



## FROM THE FATHERS

“GIVE PRAISE to God with the cherubim, who join the Three Most Holy into one Lordship (Esaias 6:3), and reveal to us the First Being in the measure that they open their wings to men of good will. With David be enlightened, who said to the Light, *In Thy light shall we see light* (Ps. 35:10), that is, in the Spirit we shall see the Son, than Whom who can be more far-shining? Thunder with John, *the son of thunder* (Mark 3:17), giving forth no sound that is mean or earthly, but only what is of heaven and exalted regarding the majesty of God, namely that the Word was in the beginning, and was with God, and was God (John 1:1), knowing God, True God from the True Father, and not a good fellow-servant honoured with the name of son. And the other Comforter, Other, I mean, than the One Who spoke; for it was the Word of God Who spoke, and when you hear His words, *I and the Father are one* (John 10:30), understand and keep before your mind unity of essence. And when you read, *We will come and make our abode with him* (John 14:23), think then of the distinction of Persons. And when you hear the names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, think of the Three Separate Persons... speak with Paul of the things of God, with one caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2), who frequently numbers for us the Three Persons, and this in various ways, not keeping to the same order, but placing the same Person now first, then second, and again third. Why? To make plain to us Their equality of nature.”

SAINT GREGORY THE THEOLOGIAN, + 390 A.D.

# *ON A LIFE OF DISTRACTION AND ON THE ATTENTIVE LIFE*

SAINT IGNATIUS BRIANCHANINOV

The sons of the world consider distraction to be something innocent, but the holy Fathers recognize it to be the origin of all evils.

The person who has surrendered themselves to distraction has, concerning all subjects and even the most important ones, a very lightweight, extremely superficial understanding.

One who is distracted is usually inconstant; his heart's sensitivities are deprived of depth and strength; and therefore, they are unstable and transitory.

As a moth flies from flower to flower, so also a distracted person flits from one earthly gratification to another, from one vain concern to another.

The distracted person is a stranger to love for his neighbour. He regards the misfortune of men with indifference, and thoughtlessly he lays on them burdens, which are heavy to be endured.

Sorrows powerfully affect a distracted person, precisely because he does not expect them. He expects only joys.

If the sorrow is a strong one but swiftly passing, then the distracted person quickly forgets about it in the noise of amusements. A long enduring sorrow crushes him.

Distraction itself punishes the one who is given over to it: with the passing of time everything bores him; and he, as one who has not acquired any well-founded understandings or conceptions whatsoever, is surrendered to a tormenting, unending listlessness.

Distraction, as harmful as it is in general, is especially harmful in the work of God, in the work of salvation, which requires constant and intense vigilance and attention.

*Watch and pray lest you enter into temptation* (Matt. 26:41), the Saviour tells His disciples.

*I say to all, Watch* (Mark 13:37), the Saviour proclaimed to all Christianity, and it follows, He said it also to us now.

He who is leading a distracted life is directly contradicting the precepts of the Lord Jesus Christ by his life.

All of the saints diligently fled distraction. Constantly, or at the very least as often as possible, they were concentrated in themselves, attending to the movements of the mind and heart, and directing them according to the Gospel testament.

The habit of attending to oneself keeps one from distraction, even amongst distractions which are noisy and surround one on all sides. The attentive person abides in solitude, within himself, even among many people.

A certain great father [Abba Agathon], one who had learned by experience the benefit of attention and the harm of distraction said: "Without intense watchfulness over oneself it is impossible to succeed in even one virtue."

It is foolhardy to pass this short earthly life, which was granted us as a preparation for eternity, in earthly occupations alone, in petty pleasures, in being dissatisfied time and again because of one's whims and fancies, frivolously running from one emotional comfort to another, forgetting, or only remembering on occasion, and then superficially, eternity's awesome, and yet dreadful, inevitability.

The works of God, it is evident, ought to be studied and examined with the greatest reverence and attention; a person can in no other way examine them nor know them.

The great work of God, the creation of man, and then after his fall, his renewal through redemption, ought to be well known to every Christian. Without this knowledge he cannot know and fulfil the obligations of a Christian. The knowledge of this great work of God cannot be acquired with distractedness.

The commandments of Christ are given not only to the outer man but to a greater extent for the inner man; they embrace all of the thoughts and feelings of man, all of his most subtle workings. It is impossible to keep these commandments without constant vigilance and profound attention. Vigilance and attention are impossible in a distracted life.

