



# Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen!

## FROM THE FATHERS

“TAKE FURTHER NOTE of what you have heard read: namely that Mary Magdalene, persevering by the tomb, found Him Whom she had been seeking. *For he that endureth to the end shall be saved* (Matt. 10:20). Accordingly, it is necessary that you drive evil from you, and so it is expedient for you that you persevere steadfastly in whatever good you have begun, if you desire to see the Lord and come to your heavenly home.”

SAINT AMBROSE OF MILAN, +397 A.D.

“THE SAME AVARICE which made captive the disciple and companion of Christ [Judas] also made captive the soldier who was on guard at the sepulchre. ‘We will give you money,’ they said, ‘and you can say that while you were sleeping His disciples came and took Him away’ (see Matt. 28:13)... You bring forward sleeping witnesses! Truly you have yourselves fallen asleep, who fail so greatly on examination! If they were asleep, what could they see? And if they saw nothing, how are they witnesses?”

BLESSED AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO, + 430 A.D.

“THE JEW rejoices on Sabbaths and feast days; and a monk who is a glutton on Saturdays and Sundays. He counts beforehand the days till Pascha, and prepares the food for it several days in advance. The slave of his belly calculates with what dishes he will celebrate the feast, but the servant of God considers with what spiritual gifts he may be enriched.”

VEN JOHN OF THE LADDER, ABBOT OF SINAI, + C.650 A.D.

“AS IT WAS *very early in the morning* that the women, according to the account, came to the tomb, a great eagerness of life is implied. And so, mystically, an example is given us of how, scattering the darkness of the vices, with our face to the light, we should be earnest in offering to the Lord the odour of our good works and the sweetness of our prayer.”

VENERABLE BEDE OF JARROW, + 735 A.D.

“IN GLADNESS, heaven and earth glorify the Giver of life Who is risen from the grave. And you, be glad also, if so be that you are heavenly! And be glad likewise if you are earthly. Now are all things filled with light, heaven and earth and the nethermost regions of the earth. Now there is gladness even in the nethermost regions, for the eternal Light, Christ our God, has shone forth there.”

VEN. ANATOLY OF OPTINA, + 1894

AFTER the resurrection we shall receive this earthen vessel, our body, once again. But then, it will no longer be heavy and burdensome, sensual and sluggish, but entirely changed by the fiery gleam of our Sweetest Jesus; it will shine rays brighter than the sun."

BLESSED ELDER JOSEPH THE HESYCHAST, + 1959 A.D.



# PASCHA AND THE SCRIPTURES

A SERMON BY THE EVER-MEMORABLE  
METROPOLITAN ANTONY (KHTAPOVITSKY)

*“Come on this auspicious day of the Resurrection,  
let us partake of the new fruit of the vine of divine gladness  
and of the Kingdom of Christ “ (Paschal Canon, Ode VIII).*

## ***Christ is Risen!***

Yes, great is the spiritual gladness of today’s feast. We rejoice because Christ the Saviour, Who was reviled and killed by the impious, has risen from the dead. We rejoice because His resurrection has given us eternal life; and, finally, we rejoice because this triumphant and great day has awakened our souls, even if not for long, from the sleep of sin, and has enabled them to partake of Christ’s Kingdom. Look at people today, not all but the majority - it is as if they have been regenerated. Where, today, is their usual unfriendliness, their striving to annoy each other, to laugh at each other? Where is the conceit and pride which superiors show to their inferiors? Where are the gloom and reticence, so characteristic of sinners? Where are all these instruments of our spiritual death? *O Death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?* (Hosea 13:14). Instead of malice, today we encounter kindness between people; instead of envy, mutual forgiveness; instead of pride, we see the great ones of this world exchanging a brotherly kiss with common folk; instead of spiritual death we see *resurrection and life*; instead of the hell that we have built on earth in our sinful life, today we have a foretaste of Paradise, of the heavenly Kingdom, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. *We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of Hades, the beginning of an everlasting life* (Paschal Canon, ode VII).

Blessed be our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has led us up from death to life, redeemed us from darkness to light; may He also be blessed for having established this feast in His Church - this feast when we can be exalted, albeit not for long, and only "in part," to the summit of the Christian spiritual disposition, when *we enter into the joy of our Lord*, and draw near, even if only a little, to the life lived by the early Christians, who were more worthy of that name than we are. Oh, if only we always lived with that joyful feeling of forgiveness and love in our souls which we now experience! How radiant and pleasing to God our lives would be! How we ourselves, it would seem, should desire this!

If some good person came for a minute to visit some hungry and neglected criminals imprisoned in a gloomy gaol, and brought them light and nourishing food and talked kindly to them - how impatiently they would wait for him to come a second time, how they would yearn for him day and night, how they would beg the guards to persuade the dear guests to come and visit them again and again! So now also Christ, risen from the dead, has come to the gloomy prison of our earthly life, has given us to taste of the *new drink* (Ode III) of His love, has enlightened us with the light of His joy. How can we not value this joy, not preserve it carefully in our lives, like the pearl for the sake of which the wise merchant deprived himself of all his possessions? When we have once tasted Christ, experienced in our hearts, even if only for a minute, all the truth of His promises, all the sweetness of His law, is it possible for us to lose it again? Surely we will not remain Christians only for today? Indeed, it is not only on one day that Christ is risen: *Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more*, wrote the Apostle. *Death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord* (Rom. 6:9-11).

