

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

DIOCESE OF SOUROZH

CATHEDRAL OF THE DORMITION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD

67 ENNISMORE GARDENS, LONDON SW7 1NH



Sourozʰ Messenger

September - October 2017, No 4



Troparion

Today we God's people radiantly feast, sheltered by thy coming, O Mother of God. Beholding thy pure image, and moved with tenderness we say to thee: Keep us under thine honourable veil, and deliver us from every ill, beseeching thy Son, Christ our God, to save our souls.

Kontakion

Today the Virgin standeth before us in the church, and with the choirs of the saints she invisibly prayeth to God for us. Angels and hierarchs offer homage, and the apostles and prophets join in chorus, for, for our sake, the Mother of God entreateth the eternal God.

In this issue:

<p> DIOCESAN NEWS.....3 Congratulations to Archbishop Anatoly.....3 CATHEDRAL NEWS.....6 LEGACY OF METROPOLITAN ANTHONY OF SOUROZH Christ’s Talk with the Pharisees.....7 NOTES ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR The Protection of Our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary.....9 SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH Priesthood.....12 The October Revolution did not come unexpectedly.....15 BRITISH AND IRISH SAINTS Saint Colman of Kilmagduagh in </p>	<p> Ireland, Wonderworker.....20 JOURNEY TO ORTHODOXY Russia is a Sacred Country for me.....25 IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE PILGRIMS Impressions of a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land.....30 FOR AND ABOUT CHILDREN The Universal Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord.....34 Wearing the Cross.....35 The Nativity of Our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary.....35 </p>
---	--

Recommended donation is £2

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>.

Sourozh Messenger was prepared by:

Archpriest Joseph Skinner, Archpriest Dimitri Karpenko, John and Stella Newbery, Galina Chuykova, Elena Kuzina, Anna Rynda, Maria Rumyantseva, Karina Vaikule, Yana Reznik, Elena Creswell, Maria Afitsinskaya-Lvova, Julia Pliauksta

Diocesan News

45TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARCHBISHOP ANATOLY'S CONSECRATION

On Sunday September 3rd, 2017, His Eminence Archbishop Anatoly celebrated the 45th Anniversary of his episcopal consecration.

On this day in 1972, Archimandrite Anatoly (Kuznetsov) was consecrated as Bishop of Vilnius and Lithuania. The consecration was performed by His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia, Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad and Novgorod, Metropolitan Juvenaly of Tula and Belyov, Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, Archbishop Pitirim of Volokalamsk, Archbishop Filaret of Dmitrov, Bishop Platon of Tashkent and Central Asia, Bishop Serapion of Podolsk, and Bishop Chrysostom of Zaraisk.



Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh visited Vladyka Anatoly at the stavropegic Savvino-Storozhevsky monastery and cordially congratulated him on his special day on behalf of the people of the Diocese of Sourozh.



***To His Eminence Archbishop Anatoly
Your Eminence, dear Vladyka Anatoly!***

I greet you cordially on this memorable day of the 45th anniversary of your consecration to the episcopate. Just less than half a century through the laying on of hands of Archpastors, among whom was the ever-memorable Metropolitan Anthony (Bloom) you were called to a very high and responsible church ministry - to become a bishop in the Church of Christ, to feed the rational flock of the children of God.

By the blessing of the Mother Church over these years you committed yourself entirely to fulfilling this divine calling. A significant part of your archpastoral service was dedicated to the Diocese of Sourozh, where through your obedience as suffragan bishop you nourished spiritually the diverse flock of the Russian Orthodox Church in the British Isles.

Let me make bold to assure you, dear Vladyka, that, in the hearts of our parishioners who know you and became spiritually close to you over the years of your service, living and sincere prayer for you and your health continues, with thanksgiving to God.

On this your special celebration the faithful people of the Diocese of Sourozh share the spiritual joy with you and with love and respect ask for your holy prayers.

Eis Polla eti, Despota!
With love in Christ,
+Elisey, Archbishop of Sourozh





Vladyka Anatoly currently resides in the Savvino-Storozhevsky monastery where he was visited recently by Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh. Vladyka Elisey shared his impressions from his meeting with Archbishop

Anatoly: *'Meetings with Vladyka Anatoly are always touching. At an advanced age, when the once longed-for silence becomes more and more the usual state of being, it is easy to notice his natural childlike spiritual sincerity and purity. In the monastery of the Venerable Savva Storozhevsky, Vladyka is surrounded by care and attention and, what is so important at this stage of life, the prayer of the brethren.'* Today we congratulated him on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of his episcopal consecration.

The clergy and faithful of the Diocese of Sourozh join these congratulations and wish many blessed years to **Vladyka Anatoly.**

ARCHBISHOP ELISEY MET WITH BISHOP IRENEI, THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ROCOR PARISHES IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

On September 1st, 2017, a working meeting took place at the London Dormition Cathedral between Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh and Bishop Irenei of Sacramento, the Administrator of the parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia in Britain and Ireland.

In the course of the meeting the bishops discussed the possibilities for ecclesial cooperation and coordination of efforts for the pastoral care of the flock of the Russian Orthodox Church in Great Britain and Ireland.



Cathedral News

CELEBRATION OF THE PATRONAL FESTIVAL OF THE LONDON DORMITION CATHEDRAL

On the 28th of August, the Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, His Eminence Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh headed the celebration of the Patronal Festival of the London Dormition Cathedral. The cathedral clergy together with the priests that take care of the Moldavian community in London concelebrated.

Before the Divine Liturgy, the Regent of the Cathedral choir, Kirill Krayushkin, was ordained to the rank of subdeacon.

The sermon was preached by the elder clergyman of the Cathedral – Archpriest Maxim Nikolsky.

Following the Liturgy, Archbishop Elisey proclaimed the ‘Message of His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Archpastors, priests, 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’. Afterwards, the clergy and numerous parishioners prayed in front of the shroud of the Holy Mother of God, in order to honour with gratitude the spiritual endeavours of the participants of the Local Council.



Following the Procession, Vladyka Elisey greeted the clergy and parishioners, underlining the laborious work of all who participated in the recent refurbishment of the Cathedral. On the initiative of Archbishop Elisey and by the Decree of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, the Cathedral





Treasurer and Trustee, Alexey Motlokhov, was awarded with the Order of the Saint Seraphim of Sarov (3rd class).

After the festive Divine Liturgy everyone present was invited to join the celebratory meal.



Legacy of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

Newsletter 30 years ago

SERMON PREACHED BY METROPOLITAN ANTHONY

CHRIST'S TALK WITH THE PHARISEES

(Matthew 22:41-46)

September 1987

There are several places in the Gospels where Christ openly states that He is the Son of God in an absolutely special sense: that He is the Only One, the Only-begotten Son of God. In St. John's Gospel, in answer to a question He says, "I am He who is". These very words are used by God Himself in the Old Testament in answer to Moses's question, "Who art Thou?", "I am He who is". There is no definition of Me. "I am, I am the Only One, Who is." In other passages

too, Christ declares that He is indeed God come into the world in the flesh.