Sin and the devil, who arms himself with sin, subtly steal into the mind and the heart. A person must constantly be on guard against his invisible enemies. How can he be thus on guard when he is given over to distraction?

The distracted person is like a house without doors or shutters; nothing precious whatsoever can be kept in such a house; it is wide open for thieves, robbers, and harlots.

The distracted life, full of earthly cares, renders a person overcharged, just as gluttony and surfeiting do (cf. Luke 21: 34). Such a person is attached to the earth, occupied with only that which is passing and trivial. The service of God becomes for the distracted person an extraneous matter. Even thinking about this service is something for him preposterous, full of gloom, and unbearably burdensome.

A life of attentiveness weakens the activity of the bodily senses in a person; it cultivates, strengthens and forms the action of spiritual senses. Distraction on the contrary, dissipates the activity of spiritual senses; it is fed by the unremitting activity of the bodily senses.

In vain do the distracted ascribe harmlessness to the distracted life. In doing this they in fact expose the evil character

of the sickness which has seized upon them. Their sickness is so great and has so dulled the soul's senses, that the soul, sickening therewith, does not even apprehend its calamitous condition.

Those who wish to learn attentiveness must forbid themselves all vain occupations.

The fulfilling of one's personal and social obligations does not enter the sphere of distraction. Rather distraction is always united with idleness or with occupations that are so empty that they can unfailingly be ascribed to idleness.

A profitable occupation, especially an occupation which is one of service, and which is linked with responsibility, does not hinder preserving attentiveness to oneself - it leads one to such attentiveness. All the more do monastic obediences lead one to attentiveness when they are fulfilled in the way they should be. Activity is the essential path to vigilance over oneself, and this path is prescribed by the Holy Fathers for everyone who desires to learn attentiveness to themselves.

Attentiveness to oneself in profound solitude bears precious spiritual fruits; but only men of mature spiritual stature are capable of this, those who have made progress in the struggle for piety, and who first learned attentiveness in the active life.

In the active life people help a person acquire attentiveness by reminding him of those things which destroy attentiveness. Being subordinate is the best means of learning attention; no one teaches a person to attend to himself so well as a strict and prudent superior.

While you are occupied in serving in the midst of people, do not allow yourself to kill time in empty talk and silly jokes. When occupied in your own room, do not allow yourself to daydream; and soon your conscience will become more acute and will begin to show you every deviation into distraction as being a violation of the law of the Gospel and even as a violation of prudence. Amen.

**Footnote:** *Saint Ignatius (Brianchaninov) lived 1807-1867, and so was writing in the mid-nineteenth century. One wonders what he would have thought of our society today, wherein people seem to crave distraction all the time, and have the means to satisfy that soul-destroying craving: magazines, television, radio, internet, mobile phones, Skype, texts, Facebook, Twitter, etc., etc. In view of what Saint Ignatius tells us in this piece, any conscientious Orthodox Christian, hoping to be saved, should keep pre-occupation with such things to the barest minimum.*



## **Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church**

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

THE service books which we now have did not suddenly appear, but were composed gradually in response to the development of the Christian liturgy. In fundamental aspects the order of the services was already set out in the Apostolic age. Besides the Divine Liturgy and the other Mysteria, which can undoubtedly be attributed to the holy Apostles, excepting for some of the rites and prayers now contained therein, we may assume that in their time, or at least shortly thereafter, the daily services appeared, i.e. Vespers, Matins, Nocturns and the First, Third, Sixth and Ninth Hours although not in the form that we have them today. There is evidence\* which shows that all these services were recorded in special books, which were safeguarded in secret by the believers, though they have not come down to us. From the fourth to the twelfth centuries, the time of the greatest dissemination of the Christian services, the order of the Divine services, which had been set forth

in the early books and which contained some diversities, were put together in a clear and definitive form, or were augmented with new prayers, hymns and even with whole services. Very many people were engaged in the composition of these books.