And so if, even for today, we were really *alive unto God*, and *dead unto sin*, then of course we could not revive to sin and die unto God again so easily and so quickly. But if, however, this does happen, if we only live unto Christ for a few hours, then it means we are not really living, that we meet His resurrection with an insufficiently clear faith, with

inadequately firm hope, with love that is too weak. How can we be filled with joy that is real, and not just apparent? With what should we fill our souls in order to meet the Risen One *worthily*, so that our *partaking of Christ's Kingdom* today is not just an ecstasy lasting one day and then easily disappearing, but is a constantly growing penetration by God's commandments, *that our joy may be full* (John 16:24)? Let us recall the sacred accounts of the appearances of the Risen Saviour to His Apostles and the Myrrh-bearing Women. Let us penetrate into the attitude of soul with which they were deemed worthy once again clearly to behold their Teacher, about Whom they had hoped that He was *he which should have redeemed Israel* (Luke 24:21). Let us penetrate into this disposition and try to make it our own, so that we may *behold Christ*, not just with a vague feeling, but with full clarity, *radiant with the unapproachable light of the Resurrection, and we shall clearly hear Him say: Rejoice!* (Ode I).

When it was yet dark, Christ's faithful women disciples went to His tomb to honour their Teacher, Who had been reviled and bestially executed, with the last earthly honours and with love, *bringing the spices which they had prepared* (Luke 24:1), and, what is more than spices, with bitter tears of love and reverence. They did not despise Christ when He was insulted. They were not afraid of the mockery and hatred of His enemies. They remembered only His love and sanctity, and they hastened to His tomb with broken hearts. But what met them at the tomb? Instead of coarse soldiers; heavenly Angels; instead of the darkness of the cave: an immaterial light; instead of funeral laments: the Resurrected One Himself with the greeting, *Rejoice* (Matt. 28:9). *Why seek ye the Living among the dead? Why mourn ye the Incorruptible amid corruption? Go, proclaim it unto His disciples* (Paschal Stichera). After setting out for grief, ignominy and insults, they returned as preachers of the good tidings, and taught the great truth of the resurrection to those whose duty it would be to *teach all nations* (Matt. 28:19).

Brothers! When we have seen Christ being insulted in life, when we have seen His law being forgotten - whether in the corruption of children, or the defilement of holy places, or the exultation of vice - have we wept like the Myrrh-bearers? Have we remained firm in our love for

Him? Have we anointed His body with the spices of good deeds, accusing the revilers, bringing those who have been led astray to their senses, consoling the distressed? If we have not acted like this, then let us do so now, and then our joy in the resurrection will be made full, and let us do so always, so that, like the holy women, we may be deemed worthy to behold the life of Christ even in circumstances in which it seems to the world that His law is completely dead and is being trampled on in life. Let us imitate the holy women in their fearless faithfulness to Christ, taking no account of how little He is appreciated in the life which surrounds us.

Then, like all people who are truly pious, truly devoted to Him, we will always see His resurrection with our spiritual eyes, like the Myrrh-bearers, to whom He revealed Himself in His glorified flesh for the first time.

And again, an unknown third person comes up to two travellers, Luke and Cleophas, asks them about the reason for their grief, reproaches them for not understanding the prophets and begins to explain, *beginning at Moses*, how Christ had to suffer these things, *and to enter into His glory* (Luke 24:27, 26). The Divinely inspired prophecies of the righteous ones of old kindled the spirit of the grieving disciples; the spiritual image of their beloved Teacher was reflected in their souls with new strength - and then what happened? The traveller came to share their meal with them, broke bread and suddenly opened their eyes, and they saw that the Risen Christ Himself had been with them, that it was He Who had opened their hearts as he explained the Scriptures.

Brothers! Do our hearts burn when we hear the word of God in church? And do we hasten to read for ourselves the revelation of God's will which is given us in the Holy Bible? If in future we behaved differently, we could set aside at least fifteen minutes in each day which we give up to our worldly interest; let us set aside at least those few minutes for studying the Divine law and making it our own, and then, when we read it, our hearts will burn, i.e. we will try mentally to taste every word in the Bible with our hearts, to experience in ourselves all that the Lord is teaching us. Then we will always live with Him; then the joy of His resurrection, which we are now celebrating, will remain with us hence-

forth and we will always bear it in our burning hearts, *exalting the eternal Pascha* (Ode V).

However, you will notice that neither the Myrrh-bearers nor Christ's disciples were deemed worthy to meet Him without trials and woes. On the contrary, it would appear that she to whom He *appeared first* (Mk 16:9), Mary Magdalene, experienced the longest trial of all. Not finding the Lord in the tomb, she did not understand that the day and hour of His glorification had come. Instead, in the simplicity of her soul, she presumed that His enemies had permitted yet another new mockery of His body and had thrown it out into the street somewhere. She weeps bitterly, so that from the abundance of her tears she does not recognize the angel who is talking to her, then thinks it is the gardener who is speaking to her and addressing him with her last hope, *If thou hast bourned Him hence, tell me where thou has laid Him, and I will take Him away* (John 20:15). But suddenly she recognizes the voice, not of the hostile gardener, but of the sweetest Lord Jesus, saying, *Mary*, and she worships the Godman risen in the flesh.

