: a) If Russia had won World War I; b) If it had not had the civil war, revolutionary terror, the departure and death of precious human resources, hunger, destruction, loss of Church and museum artistic valuables, and so on; and c) if a victorious spirit had overtaken the entire nation and inspired it towards a post-war restoration of the economy!

I can imagine that regardless of the differing opinions about history not having a subjunctive tense, it is perfectly appropriate to frame the question this way. From this very perspective it becomes clear how absurd it is to idealize the Soviet regime and tell sentimental tales about how “Stalin

received Russia with the plow, and gave it back with the atomic bomb." No revolutionary shifts are capable of providing prosperity and well-being; they are everywhere destructive and always throw the country backwards by all parameters of state existence.

For me personally, a negative relationship toward the Soviet regime, with all recognition for its objective achievements, is determined by the fact that it continued the anti-national line of the revolution for destroying the fundamental values of historical Russia and liquidating its Orthodox foundation and origins.

As for "justification of the many sacrifices", I will cite the profound thought of Feodor Mikhailovich [Dostoevsky] about how no beneficent aims, no matter how great, can justify the tear of even one infant. I would propose to speak not of justified sacrifices but rather about their spiritual significance in the rebirth of faith in Russia, which is now happening both mysteriously and obviously. Let us bow down in gratitude for their sacrificial labour and their prayers!

*- We are talking on the eve of the Russian day of peacemaking and unity. As a person who has been directly touched by the consequences of the October revolution, could you say that there really is peacemaking and unity in our society? Are we worried about Russia's future? Aren't we witnessing the symptoms of*



I. Vladimirov. Revolution  
1917-1918

***society's spiritual illness, and aren't they just too much like those on the eve of 1917?***

- Alas, I can't give a positive answer regarding any peace and agreement reigning in our society. But neither can I pass over the positive steps in this direction. Remember the terrible 1990s. Totalitarian liberalization of social moods, the cult of Western lifestyle taken to absurd extremes, the relegation of lofty patriotic feelings to the level of the "last refuge for scoundrels," the defamation of a man in military uniform, the idealization of the "Pepsi generation", the unbridled propaganda of violence and debauchery... What optimistic dreamer could have imagined that only ten years later the overwhelming majority (over 80%) of this same society would choose as their national leader a man who publicly and systematically overthrows all these hideous anti-Russian and anti-Orthodox pseudo values?

Even so, you are right concerning



the presence of anxiety over Russia's future. The spiritual state of today's society really does remind one of the situation on the eve of 1917. But two circumstances are consoling. Firstly, the unarguable fact that the home-grown wretched liberals, who greedily relished their power in the 1990s, have summarily and enduringly discredited the liberal idea in the minds and hearts of our contemporaries. And secondly, there is the factor of a progressively growing number of young people filling Orthodox churches all across greater Rus'. These two circumstances distinguish in principle the prerevolutionary situation from the current one. They are, as I see it, the primary reason for the crushing defeat of the "white tape" fifth column: everyone is utterly tired of liberal slogans, and the greater mass of young people refused to participate in the "Bolotny" movement.

**- In your opinion: Could a possible catastrophe be avoided? What can we do in order to prevent one?**

- We are commanded not to be despondent and to live according to the principle of "do as a Christian should, and what will be will be." Will the Lord will allow a catastrophe to break over the Russian land if there will be, as in better, former times, righteous people? In my opinion this is a rhetorical question. And righteous ones are not only those who leave the world to labour ascetically in prayer as recluses. They are also those who live actively

in the world as conscientious workers, raising and educating their children, protecting their fatherland, researching the mysteries of the world's creation, creating works of art that ennoble souls, mining natural resources; that is, people with the most ordinary professions but living with Christ, avoiding sin and keeping Christ's main commandment of Love for God and neighbor. Glory be to God, there are many thousands of such people all across our country. This kind of cooperation of Russian people with God's plan for the created world is the foundation of our hope in prosperous times and the triumph of Christian truths.