\* ***Footnote in the original:***

**Eusebius and Jerome** mention a book of **Justin** [the Martyr], *The Psalmist*, which, in the opinion of academics, contained church hymnography. **Saint Hippolytus of Ostia**, the Bishop (+ c. 250 A.D.) left a book in which there is set forth the Apostolic tradition concerning the setting aside of a reader, a sub-deacon, a deacon, a presbyter and a Bishop, the prayers employed, a short order of Divine services and a commemoration of the departed. Concerning the prayers, it says, among other things, that they must be read in the morning, at the third, sixth, and ninth hours, in the evening and at cockcrow. If it is impossible to assemble in some house or in church, then each individual should chant, read and pray by himself. By the precept set down in these books every one of the faithful is enjoined to chant, read and pray in his own home.

Worthy of note among these early composers of services were: 1) **Saint Basil the Great, St John Chrysostom, and St Ambrose of Milan**, who composed Liturgies for their churches. Moreover, the first appointed and augmented the daily services and Vespers on the day of Pentecost with prayers which he had composed, and the second of them introduced the rite of the *liti* [entreaty] into the Vigil. Following after these hierarchs were many others to whom we are obliged for their contributions to the Hieraticon [Priestly Service Book] and the Book of Hours: 2) **St Anatolius, the Patriarch of Constantinople** (+458 A.D.), who composed resurrectional verses; 3) **Saint Romanus the Melodist** (+ end of the fifth century), a renowned composer of contakia and ikoses; 4) **Saint Sabbas the Sanctified** (+ 532 A.D), the founder of the renowned lavra in Palestine. He wrote

the first typicon (rule) for the ordering of the church services, which is called the Jerusalem typicon and was accepted by all the monasteries in Palestine. 5) **Saint Sophronius, the Patriarch of Jerusalem** (+ 644 A.D.), who compiled a remarkable part of the Triodion (though in the tenth century some of his work went out of use), as well as the order of the Hours for the Nativity of Christ. He put the order for the Great Blessing of Waters, which is served on the eve of Theophany, into its final form. He introduced many hymns into the Divine services, and he reviewed and re-worked the typicon of Saint Sabbas the Sanctified. 6) **Saint Andrew, Archbishop of Crete**, composed the Great Canon of Repentance and many other hymns. 7) **Saint John of Damascus** (+ 776 A.D) composed the Octoechos, the Heirmologion, the Paschal Canon and several other services for the Resurrection, the funeral hymns, the Matinal antiphons, and the Menaion; he also reviewed the typicon of Saint Sophronius, and proposed an order of church services corresponding to the usages of his time. 8) **Saint Cosmas, the Bishop of Maiuma**, the associate [in fact his adopted brother] of St John Damascene, wrote many canons for the feasts, triodes for the days of Passion Week, and the hymn, *More honourable than the Cherubim*, and he collaborated with St John on the composition of the Octoechos. 9) **Saint Theodore** (+ 826 A.D.) and **Saint Joseph** (+ 825 A.D.) **the Studites** who collected all that hitherto had been chanted during the Great Lent and added their own verses and hymns to complete the Lenten Triodion. Moreover, St Theodore wrote a typicon for his monastery [Studium], which was later adopted by all Russian monasteries and churches. 10) **Saint Theophanes the Branded** (+ 843 A.D.) and **Saint Joseph the Hymnographer** (+ 887 A.D) who both composed many canons, adding them to the Octoechos of St John Damascene and introducing them into the Pentecostarion and the Menaion. 11) **John the Bishop of Evchaita** (+ c. 1100) composed many canons, among which we include the well-known canon to the Sweetest Jesus and that to the Guardian Angel, and he corrected the Menaion.



**[Note 1:** How many of the early hymnographers were from Palestine. Of the nineteen Fathers mentioned in this footnote, nine were from or lived in Palestine; another two were from Syria.

**Note 2:** The Russian text adds a short paragraph about the translation of the services into Slavonic, which we have omitted]

*... to be continued.*



# THE COMING MONTH

TWO of the most important feasts of the Church Year fall in May this year: that of the **Ascension of our Saviour** (16th / 29th) and that of **Pentecost-Trinity Sunday** (26th May / 8th June). The events celebrated on both of these Great Feasts are clearly recorded in the New Testament, and were prophesied in the Old Testament.

The first gives us our greatest hope, for in the Ascension we see one of our kind, a man, our Lord Jesus Christ, seated on the throne of the Almighty, and in the second we witness the sending down of the Holy Spirit upon the holy Apostles and disciples, granting Orthodox Christians the possibility of realizing this hope, our deification, that we might indeed become gods by Grace, as Saint Athanasius the Great says, “He [the Son of God] was made man that we might be made God.”