Brothers! How many times in life we have lost Christ, not from the burial cave, but from our own most sinful hearts! Do we seek Him again? Do we weep over the loss with warm tears of contrition? Do we ask everyone once again to show us the path to Christ? And if not, then let us imitate this woman peer of the Apostles, who in her time was perhaps more sinful than we, but nevertheless twice found Christ and His salvation. The first time he drove seven demons out of her, and the other time He sent her to preach *the glad tidings of joy*. So also with us, if we seek Him, if we weep when we temporarily lose love and firm faith towards Him, if we repent and pray and seek instruction from the vine-dressers of the Church, then the Lord will reveal Himself to us also, and fill us with the joy of His appearance, so that we might also *proclaim in the morning His joy, and His truth by night* (see Ps 91:2). Every day, at every step we take, let us remember His resurrection from the dead, so as to overcome the temptations of life with it, and thus be Christians not only today, but all our lives, to preserve that love, that forgiveness, that humility before all, which make the feast of the Resurrection, the cause of these feelings, so sweet for us.

And so, with what disposition of soul can one be deemed worthy to behold the Resurrected One face to face? With the faithfulness and love of the Myrrh-bearers, by listening to the Scriptures with flaming hearts like the two Apostles, and by ceaselessly seeking Christ like Mary Magdalene. If we encourage such dispositions in ourselves and patiently cultivate them in our souls, then not only will we always have the joy of Christ's resurrection in our hearts here on earth, but we will also *partake of Him fully in the unwaning day of His kingdom* (see Ode IX).

And when the gloomy life of the earth arms itself against our spirit, and temptations of the flesh and the world start swaying our hearts - like the Christ-hating scribes who taught the soldiers to slander the miracle of the resurrection - when, that is, malice or envy, or self-interest, or vainglory, or the passion of lust rise up against us, then let us remember today's Paschal joy. Let us reproduce in our souls the heavenly joy which we are now experiencing, and we will see how in comparison with it how insignificant are the momentary joys of sin, *which shows us sweet things, but ever makes us taste and swallow bitter things*.

Let us flee far from the bitter taste of sin and bind the sweetness of Christ's resurrection more firmly to our hearts; let us unite it with faithfulness, with love, with reading the Holy Scriptures, and then Christ's words will be fulfilled in us: *I will see you again, and you heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you* (John 16:22). Amen.

*THIS SERMON was originally delivered on the first day of Pascha, 1889, in the main church of the St Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St Petersburg. It was published in English translation in the March-April, 1975, issue of "Orthodox Life" (Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville). We have very slightly tweaked the English of that translation, and have put the quotations from the Paschal services in the form that we use here at Saint Edward's.*



# TEACHING

## OF THE VENERABLE SERAPHIM OF SAROV

# ON THE PRAYER OF JESUS

SO SACRED and inspired of God are the words of this prayer, they were not only handed down by the Godly-wise Fathers, but even before them they were handed down by the most preeminent of the Apostles, Peter, Paul and John. One says: *No man can say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Spirit* (1 Cor. 12:3); another: *Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ* (John 1:17); and again: *Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God* (1 John 4:2); to the question of the Saviour and Teacher to His Apostles, *Whom do men say that I am?* - the elect disciple of Christ offered a most blessed confession, when he replied, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God* (Matt. 16:13, 16). Therefore those who came after them, our glorious teachers, and particularly those who lived in solitude, in the deserts and in silence, have collected together these sayings, which were spoken by those three pillars of the Church in various places and only partially, as being Divine voices, decreed aforetime by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and by three trustworthy witness, as it is said in the Scriptures: *that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established* (Matt. 18:16). These heavenly-wise Fathers, working together with the Holy Spirit, Who abode within them, beautifully brought them [*the Apostolic words - transl.*] into one composition; they called them the pillars of prayer, and passed them on to their disciples to keep and preserve. Behold now the wondrous order and sequence from the wisdom which is on high! For one names the Lord Jesus, another calls Jesus Christ, yet another calls Christ the Son of God, and so they follow one another, progressing close upon one another though the concord and harmony of these Divinely effectual words. For you can see that each one of their expressions, found at the end of the previous saying, forms the beginning of yet another saying, and in like manner leads on to the third. And this the Fathers proposed for all, not simply of themselves but being moved by the hand of the Most Holy Spirit. The