In this short extract from St. Matthew's Gospel we see how Christ, when He is questioned by people who want to catch Him on a word, faces His hearers with a paradox that is beyond understanding: that He is at the same time the Son of God and the son of man; something that by human laws is impossible. A Jew of the Old Testament could not anticipate such a thing because of his conception of God as being beyond comprehension. And yet in the Old Testament there are a number of places, including the one cited above, where the reader is faced with a difficult question: How can this be? How can it be that

Christ is the son of David, and at the same time David calls Him his Lord? As I have just said, there is no intellectual answer to this - the answer is in the historical fact, the fact that the Son of God was born of the Virgin. In these few words set before the people of the Old Testament (as indeed before any unbeliever or searcher) lies the question, the difficulty and the answer. A Western saint said very daringly, but it seems to me very beautifully, 'I am as great as God, God is as small as I.' Christ is God, Christ is man; this is incomprehensible and this is a historical fact. This also shows us what we are called to be: to be so one with Christ as to grow to superhuman measure to partake of God's nature, to become divine by participation, yet remaining what we are, human. Only by accepting the historical fact of the incarnation can

Christ's question to the Pharisee be answered; and only the meeting with Christ as God could convince first a small group of disciples and later an ever increasing number of people, believing Jews and searching pagans, that the prophetic words had been fulfilled in life. Paul had seen only a man in Christ and therefore considered Him a false prophet and imposter, but having met Him on the way to Damascus in His risen glory, he found the answer. So millions of people from generation to generation have found Him and believe with all their mind and heart and soul, in the whole tenor of their lives, that the Son of God became the son of man, that Christ is their God, and that for us all He is an example, the way, the truth, the life.

Amen.



The Pharisees Question Jesus. James Tissot

Notes on the Church calendar

THE PROTECTION OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE MOTHER OF GOD AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

“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 venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!”

This miraculous appearance of the Mother of God occurred in the mid-tenth century in Constantinople, in the Blachernae church where her robe, veil, and part of her belt were preserved after being transferred from Palestine in the fifth century.

On Sunday, October 1, during the All Night Vigil, when the church was overflowing with those at prayer, the Fool-for-Christ Saint Andrew (October 2), at the fourth hour, lifted up his eyes towards the heavens and beheld our most Holy Lady Theotokos coming through the air, resplendent with heavenly light and surrounded by an assembly of the Saints. Saint John the Baptist and the holy Apostle John the Theologian accompanied the Queen of Heaven. On bended knees the Most Holy Virgin tearfully prayed for Christians for a long time. Then, coming near the Bishop’s Throne, she continued her prayer.

After completing her prayer she took her veil and spread it over the people praying in church, protecting



Icon of the Protection of Our Most Holy Lady the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary

them from enemies both visible and invisible. The Most Holy Lady Theotokos was resplendent with heavenly glory, and the protecting veil in her hands gleamed “more than the rays of the sun.” Saint Andrew gazed trembling at the miraculous vision and he asked his disciple, the blessed Epiphanius standing beside him, “Do you see, brother, the Holy Theotokos, praying for all the world?” Epiphanius answered, “I do see, holy Father, and I am in awe.”

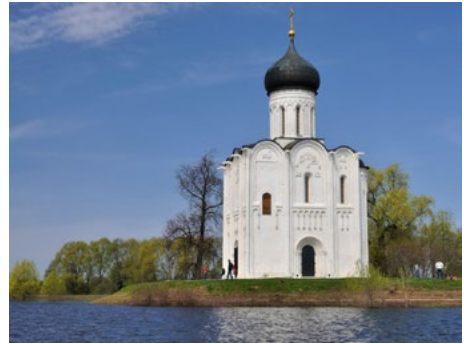
The Ever-Blessed Mother of God implored the Lord Jesus Christ to accept the prayers of all the people

calling on His Most Holy Name, and to respond speedily to her intercession, “O Heavenly King, accept all those who pray to You and call on my name for help. Do not let them go away from my icon unheard.”

Saints Andrew and Epiphanius were worthy to see the Mother of God at prayer, and “for a long time observed the Protecting Veil spread over the people and shining with flashes of glory. As long as the Most Holy Theotokos was there, the Protecting Veil was also visible, but with her departure it also became invisible. After taking it with her, she left behind the grace of her visitation.”

At the Blachernae church, the miraculous appearance of the Mother of God was remembered. In the fourteenth century, the Russian pilgrim and cleric Alexander, saw in the church an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos praying for the world, depicting Saint Andrew in contemplation of her.

The Primary Chronicle of Saint Nestor reflects that the protective intercession of the Mother of God was needed because an attack of a large pagan Russian fleet under the leadership of Askole and Dir. The feast celebrates the divine destruction of the fleet which threatened Constantinople itself, sometime in the years 864-867 or according to the Russian historian Vasiliev, on June 18, 860. Ironically, this Feast is considered important by the Slavic Churches but not by the Greeks.



*Church of the Intercession on the Nerl
(Photo - www.wikipedia.com)*

In the PROLOGUE, a Russian book of the twelfth century, a description of the establishment of the special Feast marking this event states, “For when we heard, we realized how wondrous and merciful was the vision... and it transpired that Your holy Protection should not remain without festal celebration, O Ever-Blessed One!”

Therefore, in the festal celebration of the Protection of the Mother of God, the Russian Church sings, “With the choirs of the Angels, O Sovereign Lady, with the venerable and glorious prophets, with the First-Ranked Apostles and with the Hieromartyrs and Hierarchs, pray for us sinners, glorifying the Feast of your Protection in the Russian Land.”

Churches in honor of the Protection of the Mother of God began to appear in Russia in the twelfth century. Widely known for its architectural merit is the temple of the Protection at Nerl, which was built in the year 1165 by holy Prince Andrew Bogoliubsky. The efforts of this holy prince also established in the Russian Church the

Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God, about the year 1164.

At Novgorod in the twelfth century there was a monastery of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos (the so-called Zverin monastery) In Moscow also under Tsar Ivan the Terrible the iconic Cathedral of the Protection of the Mother of God (often known today as Saint Basil's Cathedral) was built near the Kremlin.

On the Feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos we implore the defense and assistance of the Queen of Heaven, "Remember us in

your prayers, O Lady Virgin Mother of God, that we not perish by the increase of our sins. Protect us from every evil and from grievous woes, for in you do we hope, and venerating the Feast of your Protection, we magnify you."

Adapted from: <https://oca.org/saints/lives/2017/10/01/102824-the-protection-of-our-most-holy-lady-the-mother-of-god-and-ever>



The Protection.
By Russian artist Mikhail Nesterov
(photo - www.Foma.ru)

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 8. PRIESTHOOD

The sacrament of Priesthood includes three liturgical rites of ordination: to the episcopate, to the priesthood and to the diaconate.

According to the present tradition of the Orthodox Church, bishops are chosen from among the monks. In the early Church there were married bishops: St Paul says a bishop must be 'the husband of one wife' (1 Tim. 3:2). However, even in the early centuries, preference was given to monastic or celibate clergy. Thus among the holy bishops of the fourth century only St Gregory of Nyssa was married, while St Athanasius, St Basil the Great, St Gregory the Theologian, and St John Chrysostom were celibate. Priests and deacons in the Orthodox Church can be either monastic or married. However, marriage is possible for clergy only before ordination and only once: those married a second time are not allowed to become priests or deacons.