*Continued from previous issue.*

***Peter Davydov spoke with Zurab Mikhailovich Chavchavadze.***

***Translation by  
OrthoChristian.com***

***Pravoslavie.ru 11/7/2015 Source:  
<http://orthochristian.com/87511.html>***

## *For reflection*

***The Lord gave me my tongue as a reward, and I will praise Him with it.***

*Book of Wisdom of Jesus  
Son of Sirach, 51:30*

## *Journey to Orthodoxy*

### “RUSSIA IS A SACRED COUNTRY FOR ME”

**Interview with James Evans,  
an Orthodox Briton.**

**Continued from previous issue.**

**James Evans:** Since I came to Orthodoxy through Russia, the first phase for me was getting to know Russia. I felt that something physically changed inside of me. This was my initial phase only. The second phase started when Vasily Petrovich invited me to go further. That was when I got that inner smile in response to his words, that “Wow” feeling, knowing that I am about to enter the inner circle of Russia. For me, Orthodoxy is connected to Russia. Maybe somebody might find this wrong, but for me Russia is a sacred country. I have a feeling that living in Russia is already my first step to salvation. I can’t speak for other people, but this is what it is for me. That was why when I converted to Orthodoxy, I didn’t feel like a stranger, I already felt that Russia was like a mother to me. This doesn’t mean that I like everything I see in Russia, but... It is as if she is telling me, “Ok, James, come to me.” So when I started attending services, it felt natural to me. Later, when I started working in the children’s camp in Optina Monastery (I sing there in the choir), it was as if I made another



*Priest George Maximov with James Evans*

step inside, got to the next level. Just like a nesting doll, you get more with every step.

**Father George:** *How did your relatives take your moving to Russia and becoming Orthodox?*

**James Evans:** It is difficult for parents when their child moves to another country, but my parents are open-minded. They understand that if I’m doing anything, I’m not doing it thoughtlessly.

And another thing - here’s what Catholics don’t really understand. They believe that the Orthodox are like brothers to them, while all Protestants are heretics. Catholics are more accepting of Orthodoxy than Orthodoxy is accepting of Catholics. I’m talking about regular people. I am not saying that they understand the situation correctly, but this is what they think. The priests’ opinions are a whole other matter.

So, in this respect, my mother is fine with it. Moreover, she knows that

I'm singing. Of course, she feels better knowing that her son is closer to God. This was what she always wanted. Somehow, it didn't happen in England, but it happened when I converted to Orthodoxy. This feeling of being closer to God is getting stronger when I live here in Russia and sing in the church.

**Father George:** *Has your mother come to visit you in Russia? Has she attended the services you sang at?*

**James Evans:** No, she visited me only once and it was before I converted to Orthodoxy. It seems that my parents didn't feel comfortable in Russia. It is strange because I did. But Russia is not for everybody. Once I invited my mother to attend a Greek Orthodox service in England in a church that was close to her house. It was a small community, not too many people. However, she feels comfortable in her Catholic church and that is why she prefers to stay there. I think that she respects my decision. Perhaps she has some minor negative feelings because I quit Catholicism, but we have never quarrelled because of it.

**Father George:** *James, a lot of people emigrated from Russia to the West, and to England in particular, especially in the 1990s when there was an economic crisis. Many people were going there with wide-open eyes expecting to see some advanced civilization, an especially developed culture. Some found what they were looking for, some were disappointed and some even returned home. But there was definitely a flow of*

*people from Russia to the West. Since you were moving in the opposite direction, I'd like to ask you: What is the greatest difference in mentality between people in England and Russia?*

**You start to see things in different light and think, "Something feels wrong with the West."**

**James Evans:** I remember what happened in 1989 when that group of students from the Soviet Union came to visit us. They were looking in awe at the shelves full of audio equipment in a small suburban English town. When I came to Russia the same year, I saw empty shelves in the stores. That's why I felt like I was coming from a world that seemed to have everything. We thought that we were doing everything right and that we had an advantage, not only in terms of economics but in terms of something bigger. It is difficult not to succumb to this fallacy, when you seem to be getting everything right. On top of that, in the 1990s corruption in Russia was rampant. Therefore, at first I felt that I come from a democratic country where we do everything right, while here they have corruption... Then I started seeing things in a different light and thinking, "Something feels wrong with the West. Something is a little bit off with England and the USA. Although something is off here in Russia too, but there is something extremely beautiful. It is very difficult to define what it is."