confession of the most divine Peter was granted him by revelation; it was inspired within him by the action of the Holy Spirit. *But all, it is said, these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will* (1 Cor. 12:11). In such a manner this Godmade prayer, like a thrice woven and indestructible cord, is most wisely and rationally woven and stitched together and composed, finally coming down to us in all its fulness. Furthermore the words, *have mercy on me*, the Divine Fathers united and added to this saving prayer, i.e. *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God*, in later times, specifically for those not yet mature in virtue, that is, for the beginners and those who are not perfect. For those who are experienced and perfect in Christ it suffices only to say that which comes from the Divine saying, that is, either *Lord Jesus*, or *Jesus Christ*, or *Christ Son of God*, or even just *Jesus*, which word they embrace and kiss as the fully complete work of the prayer, which fills them with that ineffable sweetness and joy, which excels every mind and all vision and all hearing. And thus these thrice blessed ones, being outside the flesh and the world and their related feelings on account of the Divine gift and grace which is implanted within them, transported and blessed by the embrace of love, are cleansed and sanctified and perfected, for, although it is not manifest, yet as a share of the promise, as if in a mirror, from now they contemplate the Divinity, which is beyond all essence and being, and the beginningless and uncreated Grace, and, satisfied with the remembrance and teaching alone, for it is said that both one and the other derive from the remembrance of the name of the Godman, the Word, from this they are raised up to inexpressible delight and to union and revelation. That this may be fully explained and most clearly confirmed, our sweetest Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Who loves souls, Whose words are deeds, and Whose sayings are, according to His own expression, spirit and life, has said with perfect clarity: *Without Me ye can do nothing* (John 15:5); and, *Whatsoever ye shall ask (of the Father) in My name, that will I do* (John 14:13), and moreover: *If ye shall ask any thing in My name, I will do it* (John 14:14) and so on. (See Saints Ignatius and Kallistus, chapter 50).

*... to be continued in the next issue.*

# The Coming Month

APRIL, this year, begins on **Holy and Great Saturday**, the day before Pascha itself, when we have two of the most beautiful services of the whole year. On this day, according to the hymn, Christ is in the grave bodily, in Hades with the soul though He is God, in Paradise with the thief, and enthroned with the Father and the Holy Spirit, filling all things with His glory. The Mattins service, often called the services of Lamentations, is chanted on the Friday evening, and during it the funeral psalm (118) is intoned with each verse interspersed with a chant of lamentation. At the end of the service a procession is made round the church with the Winding Sheet of the Saviour (the Epitaphios or Plaschanitsa). At the Vespers service of Great Friday, there was a shorter procession with the Shroud, when it was brought out of the sanctuary and laid on the bier in the centre of the church. This represented the taking down of Christ's body from the Cross and His being laid in the Tomb. The longer procession with the Winding Sheet on the Lamentation service represents his descent into Hades, and almost immediately thereafter we have three Scriptural readings which indicate that He has despoiled Hades: Ezekiel 27:1-14, the parable of the dry bones; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 and Galatians 3:12-14, which tells us of our deliverance from the curse of the law; and Matthew 27:62-66, wherein in anticipation of the miracle of the Resurrection we hear of the sealing of the Tomb and the setting of the guard. The Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great on the Great Sabbath itself is linked to Vespers. After the entrance of Vespers there are fifteen Old Testament readings, relating to Christ's Resurrection, ending with the hymn of the Three Children in the Babylonian furnace. Then follows the usual Apostle and Gospel sequence, but today it is broken by the chanting of prophetic verses in place of the usual Alleluia. During these verses, which begin "Arise, O God; judge the earth!", the altar coverings and the clergy vestments are changed from the dark lenten colours to bright paschal ones, and the pot pourri is scattered around the church, so that when we begin the Gospel reading, it is adorned in paschal radiance

and is made fragrant by the pot pourri. The Gospel reading itself, Matthew 28:1-20, proclaims the events which showed forth the resurrection of Christ. This changing of the vestments not only signifies the end of the time of grief and mourning and the beginning of paschal rejoicing, but is connected with the practice in the Early Church of baptising neophytes on this day, emphasizing that they died with Christ and rose again with him. They would be clothed in white chrisom robes after their Baptism and the whole church is similarly adorned, rejoicing over the sheep which were lost and have been found again.

The Midnight Service at Pascha is one which, unlike many others in the Church year, the vast majority of Orthodox Christians attend, and at least its outward form is familiar to them. It begins with a triple procession round the church, which recalls the Myrrh-bearers coming to the Tomb, very early in the morning. When the doors are opened, the church which we left in darkness is found to be full of light, because all the lamps and candles have been lit, and it signifies the empty Tomb, which, though it was empty of the Body, was filled with the divine light of the Resurrection. We enter the church again, repeatedly chanting the Troparion for Pascha: *“Christ is risen from the dead, by death hath He trampled down death, and on those in the graves hath he bestowed life.”* His victory is won; the troparion speaks of these things as already achieved. In Mattins the canon of the feast is chanted, interspersed at each ode with the threefold repetition of the troparion and a Little Litany. At the end, after the Praises, there are special verses, during which all exchange the threefold paschal kiss, greeting each other with the joy of the feast. This signifies the love and reconciliation which has been established between us through the death and Resurrection of Christ, and more deeply the reconciliation of our kind with God. Then the catechetical homily of Saint John Chrysostom is read. It is a spirited invitation to all the faithful to participate spiritually in the festival and it forcefully proclaims the victory of our Saviour. After the chanting of the Paschal Hours, we celebrate the Divine Liturgy with all the doors of the iconostas left wide open, as at all the services are in Bright or New Week (the week of Pascha) signifying that Heaven has been opened unto us. At the end of the Liturgy, the foods which we have not eaten during the fast, are

blessed so that thereafter, having received the Holy Mysteries of Christ at the Liturgy, we may break our fast. In Bright Week itself no fasting is appointed, and throughout the rest of the forty-day feast of Pascha, and indeed up to Pentecost itself, the fasting discipline is somewhat relaxed, and we are permitted wine and oil even on the usual Wednesday and Friday fast days.