The ordination into hierarchical ranks has from the apostolic times onwards



been accomplished through the laying of hands (Greek *cheirotonia*). According to the Church's rules, a priest and a deacon must be ordained by one bishop; a bishop, by several bishops (no less than three or two). Ordinations take place during the Liturgy. A bishop is ordained after the singing of 'Holy God' (during the Liturgy of the catechumens); a priest, after the Cherubic Hymn; and a deacon, after the consecration of the Holy Gifts.

Episcopal ordinations are especially solemn. A priest who is to be ordained bishop enters the altar through the 'royal doors' and goes three times around the holy table, kissing its four corners; the clergy and the choir sing the troparia from the rite of Marriage. The one being ordained then bends his knees before the holy table, and the hierarchs lay their hands on his head, with the presiding celebrant reading the prayer of ordination: 'The grace divine, which always healeth that which is infirm and completeth that

which is wanting, through the laying-on of hands elevateth thee, the most God-loving Archimandrite, (name), duly elected, to be the Bishop of the God-saved cities, (names). Wherefore let us pray for him, that the grace of the All-holy Spirit may come upon him'. Following this, while Kyrie eleison ('Lord, have mercy') is sung by the clergy and the choir, the first hierarch reads other prayers. The newly-ordained bishop is then clothed in episcopal vestments, while the people (or the choir) exclaim Axios ('He is worthy!'). This exclamation is the only trace of the ancient practice of the election of bishops by all the faithful.

Ordinations to the priesthood and to the diaconate follow the same order: the one who is being ordained enters the altar, goes around the holy table, kissing its corners, bends his knees (or only one knee, as in the case of a deacon); the bishop lays his hands and reads the prayers of consecration over the newly-ordained; and the latter is



then clothed in his priestly (or diaconal) vestments with the Axios sung by the people.

The singing of the troparia from the rite of Marriage has a special meaning in the ordination to the hierarchical ranks: it shows that the bishop (or priest, or deacon) is betrothed to his diocese (or parish). In the early Church it was very unusual either for a bishop to change his diocese, or for a priest, his parish. As a rule, an ecclesiastical appointment was for life. Even the Patriarch was chosen not from the bishops of a particular patriarchate, but from the lower clergy, in some cases even from the laity.

The Orthodox Church ascribes a very high significance to the sacrament of Priesthood, for with it the church community receives its new pastor. Despite everything that has been written and said about the 'royal priesthood' of all believers, the Church also recognizes the difference between lay people and an ordained priest, the latter being entrusted with the celebration of the Eucharist, and having the power of 'binding and loosing'. Ordination into a hierarchical rank, be it of bishop, priest or deacon, is not only a change of status for someone, but also, to a certain extent, a transition to another level of existence.

St Silouan, who was a monk of Mount Athos until his death in 1938, and not himself ordained, wrote the following about the high dignity of priestly ministry and grace given to the

pastors of the Church: 'This grace is so exceeding great that were men able to see the glory of this grace, the whole world would wonder at it; but the Lord has veiled it that his servants should not be puffed up but find salvation in humility... Truly noble is a priest - the minister at God's altar. Whoever gives offence to him offends the Holy Spirit who lives in him ... If people could behold in what glory a priest celebrates the divine office they would swoon at the sight; and if the priest could see himself, could see the celestial glory surrounding him as he officiates, he would become a great warrior and devote himself to feats of spiritual endurance, that he might not offend in any way grace of the Holy Spirit living in him.'

In the Orthodox Church, priests and bishops are regarded as bearers of divine grace, as instruments through which God Himself acts. When receiving a priest's blessing, the faithful kiss his hand as if it were Christ's hand, because it is by Christ's power

that he gives the blessing. This sense of holiness and dignity in priestly ministry is weakened in some Christian denominations. In certain Protestant communities the only difference between the laity and the clergy is that the latter have a 'licence to preach'.

If the sacrament of priesthood is a very special event for the entire community, for the man who has been ordained this day is his personal Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descends upon him and he receives gifts of divine grace. Some Saints are reported to have seen the Holy Spirit in a visible form during the ordination. As the life of Saint Simeon the New Theologian tells us, when the bishop read the prayer of consecration, Simeon saw the Holy Spirit, which descended without form as simple and boundless light and covered his sacred head; he always saw this light when he celebrated the Liturgy throughout the forty-eight years of his priesthood.

In his autobiographical notes, Father Serge Bulgakov describes his ordinations to the diaconate and to the priesthood as the most remarkable mystical experiences of his life: 'I was ordained deacon on the day of the Holy Trinity. If the inexpressible can be expressed, I shall say that this first ordination was experienced by me as the most fiery. The most overwhelming aspect of it was my passing, for the first time, through the royal doors and approaching the holy table. It was like passing through fire, burning, illuminating and regenerating. This



was entering into another world, into the Kingdom of heaven. This was for me the beginning of a new form of existence, in which I remain till the present ... The experiences of ordination into the priesthood are even more inexpressible than those of the first ordination – “silence is more suitable”...’



«THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION DID NOT COME UNEXPECTEDLY»

A TALK WITH PRINCE ZURAB CHAVCHAVADZE

On November 6, 1917 (October 25 according to the Julian calendar used at the time) the “Great October Revolution” began in Russia, changing that country forever. The aristocratic family of Prince Zurab Chavchavadze, a direct descendant of Georgia’s beloved and sainted poet, Ilia Chavchavadze, fled after the Bolshevik Revolution. Enticed back by Stalin’s government, Zurab’s family left Paris for the Soviet Union only to find themselves in prison and exile.

Pravoslavie.ru correspondent Peter Davydov spoke with Prince Zurab about whether the tragedy of Russia in the twentieth century was accidental, or came about through specific causes. Was the Soviet period of Russian history no more than a terrible a curse or do we need to try to find something positive? And how can Russia prevent similar suffering in the future?

- Zurab Mikhailovich, was the year 1917 a total tragedy for Russia? Or perhaps it freed the country from an unviable social order with all its defects? Could these events have been a



Prince Zurab Chavchavadze

sort of "surgical operation" to remove a "cancerous tumour"?