According to the scriptural record, the two feasts are celebrated on the fortieth and the fiftieth day after Pascha, and after the day of Pentecost itself we have a fast free week. With the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity, which from the earliest days of sacred history had been shown in types, was manifested to us, and so that day we keep as the feast of the Holy Trinity, and for that reason

in the “From the Fathers” section of this issue, we have included teaching from Saint Gregory the Theologian, the Patriarch of Constantinople, one of the Three Great Hierarchs, on this Mystery.

Among the Saints celebrated in May, we have:

Our **Venerable Father Arsenius the Great** (8th / 21st) was born (354 A.D.) at Rome into a pious Christian family, which provided him with a fine education and upbringing. He studied rhetoric and philosophy, and mastered Latin and Greek. However, wisely he abandoned philosophy and the vanity of worldly life, seeking instead true wisdom. He was ordained a deacon in one of the Roman churches, dedicating himself to the service of God. However, the Emperor Theodosius (379-395), who ruled the eastern half of the Empire, hearing of his erudition and piety, entrusted the saint with the education of his sons, Arcadius and Honorius. Arsenius was loathe to undertake this task, but in obedience to Pope Damasus he consented and moved to Constantinople. Theodosius entrusted him to educate his sons not only in learning, but also in piety, guarding them from the temptations of youth. And he instructed his sons to obey Arsenius as their father and teacher. The saint was troubled by the high esteem in which he was held and yearned for the quietude of monastic life. He prayed to be shown the way to salvation, and heard a voice: “Arsenius, flee from men, and thou shalt be saved.” Thereupon, removing his fine clothing and replacing it with old and tattered garments, he secretly left the palace, boarded a ship for Alexandria, and made his way to Skete, a monastic settlement in the Egyptian desert. He asked the fathers to accept him, calling himself a wretched wanderer, though his very demeanour betrayed that he was a cultivated man. The brethren took him to Abba John the Dwarf, who, wishing to test the newcomer’s humility, did not seat Arsenius with the monks at table. He threw him a piece of crust, saying, “Eat if you wish.” St Arsenius got down on his hands and knees, and picked up the bread with his mouth. Then he crawled off into a corner and ate it, like a dog. Seeing this, Abba John said, “He will be great!” He

received Arsenius with love and tonsured him. Arsenius zealously passed through his obediences and soon he surpassed many of the desert Fathers in asceticism. Again he heard a voice while he was praying: "Arsenius, hide from people and dwell in silence, this is the root of virtue." Thereafter he lived as a silent solitary. He left his seclusion only to come to church on Sundays and feast days. When Abba Moses asked him why he hid himself from people, Abba Arsenius replied, "God knows that I love you, but I cannot remain with God and with men at the same time. The Heavenly Powers all have one will and praise God together. On earth, however, there are many human wills, and each man has his own thoughts. I cannot leave God in order to live with people." Though absorbed in constant prayer, the saint did not refuse visiting monks his counsel and guidance, giving short, but perceptive answers to their questions. Once, a monk from Skete saw the great Elder through a window standing at prayer, surrounded by a flame. His work was to weave baskets, using date palms soaked in water. For a whole year St Arsenius did not change the water in the container, but merely added a little water to it from time to time. This caused his cell to be permeated with a foul stench. When asked why he did this, the saint replied that it was fitting for him to humble himself in this way, because in the world he had used incense, perfumes and fragrant oils. Reminded by the stench, he prayed that after death he would not experience the stench of hell. His fame spread abroad, and many came to see him, which disturbed his tranquillity. As a result, the saint was forced to move around from place to place. St Arsenius taught repentance, fasting, and vigil, and that they guard one's soul from pride, greed, jealousy, hatred of one's brother, remembrance of wrongs, and judgment. He told a certain monk, "You must study and learn the Holy Scriptures constantly, even if you do not understand their power... For when we have the words of the Holy Scriptures on our lips, the demons hear them and are terrified. Then they flee from us, unable to bear the words of the Holy Spirit Who speaks through His apostles and prophets." The saint often urged himself on in his efforts with the words, "Rouse

yourself, Arsenius, work! Do not remain idle! You have not come here to rest, but to labour.” He also said, “I have often regretted the words I have spoken, but I have never regretted my silence.” The great ascetic and hesychast was given the gift of tears with which his eyes were constantly filled. He spent fifty-five years at monastic labours and struggles. He spent forty years at Skete, and ten years on the mountain of Troe near Memphis. Then he spent three years at Canopus, and two more years at Troe, where he fell asleep in the Lord, being almost one hundred years old, in the year 449 or 450.