This relaxation, though, should be observed in a Christian spirit. Last year we mentioned that in the early hours of the morning of Pascha a car load of Russians from their Church in West London came to joined us, sadly much the worse for wear, and they made rather a commotion. One of them later visited us again and very sweetly apologized and asked forgiveness. Perhaps out of embarrassment, he spoiled his apology somewhat by adding, "I had an excuse though - it was Pascha!" This may be a popular misconception, but it is not - in case any of you are wondering - the practice the Church advocates! Saint John Chrysostom, netting those who over-indulge and those who consider Pascha only as an occasion for showy dressing writes: "In the feasts of the outside world, the poor may be sad and unhappy, the rich festive and rejoicing; and not because of the food only, but also because of dress. For what happens with regard to food happens also with regard to clothing. For when a needy man sees a rich one clad in fine clothing, he is stricken and fancies himself the unhappiest of men. But here [*in the Church*] this is taken away, for all alike are clothed with the one saving garment: *For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ* (Gal. 3:27). Let us then not shame this sacred day with drunkenness, for the Lord has honoured us all alike, rich and poor, masters and servants; but rather let us repay the Lord for His goodness towards us, and the most perfect thanksgiving is a pure manner of life and a sober mind. For this festival and for this solemn gathering there is need neither of wealth or display, but of the riches of the mind, riches of the will. Such are the riches that here are offered. Nothing is sold here that relates to the body, only the hearing of the Divine teaching, the prayers of the fathers, the blessings of the priests, harmony, peace, and the union of soul. The gifts are spiritual, and spiritual also the price; which may we all receive through the grace and mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ."

# POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*“I DID READ an opinion that King Harold Godwinson (Harold II) was the last Orthodox British King and did die as the martyr at the Battle of Hastings on 14 October 1066. Do You honour him as the saint royal martyr?” - Y.A.K., Voronezh, Russia*

REGARDING King Harold, here we have never publicly honoured him as a Saint, because we believe that it is best to err on the side of caution in such matters, and wait until we are guided by people of greater spiritual understanding than ourselves.

I realize that one cannot simply draw the line of the Great Schism of Rome from Orthodoxy at 1054, and there are strong evidences to suggest that England remained faithful until the Norman Conquest. Some argue this on the basis that [at the time of the Conquest] Archbishop Stigand of Canterbury was under Rome’s censure, and therefore not in full communion with Rome. However, the censure had nothing to do with faith, but was rather on account of his holding a plurality of dioceses. So it would seem, if anything, Rome’s objection had some justification, although it was undoubtedly also motivated by their disapproval of the deposition of the previous Archbishop, Robert of Jumieges.

Others supporting the contention that England fell away from Orthodoxy in 1066, claim that the Pope blessed William’s invasion of England, and that the banner of the English was later sent to Rome for the Pope as a trophy, but modern scholars cast some doubt on those claims, which in any case might only suggest that the papacy was then politically aligned with the Normans, and may have no significance regarding the Faith.

Much stronger evidence that the Norman Conquest of 1066 is a better date than 1054 with regard to England, I think lies in the two facts that, after the Norman Conquest, there was a wholesale re-ordering of the Church, senior clergy were replaced, in several instances seats of Bishops were moved, relics were subjected to trial by fire, etc; and also after

the Conquest there was an English Exile, often forgotten. Where did the exiles go? One might have thought that they would have settled in other parts of Western Europe not under Norman sway. They did not. They went to Constantinople (where until the Fourth Crusade in 1204 there was an English Church), and to the Crimea. Maybe, and we can only say that, this is an indication that they consciously strove to settle in countries which had remained Orthodox.

So, I think we have to be cautious of accepting King Harold as a Saint and Martyr. He was undoubtedly a hero, a good king, and the one with the legitimate claim to the Throne, one worthy of honour and admiration, but we cannot be sure that he died as a member of the Church. Until a Synod of Bishops, untainted by their espousal of modern ecumenism and well-versed in the issues of the day, proclaims him such, I believe that we should err on the side of reticence. Perhaps I am mistaken.



#### TWO MORE BRIEF POINTS on **Alfred Swan**:-

**Father John** of the **Sacred Monastery of Sts Cyprian and Justina at Fili**, in Greece, who was at Jordanville in the seventies, writes: "I read with interest the two references to the musicologist Alfred Swan, and thought to write earlier. I see Isaac Lambertson wrote to clarify the matter. As I recall, I performed his funeral, or at least assisted if it was Vladyka Lavr who presided. Before the service I asked his widow, his second wife and a former student of his, what his Orthodox name is. She said Julius. So I told her that is how we will commemorate him. She was a bit taken aback, but made no objection. After a few years I remember she came and we served a pannikhida on his grave. When I started commemorating him as Alfred, she corrected me: Julius. That was the only occasion that I know of when Alfred was rendered in Church Slavonic." Fr John is undoubtedly right in correcting me; the occasion when I heard him mentioned in prayer as Alfred was probably not at the funeral, but in one of the several memorial services for him, chanted while his body remained in the church before the funeral - A.A.