I'll tell you about my most vivid



Optina monastery

children's camp and singing in the choir in Optina monastery. And there I could clearly see the difference: In England, the monasteries that in the 1540s were shut down under some false pretences by Henry VIII, who killed everyone, the abbots and priors of monasteries who didn't want to bow down to him, are still deserted. In Russia, the process of spiritual revival began as soon as the epoch of Communism was over. I can't say, if it is right or correct, but I see that the process is going on, I see the revival. I feel the spirit of medieval times, not in a bad sense, but in the sense of continued tradition. This is what is happening in Russia, in Optina monastery. What's happening in England? Well, they have some sites, some small communities and monasteries, but in general there is no spiritual revival in England. Napoleon used to call the English people "the nation of shopkeepers". Something seems to be missing in England, and you really feel it. Why is it that England still cannot restore its inherent spiritual life? Not all people

should live in a secular way. I'm not a monk and even though I lead a simple life, I live in a secular way, but it seems strange to me that nobody in England ever restored those monasteries. England has not yet come to terms with its past, while Russia, despite many problems, managed to reconnect those torn threads. This means that we are doing something right in Russia.

**Father George:** *You remind me of what happened when I first visited a Catholic country. I was invited to participate in a small conference in Austria where the Orthodox would present the Orthodox views while Catholics presented Catholic views. On the very first day, our hosts took us to a restaurant that was set up in a former monastery building. I was shocked. This was more than ten years ago, and at that time we too still had some churches and monasteries that had not been returned to the Church. We had just a few of those left and they were perceived as our pain, as sacred places that were desecrated, the sites we could not yet manage to return and restore. If I had some Catholic guests, I wouldn't even think about taking them to a former church to eat. These*

*former churches that stopped being churches, those former monasteries that are lifeless now, they are a symbol of demise, a symbol of the nation's mistake. While for Catholics it was perfectly normal. This is one of the things that I have difficulty understanding in the Western way of thinking. Even though they didn't have that painful experience we had here in Russia, when all the ties with the past were forcefully cut off, people in the West have lost their past on their own volition and don't even worry about it.*

***In Oxford where I studied, a church was turned into a bar. England has lost its ties with holiness.***

**James Evans:** That's right, in Oxford where I studied, a church was turned into a bar. Some small village churches were turned into residential houses. England has lost its ties with holiness. Only Orthodoxy is maintaining these ties in England. It represents a small part of the spiritual life in England; I'm not sure, maybe 1% in terms of numbers of people. But they venerate the English saints. There are thousands of saints. These sacred sites, places where the saints lived and sites of pilgrimage are mostly venerated by the Orthodox. The others, both Protestants and Catholics, chose a different path. They chose a totally different world, a totally different world view. It is very difficult for them to understand how we live in Russia. When I'm in England, I have difficulty with that, because they are so sure that their materialistic reality is an objective reality and that is all

there is. Well, they know that God exists, but that is basically it.

***There is no past or future in Orthodoxy, during the worship service there is only the present. And Jesus Christ Himself is standing next to us.***

Russia never lost the understanding that during the worship service, all the saints and martyrs of Russia participate in the service with us. During the service, there is no past or future, there is only the present. And Jesus Christ Himself is standing next to us. If you were to start rationalising it, you'd be on the wrong path. You need to understand that it is a Mystery. I think that in Russia this Mystery is accepted quite naturally. I no longer understand how people can live the way they live in the West. I think they have some kind of illness. I hope it will be cured. Here, Russia probably helps. It maintains that connection with the past that the West has lost.