**Our Holy Father Michael the Confessor, the Bishop of Synnada** (23rd May / 5th June) longed for the monastic life from his earliest days and was eventually sent by Saint Tarasius, the Patriarch of Constantinople, to a monastery on the Black Sea coast. St Theophylactus, a future Bishop of Nicomedia, also entered the monastery with him. There both monks engaged in spiritual struggles and were soon glorified by gifts from the Lord. Once, during a harvest, when the people were weakened by thirst, an empty metal vessel was filled with water through the prayers of these monks. Saint Tarasius consecrated Fr Michael as bishop of the city of Synnada. Through his holy life and wisdom, St Michael won the love of his flock, and also came to the notice of the Emperors Nicephorus I (802-811) and Michael I Rangabe (811-813). He was present at the Seventh Œcumenical Council at Nicaea in A.D. 787. When the iconoclast Leo the Armenian (813-820) assumed the throne, he began to expel Orthodox hierarchs from their sees, appointing heretics in their place. St Michael remained staunchly Orthodox, bravely opposing the heretics and denouncing their error. Leo had him brought to trial, but without fearing torture he confessed, “I venerate the holy icons of my Saviour Jesus Christ and the All-Pure Virgin, His Mother, and all the saints, and it is to them I bow down. I shall not obey your decrees to remove icons from churches.” Leo then banished St Michael to the city of Eudociada, where the confessor reposed about the year 821. The head of St Michael is preserved in the Great Lavra of St Athanasius on the

Holy Mountain Athos, and portion of his relics is treasured in the Iveron monastery there.



## POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*“I CAN SEE that Russian people get very proud and hooked to their rules. But what I could never understand is, if there is such a strict rule, fine. But how can a Russian priest have the Holy Communion if he serves every day? Does he just live on fasting food and say five times more prayers every single day? And if he does not, is it because he is special and pure? I mean there is one rule for ordinary people and another one for priests, who should be an example to everyone. It does not make sense. Priests have the Holy Communion and milder rules every day and other people are not good enough. A bit mean, isn't it?” V.B., Woking.*  
(N.B. This letter was a follow-up to the one we published last month).

RE Russian priests serving and taking Holy Communion every day: you should really ask them, but I suspect very few do serve every day. Usually in churches where they have daily Liturgies, they have a number of priests. There is certainly NOT one rule for the priests and another for the people! The one exception is that generally, even among the Russians, the priest is not required to go to confession before every Liturgy - this, I presume, because in many cases it would simply be impossible. To have one rule for the priest and another (stricter one!) for the people would be rank hypocrisy. There is nothing to guarantee that the priest is any purer, holier or more special than any of his people. Surely you know that from experience!

I do know of two rather horrifying incidents though. One happened years ago in America, and there a priest, presumably fed

up with having to prepare for Communion before every Liturgy and having no one receive the Gifts, served at least one Liturgy with nothing in the Chalice or on the Diskos - a sort of dummy run. Poor man had a rather dreadful end.

I also heard of another priest who was seen to eat meat on Saturday evenings before serving next day, but who was very insistent in telling his people they should not do so. When one of his parishioners (who told me this) asked him about it, his excuse was that he only actually received Communion during those Liturgies when he had first been to confession. This an extremely odd idea, and one hopes one that only that priest held!



## News Section

### *ÆCUMENICAL PATRIARCH'S CONTINUED ECUMENISM*

ON THE WEBSITE of the Æcumenical Patriarchate (24/4/14), his recent address to the **National Council of Churches** was posted. His All-Holiness, **Patriarch Bartholomeos I**, said: "It is a great joy always to meet with colleagues and co-workers in the ecumenical field, who are labouring to serve the people of God in a united manner, faithful to the teachings and commandments of the Lord. Of course, every Christian is called to follow the way of Christ and respond to the needs of 'the least of our brothers and sisters,' in whom Christ is manifested. Nevertheless, when our Churches humbly work together, the blessing is always more fruitful and more tangible. For, the truth is that, as individual communities, we are 'fragile sticks,' to adopt the words of the Prophet Ezekiel (37:15-28). Together, however, we can become one people under one God, neither divided among