And **Brother Isaac** writes again: “I recently discovered that Jane (Eugenia) Swan passed away, having suffered from Alzheimer’s disease, on the feast of 2/15 October 2010, in Atlanta, Georgia, where she was living with her son and only child, Alexis Swan. Perhaps you could enter her name among those you commemorate regularly.”

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# NEWS SECTION

## *STATEMENT OF THE EPISCOPAL ASSEMBLY OF OCEANIA*

NINE BISHOPS issued the following statement for the **Senate Standing Committee on Legal And Constitutional Affairs, in Canberra, Australia**: “The Orthodox Christian position on marriage requires an adequate understanding of how the term ‘marriage’ is understood not only in our faith community, but also its broader societal implications. Marriage is regarded above all as a sacrament that has been instituted by God who created man and woman in His own image and likeness (Gen. 1:27-31). There is a strong biblical basis for this view, and the position of the Orthodox Church worldwide (not only in Australia) can never depart from the teaching of Holy Scripture. The union between a man and a woman in the Sacrament of Marriage reflects the union between Christ and His Church (Eph. 5:21-33). Those who freely choose to enter into marriage, enter into a conjugal union which ideally leads to procreation. Whilst not every marriage is blessed with the birth of children, every such monogamous union exists to form of a man and a woman a new reality of ‘one flesh’ (Mark 10:6-8).

The implications of such within society are:

- Marriage is a unique relationship between one man and one woman wherein the human person is made complete through gender complementarity;

- Marriage is the very foundation of a family, which in turn is the foundation of society itself;

- Confusing the institution of marriage with same-sex unions will have serious consequences for religious freedom and implications for freedom of conscience; and

- Children should be afforded every opportunity to start life, grow and develop with both their biological parents, i.e. their mother & father.

Our purpose is not that government legislation should become a ‘tool’ to impose Christian ethics upon fellow citizens who do not share our beliefs. This of course would not be legitimate, given that we respect the free will of all. Rather, our concern is that the very institution of marriage, which has a Christian tradition of two entire millennia, should remain as it is, and not be confused with the political debate concerning the legal status of same-sex unions.”

The nine signatories were Archbishop Stylianos (Ec. Patr), Metropolitan Paul (Antiochian Patr.), Metropolitan Hilarion (ROCA-MP), Bishop Irinej (Serbian Church), Bishop Mihail (Romanian Church), and the Assistant Bishops Ezekiel, Seraphim, Nikandros, and Iakovos.

## ***BISHOPS’ STATEMENT AGAINST “CONTRACEPTION MANDATE” IN U.S.A.***

ON 6th February, **sixty-five Orthodox bishops** petitioned **President Barack Obama** and Health and Human Services Secretary **Kathleen Sebelius** to repeal the mandate that religious institutions provide birth control, sterilization, and abortion drugs in their health care coverage. They stated: “The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees the free exercise of religion. This freedom is transgressed when a religious institution is required to pay for ‘contraceptive services’ including abortion-inducing drugs and sterilization services that directly violate their religious convictions. Providing such services should not be regarded as mandated medical care. We, the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops, call upon HHS Secretary Sebelius and the Obama

Administration to rescind this unjust ruling and to respect the religious freedom guaranteed all Americans by the First Amendment.” The bishops urged the faithful to take action. The statement calls upon “all the Orthodox Christian faithful to contact their elected representatives today to voice their concern in the face of this threat to the sanctity of the Church’s conscience.” America’s Orthodox Christians join a growing number of non-Catholics who had officially opposed the contraception mandate, which religious institutions will be required to observe by next August. “Dr. Albert Mohler, president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said on his daily podcast last Tuesday that any law requiring people of faith to violate their conscience ‘is not only a Catholic issue...our religious liberty is being similarly subverted and attacked.’” Last year 60 religious leaders, mostly Protestants as well as two Orthodox Jewish spokesmen, signed a letter to President Obama, stating, “It is emphatically not only Catholics who deeply object to the requirement that health plans they purchase must provide coverage of contraceptives that include some that are abortifacients.” (*Source LifeSiteNews.com*)

## ***RUSSIA’S SPIRITUAL REVIVAL***

***PORTAL CREDO.RU*** reports: “Despite the so-called spiritual revival in Russia, only 1% of committed believers are “active” in the life of the parishes. This was revealed by a survey by Sreda polling agency. The topic is of great importance for the Moscow Patriarchate. Patriarch Kirill has said recently that the very vibrant and active community organization of the territory is one of the main objectives to be achieved in the near future. According to the survey, 15% of Russians call themselves Orthodox, attend their parishes, but of these only 1% is engaged in an active way. Those who participate more in the parish activities, according to research Sreda, are women, residents of the Central Federal District and Moscow area, public employees and citizens between 55 and 64 years. 76% of respondents who declared themselves Orthodox said they were not involved in community life. The over-65s, residents of large cities except Moscow, single parents and those with health problems are

the categories that are totally disinterested in participating in parish life. The survey was conducted in 100 cities and villages of 44 regions and involved 1,500 people.” This should give us no cause to crow over the situation in Russia, rather we should pray for an improvement. It should, however, give us cause to suspect the over-enthusiastic claims of those who, for reasons of their own, bruit reports of a fantastic spiritual revival in Russia. One also suspects that “statistics” of Orthodox participation in the diaspora would be equally disappointing. How many people in our own church come to more than the Sunday Liturgy? - the very minimal Christian commitment!