***Father George:*** *I hope to God that spiritual revival would begin in the West too. I believe that God has plans for all nations and I hope that people in the West would discover the treasury of Orthodoxy for themselves, because this treasure is not only for Russia, Greece or Serbia, it is available to anybody who is looking for the Truth.*

***James Evans was interviewed by Priest George Maximov***

***Translation by Talyb Samedov***

***Pravoslavie.ru 30/16/2017***

***<http://orthochristian.com/104762.html>***





## *For and about Children*

### **FEAST OF THE KAZAN ICON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD**

**October 22/November 4**



The wonderworking Icon of the Mother of God of Kazan is one of the most venerated icons in Russia. This icon has two feast days – 21st of July and 4th of November.

The icon was discovered in Kazan in 1579. According to the legend, a 9 year old girl called Matrona three times

had a dream that the Holy Mother of God visited her and pointed out the place where under the ruins and ashes of a destroyed house Her miraculous icon was buried. The girl told the local priest Hermolay about her vision and the icon was indeed found there.

On October 22nd 1612, the icon of Kazan accompanied the national troops as they sought to liberate Moscow from the Poles. The people of Moscow and soldiers were praying for three days to God and the Holy Mother of God asking for help and protection. On the 4th of November the Russian people achieved final victory over the invading Poles and this autumn date was also chosen to commemorate the Icon of the Mother of God of Kazan.

Over the years the icon of the Mother of God of Kazan became known as the Protectress of Holy Russia.

***Home Work: Ask your parents to help you to find Moscow and Kazan on the world map. What other cities in Europe do you know?***

**SYNAXIS OF THE ARCHANGEL  
MICHAEL & THE OTHER  
BODILESS POWERS: GABRIEL,  
RAPHAEL, URIEL, SALAPHIEL,  
JEGUDIEL & BARACHIEL**

**November 8/21**

All the Angels, according to the Apostle Paul, are ministering spirits, - sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation - (Heb. 1:14). God set them as overseers of every nation and people, and guides to that which is profitable (Deut. 32:8); and while one Angel is appointed to oversee each nation as a whole, one is also appointed to protect each Christian individually. He commands them to guard them that hope on

Him, that nothing should harm them, neither should any evil draw nigh to their dwelling (Ps. 90:10-12). In the Heavens they always behold the face of God, sending up to Him the thrice-holy hymn and interceding with Him in our behalf, seeing they rejoice over one sinner that repents (Esaias 6:2-3; Matt. 18:10; Luke 15:7). In a word, they have served God in so many ways for our benefit, that the pages of Holy Scripture are filled with the histories thereof. It is for these reasons that the Orthodox Catholic Church, wisely honouring these divine ministers, our protectors and guardians, celebrates today the present Synaxis that is, our coming together in assembly for their common feast to chant their praises, especially for the Archangels Michael and Gabriel, who are mentioned in the Scriptures by name. The name Michael means "Who is like God?" and Gabriel means "God is mighty." The number of Angels is not defined in the divine Scriptures, where Daniel says that thousands of thousands ministered before Him, and ten thousands of ten thousands attended upon Him -(Dan. 7:10). But all of them are divided into nine orders which are called Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim, Dominions, Powers, Authorities, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels.



*Archangel Michael*



## PRAYER LESSON

Today, in our lesson of prayers, we will learn how to praise God.

### Thanksgiving Prayer to God

*Glory to Thee, our God, glory to Thee!*

*Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.*

With these words, we praise God. We can say a shortened version, '**Glory to thee, God!**' But we could also say it with the words of the full prayer. In those words, we affirm that God is our Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is eternal and will be praised for centuries. God has always existed, even when there was not only no land

or the world but even when there wasn't even time itself and God was and will always be great and praised.

Try not to say these words just for the sake of doing it. Try to understand the meaning and think about God when saying them.

*Translated by Sophia Reznik*



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