- From the spiritual point of view, the events of 1917 were a large-scale catastrophe not only for Russia but for Christianity all over the world. That is because from the time of the fall of the Byzantium up until the destruction of the Russian Empire, our country was the only sovereignty left in the world whose national ideals were steadfastly founded on Christian teaching. In Sergei Uvarov's famous "Triad of Official Nationality"—"Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Nationality", Orthodoxy was not only placed intentionally at the beginning, but the other two were also penetrated with Orthodox content. After all, the condition for autocracy here was that its authority was divinely bestowed upon God's Anointed One, and nationality is understood as the conciliar unification of the people who formed the state, who are responsible before God for the establishment of a common home encompassing all nationalities based on the Christian principles of justice and mercy. In losing its status as a worldwide bastion of Christianity, Russia lost its apocalyptic function as "the one that restraineth", thus loosing the hands of apostate powers that condemned the peoples of the world to untold sufferings during the course of the twentieth century and continue to this day to sow everywhere enmity, division, and spiritual and moral corruption. The thesis that the Russian Revolution



*Vladimirov I.A. The Revolution
(from collection) 1917-1918*

perhaps "freed the country from an unviable social order with all its defects" reminds me of the joke about the guillotine being an effective cure for a headache. Personally, I could hardly call the social order that provided Russia with an unprecedented upward surge during the reign of Nicholas II "unviable". And as for "removing the defects", the great Stolypin commented well on this when he foresaw countrywide prosperity in Russia under the condition that it have twenty years of peace. It's understood that such prosperity also included the removal of defects. And of course, about the revolution as a surgical operation to remove a "cancerous tumour": This comparison is justifiable only if you allow that the surgeon was not a healing doctor but a monstrous, mad scientist who instead of removing the "cancerous tumour" took all the healthy, vital organs out of the organism. This is what happened with the highly unique Russian gene pool, which found

itself on the verge of total extinction after the Bolshevik "operation" of physically exterminating or forcing into flight from the country all the best representatives of all social classes - the industrious peasant, the educated aristocracy, the enlightened clergy, the enterprising merchants, the freedom-loving Cossacks, and the parliamentary, creative, and scholarly intelligentsia.

- If this was a catastrophe, and a tragedy, then is it one that came on suddenly, unnoticed, and unexpectedly? Were the God-bearing people just living their lives when suddenly catastrophe befell them? Could there be some parallel here with the Old Testament history, or with Byzantium or Christian Rome?

- The catastrophe did, of course, hit the people - only not from the outside, but from within. The people as a whole, beginning from the top, to the middle classes, and finally to

the broad masses of peasants had begun to gradually depart from the traditional foundations of life that had for centuries been very closely bound up with Church institutions, which required all to test their deeds against the eternal, faith-based principles. That is why we not only can but must draw parallels with Old Testament and Christian eras in order to suggest to our social consciousness the thought that any mass apostasy from divine commandments inescapably leads to tragic events in the life of God's people. Nevertheless, these catastrophes came "unnoticeably, unexpectedly" only for those who had stopped learning from history. This moment is artfully investigated in the film by Nikita Mikhailkov, "Sunstroke". We recall the radiant little boy who after falling for the temptation of the revolutionary spirit changes from an angelic being into a notorious killer. This tragedy of one individual becomes the prototype of the gigantic tragedy of an entire people.



A demonstration in Petrograd. 18 June 1917

And the main thing here as far as cause and effect goes is that both tragedies were predetermined by apostasy. For the former seminarian as well as for many of those in the "creative" caste and spiritually bankrupt members of the intelligentsia, the tragic events in Russia really did come on unnoticeably. But there were other Russian people who had not broken from a life in Christ. They tirelessly called the people to come to their senses and warned them about God's inescapable punishment for apostasy.

- St. Theophan the Recluse wrote at the end of the nineteenth century, "Do you know what bleak thoughts I have? And they are not unfounded. I meet people who are numbered among the Orthodox, who in spirit are Voltairians, naturalists, Lutherans, and all manner of free-thinkers. They have studied all the sciences in our institutions of higher education. They are not stupid nor are they evil, but with respect to the Church they are good for nothing. Their fathers and mothers were pious; the ruin came in during the period of their education outside of the family homes. Their memories of childhood and their parents' spirit keeps them within certain bounds. But what will their own children be like? What will restrain them within the needed bounds? I draw the conclusion



Construction of the White Sea-Baltic Canal

from this that in one or two generations our Orthodoxy will dry up." St. John of Kronstadt and St. Ignatius (Brianchininov) as well as the great Russian writers also shouted about the coming catastrophe. What, in your view, caused their alarm, their presentiment of the coming catastrophe? After all, Rus', Russia can probably serve as a worthy example of courageous and Christian endurance of all kinds of material hardships. What caused our saints to speak with such sorrow about the coming times?

- Those are the very Russian saints I meant when I spoke about those who were alarmed over the fate of Russian Orthodoxy. I would also add the Optina Elders, and the majority of our famous Slavophiles. Their alarm was based precisely on the ability to draw lessons from bitter historical examples of both Old Testament and Christian periods, including those sad pages of our history

that are connected with internecine wars between Russian princes and the Time of Troubles. We have to admit, albeit with great regret, that the larger part of Russian prerevolutionary society did not listen to the alarming warnings of our spiritual giants, which only goes once again to show the truth of the famous maxim, “A prophet is not known in his own country.”

I can’t but agree that truly, Russia has many times been an example of steadfast Christian carrying of a heavy cross, when it was beset with all kinds of material adversities and hardships. But this fact could in no way ease the alarm of our saints, who sorrowfully foretold the coming times. This is because they sorrowed and were alarmed not over defects in the Russian character, such as, let’s say, faint-heartedness, weak will, or cowardice, but over the people’s faithfulness to Christ and His teaching. It is in this that they saw the Russian Orthodox person’s main calling. And the disregard for this calling increasing with each generation made them sorrow over what was to come.

Incidentally, the same concern with preserving faithfulness to Christ’s teaching can be heard from some who are practically our contemporaries - the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. In their instructions to their flocks and in letters to spiritual children from prison they constantly called on people to strengthen their faith; they taught them not to seek other reasons for the reign of godlessness other than the drying up of Orthodoxy in Rus’,

and like St. Seraphim of Sarov they spoke of the importance of acquiring a “spirit of peace” as a surety not only of our personal salvation, but also of the restoration of our Orthodox fatherland to the path of spiritual rebirth.

To be continued

Peter Davydov spoke with Zurab Mikhailovich Chavchavadze.

Translation by OrthoChristian.com

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



British and Irish Saints

SAINT COLMAN OF KILMACDUAGH IN IRELAND, WONDER WORKER

Commemorated:

October 29 / November 11

St. Colman (c. 550 or c. 560-632), a great ascetic and one of the most interesting Irish saints of his age, has been venerated and loved by pious Irishmen for more than 1300 years, especially in Counties Galway and Clare (the provinces of Connacht and Munster) on the west coast of present-day Northern Ireland. It is a relief that interest in this wonderworker on the part of modern researchers has now grown.

The future saint was born in Ireland into the family of a chief named Duagh (hence the full name of the saint Colman Mac Duagh, that is, “Colman, son of Duagh”) and his wife Rhinagh. His birthplace may have been Corker in Galway, which is a pilgrimage site to this day. When he was still in his mother’s womb, she heard a prophecy that her son would become a great man who would surpass in his glory all men in his lineage. According to tradition, the jealous father understood these words not in the spiritual, but in the secular sense and bore malice to the still unborn child. The pregnant mother, fearing for her baby’s safety, fled from their home. However,



Kilmacduagh Abbey ruins, Galway

Duagh’s servants soon found her, tied a heavy stone around her neck and threw her into the river Kiltartin. But by the grace of God Rhinagh was cast ashore, survived and gave birth. The very stone to which she was tied, with marks of the rope, has survived and is kept inside a church in Corker.

When it was time to baptize the newly-born Colman, the priest who came to Rhinagh found that there was no water to perform the baptism. The mother, fearing to go back home, took shelter under an ash-tree. She prayed hard and suddenly a holy spring gushed forth from under the ground near the tree and the baby was baptized in it. Many healings and other miracles occurred from the pure water of this spring, which still exists in Corker near the river and attracts many pilgrims (there are many modern reports of healing from it). Rhinagh entrusted her boy to the care of pious monks.