ourselves nor defiling the covenant of the Lord. This means that our Churches are called to a common ministry and mission, proclaiming and promoting a worldview in which God's authority – the authority of the kingdom – guides our ways and determines our actions. If, we are to submit to the authority of God, then we must be authentic and prophetic in our criticism of the world's poverty and suffering, as well as the world's greed and consumerism. We must remember and remind our faithful that "the earth and all the fullness thereof" belongs to the Lord (cf. Psalm 24.1), that the world's resources must always be oriented toward our brothers and sisters. We must recall the Lord's beatitude, according to which 'the meek shall inherit the earth' (Matt. 5.5). For the meek person is the one who reverses the world's attitudes to power and possessions; otherwise, the world becomes a place of division and violence. Meekness is ultimately a way of caring, a way of sharing. And it stands as a contrast and correction to the division and desecration that we have brought into God's creation. Beloved brothers and sisters, the unity that we seek is a gift from above, which we must pursue persistently as well as patiently; it is not something that depends solely on us, but primarily on God's judgment and *kairos*. Nevertheless, this sacred gift of unity is something that also demands of us radical conversion and re-orientation so that we may turn humbly toward our common roots in the Apostolic Church and the communion of saints, but also so that we may entrust ourselves and submit to God's heavenly kingdom and authority. Finally, however, unity obliges us to a common purpose in this age as we expect the age-to-come; for it commits us to a sacred ministry and mission in realizing the kingdom, as we declare in the Lord's prayer, 'on earth as in heaven.' Such is the sacred gift that we have inherited, the sacred gift that we are called to minister together. May God bless you in your common service to God's world and God's people."

Had this been addressed to fellow Orthodox Christians, His All-Holiness' thoughts would not have been at all controversial,

although, even so, as so many religious leaders do today, he emphasizes the need to put the world right, rather than calling his hearers to sanctity. However, this address was made to the National Council of Churches, a body comprised of representatives of numerous heterodox denominations, a body whose aims and purposes are inimical to Orthodoxy and to our confession: that the Orthodox Church is not simply, like those heterodox ones, a body sharing “common roots in the Apostolic Church,” but is indeed that same One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

### ***MACEDONIAN CHURCH APPEAL***

ON 25th April, OCP issued a statement from their Belgrade correspondent: “It has been reported that the Macedonian Orthodox Church Synod has send letters to the Œcumenical Patriarchate, the Russian Orthodox Church, and to the Serbian Orthodox Church expressing their readiness to re-open talks regarding re-establishing communion. The Serbian Orthodox Church requires the release of Archbishop Jovan of Ochrid who has been detained by the Macedonian authorities for a long time, as the major condition to revamp dialogue for canonical unity.”

The break in communion between the Macedonian Church and the other Orthodox Churches was not occasioned by any disagreement over doctrine, but because of the way that the Church proclaimed itself independent (autocephalous). In 1959, the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church afforded autonomy to the Orthodox Church in the then Socialist Republic of Macedonia and it remained under the Patriarch of Serbia. In 1967, the Macedonian Church unilaterally announced its autocephaly and independence from the Serbian Church. The Serbian Holy Synod therefore condemned it as schismatic. The Macedonian Church has since remained unrecognized by the Œcumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and all the other national Orthodox churches.



## ***RELICS OF THE VENERABLE JUSTIN OF CHELIJE TO BE UNCOVERED***

PRAVOSLAVIE.RU reported on 10th April that the relics of the **Venerable Justin (Popovic)** are to be uncovered. This year is the 120th anniversary of his birth, and the 35th of his repose. On the feast of the Annunciation, the anniversary of his death in 1979, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Chelije Convent by **Bishop Milutin of Valjevo** and **Bishop Athanasius**. The Elder lived at this Convent and preached the faith of Christ by his theological works. He was the Convent's confessor for thirty-one years. With the blessing of **Patriarch Irinej of Serbia**, Bishop Milutin announced the forthcoming uncovering of relics of St. Justin, which will take place on 14th June. Doubtless, although the press release does not make this clear, this is the new calendar date, which would correspond to Father Justin's name day, the feast of the Holy Martyr Justin the Philosopher. Then the relics will be translated to the Church of the Convent. The Venerable one was glorified by the Council of Hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church on 2nd May, 2010.