### ***“THE RIGHT TO WEAR A CROSS”***

THE WEBSITE of the **Diocese of Sourozh** (MP) recently published the following excellent article: ‘The right of Christians to wear the cross has been lately amply discussed in the UK and Russia. The discussion was caused by the article “Christians have no right to wear cross at work, says Government” published by “The Daily Telegraph” on 12th March 2012: “In a highly significant move, ministers will fight a case at the European Court of Human Rights in which two British women will seek to establish their right to display the cross. It is the first time that the Government has been forced to state whether it backs the right of Christians to wear the symbol at work. A document seen by The Sunday Telegraph discloses that ministers will argue that because it is not a “requirement” of the Christian faith, employers can ban the wearing of the cross and sack workers who insist on doing so.” The Sourozh article continued with various comments and incidents, and can be read in full on < <http://www.sourozh.org> > and is well worth reading. Apparently several cases of Christians being required to remove their crosses at work are being brought before the European Court, and a brave parishioner of the Russian Cathedral parish at Ennismore Gardens in London is reported to have resigned from her job, even in these economically perilous times, when she was not allowed to wear a cross, even if it were not visible. By email, we urged our people to bring their concern about this matter to the

Prime Minister's office and to their local Members of Parliament, and in doing so ourselves we pointed out that though it may not be a requirement of their faith for Roman Catholics and Protestants always to wear a cross, it is so for Orthodox Christians, whose presence in this country has grown considerably in the last two decades. We are pleased to report that several did take up our suggestion and encouraged others to do so also. The matter has raised a great deal of media attention in Russia (perhaps because of the Sourozh web reports) and it is ironic that Russia, where a generation or so ago Christians were fiercely persecuted, is now able to criticise the British government for their stance on this subject.



## SIR-UK NEWS

### *TWO BAPTISMS*

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** visited England during the second week of Great Lent to hear the confessions of his spiritual children, the Traditionalist Orthodox Romanian faithful. On Saturday, 26th February / 10th April, he came to Saint Edward's and celebrated the Baptism of two infants: **Edward**, the son of **Petru and Ioana Costin**, and **Ciprian**, the son of **Constantin and Rodica Costin**. Edward was named after our heavenly patron, and becomes the third young person in our parish to bear that name (one Bulgarian, one English and now one Romanian!), and Ciprian was named for the Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian, after whom our Metropolitan and the Monastery at Fili are also named. Constantin and Rodica stood as godparents for Edward, and **Livia Florean** was the godmother of Ciprian. The newly-illuminated infants were imparted the Holy Mysteries by the Bishop, and after the service, the families provided refreshments for all who attended. On the next day, the Sunday of Saint Gregory Palamas, assisted by **Father Deacon Justin Ionas** who had travelled with His Grace from Romania, Bishop So-

fronie celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden.

## *TWO FUNERALS*

ONE of the most long-standing parishioners of the Convent of the Annunciation, **Nadezhda Knupffer**, who attended church there throughout the greater part of her life, until a few years ago when she settled in France, passed away after a long illness in the hospital Toulon la Seyne sur Mer on 25th February n.s. Her family is now scattered all over the world, and they gathered for her funeral at Saint Edward's on Saturday 19th February / 3rd March, the Saturday of St Theodore's Miracle. The service was led by Fr Alexis and Fr Œconomos Stephen Fretwell, assisted by Hierodeacon Sabbas. Nadezhda's sister, **Xenia Hoffmann-Pilguk**, was for many years choir mistress in the Russian Cathedral in Munich, and, assisted by **Misha von Bennigsen** and **Tanya James** from the Convent parish, she did much of the chanting in Slavonic, so that the service was chanted more or less equally in English and Slavonic. In his address before the Last Kiss, Fr Alexis spoke of her dedicated service at the Convent especially her helping to read the long lenten services, of her care for the spiritual upbringing of her sons, or her generosity to our community at Brookwood (which, lest she be scolded, we had to hide by using a pseudonym for her - "Hope Sawbones"), and of the way the non-Russians from our community felt that they were welcomed by her and her husband, **Michael**, when they first attended the Convent services. Nadezhda was then laid to rest in the Saint Edward's cemetery, and so it comes about that she now awaits the General Resurrection only a couple of hundred yards from her grandparents, **Paul and Xenia**, who were buried at Brookwood many years before our Brotherhood was founded. A number of the emigré Russian community in London came for the funeral, and all who came were welcomed to a Mercy Meal in the Old Mortuary, provided by her husband, Michael, and their four sons, **Nicholas, George, Alexander and Peter**. Our thanks also to **Liggy Fagerlund** for helping with the catering and setting things up, and to **Countess**

**Carolinda Tolstoy-Miloslavsky** for leading the washing-up team. May Nadezhda, to whom we owe so much, now find rest with the Saints and *Memory Eternal!*