Already a young man, Colman arrived

on the Aran Islands in Donegal where he remained for some years under the great Irish Abbot St. Enda of Inishmore. Colman became a monk there and was later ordained priest. According to tradition, St. Colman spent several years as a hermit on Aranmore Island where he also built two churches - the ruins of both of them can still be seen. Aranmore was always known as an island with extremely harsh conditions for life; in spite of this, a multitude of ascetics lived and prayed there for many years throughout “the age of saints” in Ireland.

St. Colman’s zeal and thirst for spiritual perfection were so strong that with time he resolved to leave the island monastery and to retreat to a remote and quiet place to pray more deeply. Thus, according to tradition, from 592 the holy man lived for seven years alone in solitude in the dense Burren forests of County Clare, and obtained the gift of unceasing prayer; he prayed and kept vigil day and night, ate only herbs, drank water and wore a deerskin.



Burren forest today

In his ascetic practices St. Colman imitated the Egyptian hermits, headed by St. Anthony; many other Celtic saints lived in the same spirit in those centuries. Colman’s hermitage was situated in a perfect setting surrounded by wild forest and the beautiful Burren mountains.

St. Colman made himself a tiny dwelling in a very small cave on a steep slope where he spent most of his time praying. This cave, known as St. Colman’s cave, has been well-preserved to this day. The saint also built a little chapel at the foot of the cliff where he celebrated the services alone. This St. Colman’s Chapel existed for many centuries after him but was severely damaged by puritan iconoclasts in the seventeenth century. However, its ruins survive and still preserve a particular spirit of holiness, which is evidenced by pilgrims who visit this place to this day. The saint drank water from the natural holy well located near the chapel. By the grace of God this holy well survives in good condition, and numerous miracles still occur through its water today.



Aranmore Island

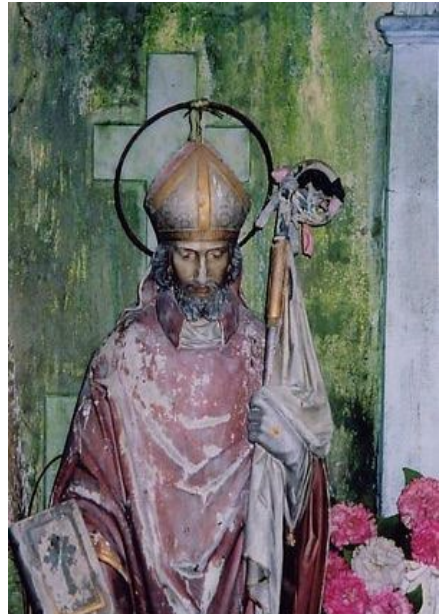


Holy Well in Corker

Like many Irish saints, St. Colman lived in harmony with wild nature. Various versions of his life relate the same and truly striking story (though with different minor details) about the communication of the holy man with animals. This story says that a cock, a mouse, and a fly were Colman's closest friends in Burren. All of them served their holy master as they could. The cock crowed at a certain time every night, reminding the saint of the time for prayer; the mouse gently touched his face, thus waking him up and ensuring that he slept only five hours per day; the fly carefully crept over the lines of the sacred books that he read, and when his eyes got tired or when the saint had to move away for a while, the fly crawled onto the first letter of the following sentence so that he could never lose his place.

The saint loved and fed these faithful friends. Once Colman got so tired that he fell into a very deep sleep and the mouse could not awaken him as usual. Then it began scratching his ear so hard that Colman awoke immediately: he praised the animal and gave it more food from that time on. One day the

saint was away for more than an hour, conversing with a guest. On his return he noticed that the fly was sitting without movement on the very word in his prayer-book where he had stopped before leaving. The saint praised the fly for its zeal and began giving it more breadcrumbs with drops of honey as a treat. But by the end of summer all of them died on the same day: the fly was the first and the mouse and cock died after it from grief. In his sorrow St. Colman wrote a letter to his friend, St. Columba of Iona, telling him this story. And St. Columba sent a letter in reply: "When you had these friends, brother, you were rich. That is why you are in sorrow now. Such sorrows come due to riches. So try not to have riches any more." And Colman realized that



Statue of St. Colman

one can be rich even without money.

In the seventh year of Colman's solitude it came to pass that after spending Lent in fasting and prayer, St. Colman had nothing to eat on the day of Holy Easter. At the same time the pious and generous King Guaire of Connacht (possibly the saint's cousin) was about to celebrate Easter with his retinue, sitting at table with sumptuous dishes. Suddenly the king exclaimed: "May all of our dinner by Divine providence go to some worthy servant of God! And we will do without such a luxury today." And at once invisible angels carried all the dishes from the royal table to St. Colman's cave. The king ordered his men to find out: Who is this holy man to whom angels brought food? And soon the hermit Colman was found. The king marveled at his ascetic life, promised to give him land to found a monastery, and assigned sufficient means to maintain it.

Thus St. Colman left his hermitage and began to serve people. Soon his



Structural remains of St Colman's Oratory

glory as a wonderworker spread all over the region. Many people came to Colman and obtained healing and consolation. Once the saint's belt fell on the ground not far from his former hermitage and it was a sign that he was to build a monastery on that spot. The monastery was called Kilmacduagh ("church of the son of Duagh") and Colman became its first abbot. (His belt was later kept as a relic and many were healed by it). Much against his will, St. Colman was also probably ordained bishop of the region with its center in Kilmacduagh and founded the first cathedral there. Colman, being a bishop and abbot at the same time, laboured with all his zeal as a true good pastor, caring for all the monasteries and convents in his diocese and kindling the hearts of his flock with fervent love for Christ our Saviour. But life "in the world" (in comparison with his former seclusion), the fame and praise from people were a burden to him, and with all his heart he desired to return to his beloved way of life one day. And after many years of service to people, the saint



*Holy Well of St Colman in Burren forest,
Clare*

resigned his episcopacy seven years before his death. The saint settled in the Oughtmama valley in the Burren area where he reposed on October 29, 632, at a very advanced age.

St. Colman was venerated as a



St Colman's cave, Burren forest

saint immediately after his death and became the patron-saint of Kilmacduagh. In addition to his main relics, the episcopal vestments and the personal staff of St. Colman were kept as precious relics for many centuries, and the staff is still preserved at the National Museum in Dublin - it was used for the taking of oaths in the late medieval period. According to legend, the saint predicted that no man or animal would ever be killed by lightning in the diocese of Kilmacduagh and it is said that this is true to this day.

In medieval times, Kilmacduagh Monastery gained great popularity and excelled in preserving ascetic traditions. This religious site was

so important that from the twelfth century on a permanent diocese existed here. Unfortunately, Vikings made raids on the monastery, and it was eventually plundered in the twelfth century. In the thirteenth century an Augustinian Abbey appeared on the site. This monastery was dissolved at the Reformation.