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“A TRUE CHRISTIAN is made by faith and love toward Christ. Our sins do not in the least hinder our Christianity, according to the word of the Saviour Himself. He deigned to say: Not the righteous have I come to call, but sinners to salvation; there is more joy in heaven over one who repents than over many righteous ones. Likewise concerning the sinful woman who touched His feet, He deigned to say to Simon the Pharisee: to one who has love, a great debt is forgiven, but from one who has no love, even a small debt will be demanded. From these judgments a Christian should bring himself to hope and joy, and not in the least accept an inflicted despair.”

VENERABLE HERMAN OF ALASKA, + 1836 A.D.

**NEWS** from the communities in the U.K.  
of the True Orthodox Church of Greece,  
under the care of Bishop Ambrose.

***EPISCOPAL VISITS***

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** celebrated the Divine Liturgy at Saint Edward's Church on the **Sunday of Saint John of the Ladder**, 17th / 30th March. Because it was the day before the **Martyrdom of St Edward** and we had a full Liturgy with a Bishop serving, we chanted the service to the Martyr on that day. After the service, the Bishop heard the confessions of several of our Romanian brothers in Christ. He also gave our community a beautiful icon of the Mother of God, the *Gerondissa*, and some beeswax candles from Romania.

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** arrived in England later in the week, on the Thursday, in order to lead the Divine Services at the Convent for the sisters' dedication festival. He was met at Heathrow by members of the Brotherhood, and came and stayed at Brookwood for three days until the feast itself. On the Friday afternoon, he presided at the Presanctified Liturgy, and later in the day, as the Brotherhood clergy were called away to attend to a sick person in Barnet Hospital, he and **Father Stephen Fretwell** led the Akathist service. On the day of the **Laudation of the All-holy Mother of God**, the Saturday, he and our clergy celebrated the Divine Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, after which His Grace gave a very instructive sermon concerning the history and meaning of the Akathist Hymn. On the Sunday morning, the commemoration of **St Mary of Egypt**, Bishop Ambrose celebrated the Divine Liturgy of St Basil the Great at Brookwood, so in three consecutive days we had hierarchal Liturgies of the Presanctified, St John and St Basil. At the last of these, not only did our clergy concelebrate with His Grace, but **Father Gabriel Lawani** of the

**Joy of All Who Sorrow Mission in Droylsden** concelebrated with us. Their mission is under the spiritual care of **His Grace, Bishop Photios of Marathon**, who gave his blessing for the concelebration, a thing which was made possible by the recent union of the two traditionalist Synods in Greece. Fr Gabriel and his Presbytera, **Helena**, had specially travelled down from Manchester for the celebration.

In the afternoon, having spent time with our parishioners, Bishop Ambrose was taken to London for the **Vigil for the Annunciation at the Convent** dedicated to that festival. He was greeted there by **Mother Vikentia** and her sisters and offered refreshments. Knowing that many of the Romanian participants would have to work the following day, after the Vigil, His Grace preached a sermon in Romanian for them. And the next day, after the festal Vespereal Liturgy, he preached in English, speaking of the Virgin's obedience to the word of God. After the church celebrations, the Brotherhood clergy took His Grace to the London home of his recently reposed mother, and from her estate he kindly gave us two antique icons and her dishwasher machine, which we somehow managed to get into our tiny Nissan Micra. Bishop Ambrose also gave us a picture of the Apparition of the Cross over Athens in 1925, to commemorate the joyous celebration of the union of the Old Calendarist Synods in Greece, which had taken place two weeks before his visit to England.

After his Annunciation visit, His Grace flew to Russia and South Ossetia, returning to England to help with the services of Great Week and Pascha, thus showing our communities true arch-pastoral love. Again he was met at Heathrow and came straight to Brookwood, and on the Wednesday of Great Week, he presided at the **Mysterion of Holy Unction** here, which was attended this year by many more people than usual. After the late evening service, **Constantin Militaru** kindly drove him to the Convent, where, as telephone calls bear witness, the sisters were anxiously waiting for him.