ON THE SAME DAY as Bishop Sofronie was at Brookwood, **Anna Turceninoff** was laid to rest in Saint Edward's Cemetery. For some time she had been disabled because of a severe stroke, but before that she had for many years been a member of the choir in the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral Parish at Ennismore Gardens** in London. The funeral service was conducted by **Archpriest John Lee** of the **Parish of the Dormition in Holbourn**, which is under the Œcumenical Patriarchate's Exarchate of Orthodox Parishes of Russian Tradition in Western Europe. After Anna had been laid to rest, refreshments were provided by the Brotherhood for the mourners who had attended her burial. **May Anna's Memory be Eternal!**

### *AND TWO VISITORS*

ON THE FEAST of the Holy Forty Martyrs, 9th / 22nd March, as we neared the end of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, we were joined by three Orthodox Romanians. Two were laymen from London, and the third was a monk, **Father Teofan**, who now lives in a cell at **Kapsala on the Holy Mountain Athos**. He is a neighbour of the **Fr Nicodim** who visited us some time ago. Fr Teofan spent 16 years at the **Monastery at Putna**, before settling on the Holy Mountain a year ago. After the service, he and his companions joined us for breakfast, and were then shown the holy things in the church. Father also told us about some of the Athonite Elders that he had met.

On the Soul Sabbath, 11th/ 24th March, after the Divine Liturgy and the commemoration of the faithful departed, **Hieromonk Nectary**, who was visiting England from Serbia, briefly came to see the church. Fr Nectary is a priest of the newly established "True Orthodox Church" in Serbia.

## ***SAINT BONIFACE MISSION, I.O.W.***

THE AGM of the Saint Boniface Mission in the Isle of Wight was held on Friday, 16th February, chaired by **Martin Smith** with all four of the trustees of the mission in attendance. After the usual formalities, the members undertook to heighten the profile of the Mission by obtaining a dedicated email address, exploring the possibility of opening a website, using social networking sites, publishing a summary of trustee and AGM minutes and relevant news items in the Herald. Currently the mission uses parishioners' homes for readers' services only and it was felt that the use of parishioners' homes for this purpose should be limited to Readers Services only. The mission was indebted to **Martin and Melanie Swan** for their use for one of the rooms in their house for Liturgies for a year after the mission's removal from Ryde Cemetery, but it was felt no longer practical to impose this burden on any parishioner and so external premises have to be found. Various possible avenues for re-accommodating the chapel are to be investigated. On all of these issues, members were delegated to take action and to report back at the next trustee meeting on 30th May. We ask the prayers of the faithful for the Mission.

## ***SERBIAN "ARK OF SALVATION"***

PROTOPRESBYTER-STAVROPHORE **Milun Kostic**, who until his recent retirement was a priest at **St Sava's Serbian Orthodox Church in Ladbrooke Grove, London**, tells us that he has now completed the translation of the Brotherhood's book, *"The Ark of Salvation"* into Serbian and he is investigating ways of getting it published in Serbia. We thank him for his great work in this regard, - God bless him for it, - and hope that the book will be of some profit for the young people of Serbia.

## ***ICON DONATED***

AN ICON of **St Mary of Egypt and the Venerable Zosimas of Palestine** has been donated to our church by one of our parishioners. It was hand-painted by the sisters of the **Sacred Convent of St Elizabeth of Russia in Etna, California**, and arrived on the weekend before the Reading of the Great Canon, during which we also hear the Life of St Mary read in church.

## *NEW BLOG*

AS we go to press, we have started a “blog” for the Saint Edward Brotherhood. It is called “Brookwood Blogger: Saint Edward Brotherhood.” It can be accessed at <http://brookwoodblogger.blogspot.co.uk/>.



## **PRACTICAL TIP**

RECENTLY, we were told of someone who was embarrassed to come to church because they were unable to stand for long periods and thought that by sitting down they would give a bad example to others. Their solicitude in this respect is commendable. Standing is an important part of our worship. It is a fundamental part of our struggle. The Fathers tell us that we should stand in prayer like a condemned criminal before the judge. Others tell us that it is a proclamation of the Resurrection. The services themselves tell us to stand: “Let us stand well, let us stand with fear!” “Upright!” We are also instructed by St John of the Ladder how we are tempted to relax this good practice: “Observe, and you will find that if you stand on your feet, despondency will battle with you. If you sit, it will suggest that it is better for you to lean back; and it urges you to lean against the wall ... then it persuades you to peep out of the window” - so runs our downward course. We must always be fully aware of this temptation and resist it. However, if one is elderly, infirm, pregnant, or holding young children, it is perfectly acceptable to sit down, excepting only during certain specific parts of the Divine services. It is reported that the Ever-Memorable Metropolitan Antony (Khrapovitsky) once advised someone worried about this question, “It is better to sit down in church and think of God, than to stand and to think about your feet!” And one might also add, “and feel proud.” Regarding giving a bad example to others: the boot should be on the other foot! In every circumstance in life we should be careful to follow good examples and not bad. Just as you have no excuse for shoplifting because your neighbour does, so also because your neighbour sits down in church does not mean that you have to or that you should. Rather, you should consider why they did so before mindlessly following suit. There is, of course, one time in church when we are bidden to sit and that is during the readings of the kathisma (sections) from the Psalter. Then we sit to rest a little and to reflect on what is being read. For the rest we should try to stand, but not feel unduly embarrassed if we need to sit for a while.