Today Kilmacduagh is a small village in the south of County Galway near the town of Gort. It continues to be a holy site and a destination for pilgrimages. Many ancient picturesque ruins survive, including ruins of the cathedral, monastery churches (St. Mary's, St. John the Baptist's and others) and monastic buildings (the abbots' house). One of its gems is an ancient Irish round tower - the highest surviving such tower in the country (112 feet).

***Saint Colman of Kilmacduagh,
pray to God for us!***

Dmitry Lapa

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/75046.htm>



Stone with traces of rope

Journey to Orthodoxy

“RUSSIA IS A SACRED COUNTRY FOR ME”

Interview with James Evans, an Orthodox Briton.

Part 1

We continue to publish the materials of Spas TV program “My Path To God”, where Priest George Maximov interviews people who converted to Orthodoxy. The guest of today’s program is James Evans, an Orthodox Englishman. He will tell us why he prefers to live in Russia rather than in England, what he gets from singing in the Orthodox Church and how his journey to Orthodoxy began.

Priest George Maximov: Hello. You’re watching My Path To God. Today we have a guest from England. James, please tell us about yourself.

James Evans: I was born in a Catholic family in London. Later we moved to Salisbury, 3 hours away from London. I went to an Anglican school, because education there was better than in Catholic schools. The Anglican service doesn’t differ much from the Catholic service. It was quite beautiful and I sang in the school choir during the services. However, I went to a Catholic church for Communion. All my grandparents are from Scotland, Ireland and Wales, and so I am of Celtic origin.

I grew up in Salisbury and went to Oxford after graduation. When I was



James Evans

still in school in Salisbury, I passed the Latin exam one year earlier and was offered to select an additional subject. I chose Informatics, but they assigned me to a Russian language course instead. I was upset, but started reluctantly studying it. A few months later, I was told that this year they were organizing a student exchange program and I had a chance of going to Russia. I travelled to Russia for my summer vacation in 1989, when I was 16. This changed everything for me and set the course for my future life. When I got back to England, I understood that I couldn’t live without Russia. I talked the Principal into giving me an opportunity to study Russian language and literature individually. He made an exception and assigned personal tutors to me. In the University of Oxford, I continued my Russian studies. Not because I wanted to become a linguist, but because I felt that Russia was calling

me. I don't know why, but I had a feeling that there would be no life for me without Russia. That was how it all started.

Father George: *So, thanks to the Russian language studies, you learned about Russian culture. You also visited Russia when it was still a part of the Soviet Union and saw its everyday life and people. Were you particularly impressed by anything?*

I wasn't impressed by the Russian culture as much as I was impressed by a totally different view on life.

James Evans: My first encounter with Russian culture started with Lermontov. After studying Russian for about a year and knowing no more than a hundred words, I started reading his Hero of Our Times. What impressed me when I visited Russia? I wasn't impressed by the culture, the museums and art, etc. as much as I was impressed by a totally different view on life.

As part of that student exchange program, a group from the Soviet Union came to Great Britain. My school has a five-century long history. It was founded by King Edward VI, the son of Henry VIII. A group of kids from Soviet Union came and broke all the rules. We drank Sovetskoye champagne in my room. One of the guests was a very good guitarist and he played a mix of Russian songs and the Beatles' songs. I think they even smoked. It was

shocking. After that, the boys in my school looked at me differently. They knew that it was something beyond their understanding.

For me, being in Russia is like breathing different air. The relationships between people here are different. I don't know why, but I didn't quite get along with kids in England. However, for some reason I felt that I belonged with these Russian kids. It was so easy. The communication was totally different and pleasant. It is difficult to explain. It was a different feeling, a different way of life. Something changed in me after my first visit to Russia. However, at that time I had no interest in Orthodoxy.

Father George: *How did you learn about Orthodoxy?*

James Evans: I participated in a second student exchange program. My friend Phillip was in that program too. Eventually, with the blessing of Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh, Philip became Father Phillip. Once Philip and I went to an Orthodox church in London. We didn't even know that Bishop Anthony was there. He was walking in the church so quietly and then came up and talked to us. In about a minute, Phillip realised who was talking to him and he couldn't believe it. I didn't quite understand who was talking to us. When I came to Russia, Phillip, who was already a Reader in the church, always invited me to the services. I stood there with a straight back, as I felt awkward and



Metropolitan Anthony of Sourozh

didn't want to bow. People in Russia probably won't understand it, but in England and generally in the West people are very afraid to show that they are religious. They don't want to make the sign of the cross not because they don't worship the cross, but because they don't want to draw attention to their inner feelings. They are too shy to show them. As I came from such a background, I felt awkward in an Orthodox church, but since Phillip kept on inviting me, I didn't refuse. I would come and stand there for about 2 hours; my back would be stiff and sore. The service was very impressive and beautiful, but it was tough for me because standing like that was difficult and I had a feeling that this was not my world, and many things seemed strange. Still, this was my first step.

Once a priest invited me into the altar. It was a great honour. I stood there in awe with eyes wide open, feeling that it was very important. The priest probably foresaw that in the future

I would convert to Orthodoxy and maybe that was why he invited me. It was unforgettable.

Father George: *How did you convert to Orthodoxy? Were you moved by your heart or by your reason? What played the major role?*

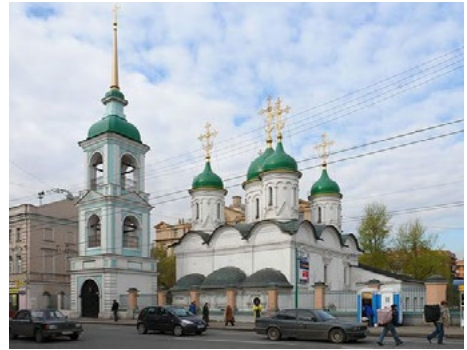
My spiritual journey is associated with singing.

James Evans: My spiritual journey is associated with singing. As I mentioned, I used to sing when I was a child, but I stopped singing when I grew up. I still don't sing much when I'm in England. I feel that there is no need for me to sing there. On the other hand, I started singing here in Russia, I don't know why. As if here I am a totally different person.

Olya, the wife of my friend from the first student exchange program, was teaching me singing in the opera school. There were some guests at the exam and among them was Vasily Petrovich, the choirmaster of the church I now go to. At the end of the exam, he came up to me and invited me to sing in his Holy Trinity Church in Lysty district. I remember that it felt as if my heart were softly smiling. Very softly, but it was a definite smile. As if my heart was telling me to say, "Yes". I don't remember what exactly I answered to the choirmaster; probably I said that I would come. However, I knew for sure that I'd come to the service. So next Sunday I went there and started singing. It happened some time early in Great

Lent, 12 years ago. People in the choir gallery knew that I was a Catholic, but let me sing anyway. I didn't think about anything specific then, I simply knew that singing during the service was beautiful. I don't remember how exactly it happened, but by the end of Great Lent, Vasily Petrovich and I were already discussing my conversion to Orthodoxy. Father Ambrose anointed me with chrism on Great Saturday and on Easter Day I was already an Orthodox Christian. This was just the beginning, of course. Some people come to religion through reason, but for me it happened through singing. I can't explain why, but singing was important for me.

I remember thinking, "Singing here is great, but it is only twice a week, three times a week maximum." It was not enough for me, so on other days I went to another church where they had early services. A few months later, a new priest was assigned to our church and he decided to have services every day. I smiled inside again, as if I knew that this would happen. So as soon as they started having services every day, I started singing at the church every morning. This was how my day started: I would get up with difficulty, but if it wasn't for singing I wouldn't get up at all. Singing was what made me get up and go to the service. So, my spiritual development was closely related to my singing every day at the church. Gradually, I started immersing myself in the atmosphere



*Holy Trinity Church in Lysty district.
(Photo by Andrey Zilov)*

of divine services.

People are hustling and bustling around, while in the church everything is serene and we are singing. That was how the services were performed throughout Russia for hundreds of years. And I am a part of it.

I think that this is the important difference between Protestants and Orthodox. Protestants are completely committed to reason. They seem to study a lot and they can tell you many interesting things, whereas in Orthodoxy, I can simply go to a service, partake of the Mystery and be totally immersed in it. It is like immersing into warm water. It is something that I do not fully understand, but although I don't understand what is happening here, I participate in it in my own small way. And I know that it counts, and I can say why it is so meaningful. I'm singing in the church, and even though I am no one important and not much of a singer, I am a part

of this worship service in downtown Moscow. People are hustling and bustling around, hurrying to work, cars rushing by, while we sing here quietly and peacefully. That was how the services were performed throughout Russia for hundreds of years. And I am a part of it. It is beautiful and this is what I need, because without it, I would be stuck in all that hustle and bustle.

Father George: *When I spoke with converts from various Western countries, some of them mentioned a special phase of their journey. Initially, they felt that by becoming Orthodox they were accepting a beautiful tradition where many things seemed somewhat strange and unusual to them. Secondly, many of them noted that later they realized that it wasn't something completely strange to them, that it was the same faith that their ancestors professed a long time ago when they were members of the one Church before Rome's rejection of Orthodoxy. They realized that the ancient saints from their home countries and the ancient history of their people are actually a part of the history of the Orthodox Church. Did you feel something like that? Or do you primarily associate Orthodoxy with the Russian world?*

In Catholic churches, everybody is sitting when the service starts, then you have to stand up for a while, then you have to sit down again and later you have to stand up and sit down again...

James Evans: In my case it was the other way around. I felt alienated from

the things I knew from my childhood in England, because there were significant changes in the Catholic worship services. You probably know about it better than I do - it happened in the 1960s, when the worship service was changed from Latin to English. On one hand, it was the right decision as it probably helped many people by making the services more accessible. On the other hand, the services became shorter and stripped down. There are benches in the churches, everybody is sitting at first, then you have to stand up for a while, then you have to sit down again and later you have to stand up and sit down again. Then you have to kneel. All this happens during a short service that lasts for about 40 minutes... If you want to talk to God quietly, this makes it difficult, because all these movements are distracting. It could even be annoying. I wasn't really annoyed, but inside I probably was already prepared for a more tranquil and profound service, the way it is done in Orthodox churches here in Russia.

James Evans was interviewed by Priest George Maximov

Translation by Talyb Samedov

Pravoslavie.ru 30/6/2017

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

To be continued

In the Footsteps of the Pilgrims

IMPRESSIONS OF A PILGRIMAGE TO THE HOLY LAND.

PART 3

Fifth Day:

Tuesday, 15th November, 2016.

This was the longest day. We started at 05.30 walking to the Liturgy at 06.15 in Bethlehem and finished at 19.30 eating St Peter's Fish in Tiberias.

The Liturgy in the Grotto was splendid. We all venerated the silver star under the altar. There were four priests including Fr Nikolay. Although there was a packed crowd in the Grotto they still managed to complete the Great Entrance with style. The service was mostly in Slavonic, but the solo choir parts were sung in Greek. Communion was given more appropriate space and took place on the upper level.

Following breakfast we set off on a round of visits. At each place of biblical significance Fr Nikolay read from the Gospel and then added appropriate prayers. Before we arrived Sr Mariam had given an outline of each place and its significance. She was also unrivalled in her knowledge of suitable places to stop, sources of pomegranate juice, shopping, or just a good view.

Our first stop at Bethany was the cave



The cave of Lazarus

of Lazarus, down 20 winding steps and then having to slide under the floor for three more steps in order to enter the tomb. We then visited the outskirts of Jericho and en route to the baptism site at the River Jordan, the Greek convent of St Gerasimos. He is mostly associated with removing a large splinter from a lion's paw. In return the lion became devoted to the Saint even helping take care of other animals such as donkeys and camels. When the Saint became ill the lion tended him, dying a few days after St Gerasimos passed away.



At the River Jordan we changed into white shifts and followed Fr Nikolay to the river. He read the Gospel; *“And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, ‘Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’”* (Mark 1 v9-11), and then immersed himself totally three times. Then it was our turn, and, although the water was cold, afterwards we hardly needed a towel to dry ourselves as it was close to 30°.



At Jericho the St Prophet Elisha’s monastery has the original sycamore tree of Zaccheus near the town centre. *“And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho, and, behold there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among*

the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed in a sycamore tree to see Him.” (Luke 19 v1-4).

It is also where Jesus healed the blind man (Luke 18 v35). According to the Bible, Jericho was the first town captured by the Israelites under the leadership of Joshua. The city walls were brought down with a tremendous shout and a trumpet blast (Joshua 6 v19).

We drank tea and ate our lunch under the shade of trees at the St John the Baptist monastery of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission (REM).

2 km north of Jericho is the Mount of Forty Days where there is a cable car service to the Greek Orthodox monastery of the Temptation. This holy retreat has a spectacular location, perched high up on a cliff face. The monastery dates back to the 12th century and is built around the grotto where the Devil appeared to tempt Jesus away from his forty day fast. Caves can be seen in the rock face where monks used to spend the forty days before Pascha. The more energetic walked all the way up. The less energetic stayed on the bus and went 1km down the road to take the cable car.

Back on the bus we headed north for about 90 minutes. It had WiFi so pilgrims could keep in touch while travelling. ‘Our second home...’ was one description. Checking in to the



REM Pilgrim Residence “The House of Arches” was a matter of minutes for all of us. A substantial meal of salad starters, bread, soup, St Peter’s fish with rice, followed by Medjoul dates and tea rounded off the day. The residence overlooks the Sea of Galilee and incorporates large parts of a Crusader castle.

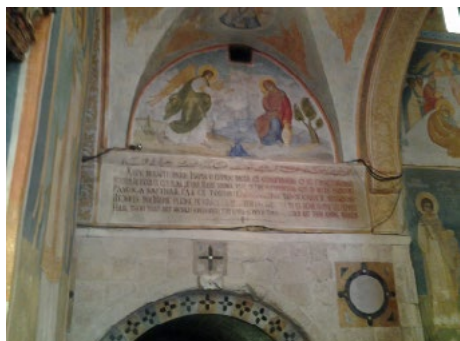
Sixth Day:

Wednesday, 16th November, 2016.

After a substantial breakfast, including proper kasha, we set off for Cana in Galilee. Jesus performed his first miracle at this small village near Nazareth, at a wedding where He turned water into wine (John 2 v 1-11). There were great views over the Sea of Galilee as we travelled. It is Israel’s main source of water, lying 212 m below sea level and fed and drained by the Jordan River. It is 21 km long and 9 km wide and since biblical times has been famous for its abundance of fish. Unfortunately the monastery was closed due to sickness, but Sr Mariam took us to a store specialising in wines of Cana. We bought gifts and all shared the cost of a jeroboam sized bottle of wine.

At Nazareth we visited the Greek Basilica of the Annunciation. It has a holy well and a cave where the Angel Gabriel is said to have appeared to the Mother of God. There are many other Christian churches in Nazareth including one dedicated to St Joseph and believed to be the site of his workshop. At Mount Tabor, 3 km northwest of Nazareth, is the site of the Transfiguration. The Pilgrim Residence had provided us with maps so that we could follow the route. The road to the top of the mountain is very narrow so we travelled in minibuses, having had the chance of yet another fresh juice. On the way Sr Mariam contrasted how Moses led the Jews out of slavery into freedom and how Christ offers the route to lead everyone out of the slavery of sin. Again at both of these stops Fr Nikolay read from the appropriate Gospel. At the top of the Mount we entered the monastery, venerated icons, and were anointed. Needless to say the Mount offers great views over Lower Galilee.

Up until today the midday meal had been a packed lunch. Today, however we visited the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission Metochion of St Mary Magdalene in Tiberias. The sisters had put on a fine spread of food with another chance to try St Peter’s fish. Fr Nikolay then led us to the little church where he read from John 20 v1, *“The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the Sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away*



The Greek Basilica of the Annunciation

from the Sepulchre". The Metochion opens directly on to the Sea of Galilee, and also has pools where weary pilgrims may soak their feet and deeper pools where swimming is possible.

Capernaum is in a designated National Park. In 1925 a Greek church was opened. After the 1948 establishment of the state of Israel it was in a UN declared no-mans-land and no visits were possible. After the Six Days War it was officially handed back by the Israeli army, and thus has a measure of recognition from the state. The interior of the Church of the Twelve Apostles is a blaze of colour from recently painted iconography. Outside we found the seashore, peacocks, and donkeys. Supper in Tiberias was soup, barbecued chicken served with chips and mixed salads, including the rather hot Russian ketchup. The evening was rounded off with a trip up to the roof accompanied by tea and the sweet wine brought from Cana.

Seventh Day:

Thursday, 17th November, 2016.

We set off on the route to Lydda (Lod) taking the Yitzhak Rabin Highway. There we found the Greek church dedicated to Saint George.

Fr Nikolay gave us anointing twice, once in the main area of the church and then in the crypt. There were also the Chains of St George on display.

At Jaffa we saw and tasted some oranges. At the REM Metochion of the Righteous Tabitha. Sr Mariam pointed out that the name is Aramaic and is pronounced "Tab-ee-tha". She was raised from the dead by St Peter (Acts 9: 36). The church had some excellent frescos depicting St Peter. We then went to the Tomb, where Fr Nikolay sang the Troparion and after veneration we were anointed again. Sr Mariam had one last surprise for us. The bus stopped in a side street and we entered a fast food bar for a serving of falafel. Then it was time to head to the airport...

That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works. "Lord I have loved the habitation of thy house and the place where thine honour dwelleth" (Psalm 25 v 7-8)!

John and Stella Newbery



**THE UNIVERSAL
EXALTATION OF THE
PRECIOUS AND LIFE-GIVING
CROSS OF THE LORD**

(27 September)

After the holy Resurrection of Jesus Christ the pagan Roman emperors covered over the ground of Golgotha and the Tomb of the Lord as they did not believe in God and wanted everyone to forget about Jesus Christ who suffered for mankind. After 300 years in the 4th century, the Emperor Constantine the Great (The Holy Equal to the Apostles Emperor Constantine) became the sole ruler of the vast Roman Empire. He believed in God and asked his mother Helen to go to Jerusalem and discover the Tomb of the Lord and the Life-Giving Cross. Saint Helen searched and searched for a long time and only after destroying the pagan temple they finally discovered the Tomb and the three crosses. Which of them was the cross of the Lord? Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem touched the crosses to a corpse and



when the cross of the Lord touched the dead one he came to life. At last, the Life-Giving Cross was found. The Cross was elevated so everyone could see it from afar; the people were saying, "Lord have mercy", and bowing before the Venerable Wood. It was the day from which the Great Feast of Exaltation of the Precious and Life-Giving Cross of the Lord originated.



WEARING THE CROSS

The Cross is a symbol of Christian faith. When Jesus Christ was crucified and died on the Cross, His invincible and life-giving divine power was given to the cross. Christians should always wear a cross. It is usually worn under the clothes not to show it off as a decoration or jewellery (only priests are allowed to wear the pectoral crosses on top of their clothes). Always have your cross on. There are moments when you feel sad or afraid – remember you have your cross on you - kiss it quietly and say: “Save me and keep me”.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR MOST HOLY LADY THE MOTHER OF GOD AND EVER-VIRGIN MARY

(21 September)

Having reached old age, Righteous Joachim and Anna had no children. The neighbours laughed at them as among Hebrews childlessness was

considered as punishment for sin. In deep grief both Joachim and Anna kept on praying with all their hearts and did not lose hope in God’s mercy. They truly believed that for God everything is possible. They even made a vow that if God sent them a child, the child would be dedicated to the service of God in the Temple.

The Lord was kind and answered their payers. Joachim and Anna had a daughter and they named her Mary, which means “Wanted-for child, Lady, Hope”. Indeed the little girl became a hope for all Christians - the Most Holy Lady the Mother of God is so pure in heart that everyone wants to pray to Her: “Most Holy Mother of God, save us”. The Mother of God hears our payers and always helps and protects us from all evil.



For Reflection

Labour to acquire thanksgiving toward God for everything, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, and then you will find peace.

St. Barsanuphius

Watch carefully lest there arm itself against you the proud and vainglorious thought that in serving the brethren you are doing everything excellently; strive as much as possible not to allow the unprofitable, evil, and soul-destroying thought of vainglory to act in you, for it enters the soul of a man subtly, so that sometimes he does not notice at all how his thoughts are becoming puffed up and are preparing a fall for him.

Elder Hilarion

Prayer is an excellent task for the servants of Christ above all others, for the other things are ministries and secondary... Truly this is the task entrusted to us by God, and the crown of all else.

St. Symeon of Thessalonica, On Prayer



*Sourozh Messenger is published with the blessing
of His Eminence Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh*

Online-version is available via the diocesan website: www.sourozh.org

E-mail: londonsobornolistok@gmail.com

We welcome your stories of finding faith, conversion, pilgrimages etc. If you would like to leave feedback or contribute content to the Newsletter, please contact us at the above address. We are always happy to hear from our readers.

Any donation to support the work of the church, however small, is welcome. You can donate by:

- Cash to the church collection boxes
- Online via the diocesan website www.sourozh.org (click «Donate»)
- A cheque or a bank transfer to Lloyds Bank

Account Name: Russian Orthodox Church in London – Rfrbshmnt

Account no. 01911504 Sort Code: 30-92-89

BIC: LOYDGB21393 IBAN: GB28 LOYD 3092 8901 9115 04