Bishop Ambrose stayed in London for the rest of Great Week and for the Paschal Midnight Service, serving at the Convent, so that the sisters and their parishioners were not deprived of priestly services on these, the most important days of the Church Year. After lunch at the Convent on the day of Pascha, His Grace returned to Brookwood, being ferried by **Matias and Liggy Fagerlund**.

Here he presided that the **Agape Vespers service**, which again was much better attended than usual, and during which the Gospel was read in twelve languages. During the buffet style refreshments afterwards, His Grace spoke to many of our parishioners and visitors. The next day he and our clergy chanted Matins and celebrated the Divine Liturgy early in the morning, and after breakfast, we took His Grace back to London, where we were offered coffee by his brother, Peter, at their mother's home, and this time given her freezer.

Special mention should be made of the heroic feat of **Fr Deacon Borislav Popov**, who deserves a golden palm. He was detailed to serve at the Convent. To do this he brought his diaconissa, **Marina**, and family from their home in Chatham to attend the paschal service at Brookwood, then drove on to London for the Convent service, returning in the early hours of the morning to Brookwood, to pick up the family and then back to Chatham.

## ***FEAST OF ST EDWARD THE MARTYR***

ALTHOUGH we had chanted the service to St Edward on the Sunday when Bishop Sofronie was with us, that evening we had a Vigil service for St Edward's feast, and on the day itself we served the Divine Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. For this we were joined by the **Priestmonk Augustine** of **Saint Michael's Parish in Guildford**, which is also under the omophorion of Bishop Photios of Marathon. Fr Augustine prayed in the altar with us, and kindly helped us feed the parishioners afterwards by

bringing a specially made lenten “Shepherd’s Pie” and chocolate cake. Being an excellent cook, he will always be welcome here!

### ***A NEW BABY BORN***

IN the last week in Lent a baby daughter was born to **Nicolas and Nektaria Papanicolaou** at the **Lister Hospital near Stevenage**, and the Brotherhood clergy went to read the first day prayers in the hospital ward. While there, they were asked by the father of another baby, who unfortunately was not strong, to bless his baby as well. Being unable to return on the eighth day, because it fell in Great Week, when the services for the Passion precluded making the journey, they visited the Papanicolaou family home in St Albans on Bright Wednesday, and read the prayer for the naming of the baby. She has been called **Cecelia**, after the Holy Martyr Cecelia of Rome.

### ***VISIT OF THE MAYOR OF WOKING***

AT the **Midnight Paschal service** at Brookwood, we were honoured by a visit from **the Mayor of Woking, Cllr Anne Roberts**. She arrived just before the service of Nocturns and was first greeted by parishioners, **Evphi Calcantera** and **Mary Gomes**. The Mayor joined us in the procession around the church, and stayed for longer than the hour and a half that she had anticipated. Before leaving she even brought her chauffeur in to witness some of the service. The service was, this year, attended by well over 300 people, many of whom stayed for the Paschal Breakfast around the bonfire in the Brotherhood grounds.

On our Bright Friday, 25th April, the Mayor held a reception, marking the approach of the end of her term of office, in the **H.G. Wells Centre in Woking** town centre. The guests were

greeted by **Cllr Roberts** and her consort, **Julie Burnett**, and included Fr Alexis and Fr Nippon. There were over 200 guests from the local community. Awards were made to three outstanding young people for their service to others, and there were two musical interludes, one a piano recital, and the other a young soprano singer accompanied by her brother on the trumpet, singing a composition of Handel's.

## ***DAY OF THE LIFE-GIVING SPRING***

As has become our custom, on the feast of the Life-Giving Spring, Bright Friday, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the **Convent of the Annunciation**, and again we were joined by Fr Augustine from Guildford, who again prayed with us in the Altar, but did not serve. The previous day members of the Brotherhood had visited him at his home in Guildford and were kindly shown Saint Michael's Church, and given a tremendous amount of beeswax candles.

## ***VISITORS***

**FATHER Archimandrite Flavian** of the **Saint George Church in Sofia** (Bulgarian Patriarchate) visited the Brotherhood unexpectedly on Saturday, 26th April. He was accompanied by three lay pilgrims, who wished to venerate the relics of **Saint Edward the Martyr**. Having prayed at the shrine, they were offered refreshments in the Exhibition Room and shown the displays there.



# A PRACTICAL TIP

## From the Ever-Memorable Metropolitan Cyprian the Elder

### *“Serving as a Model, Not Laying Down the Law”*

WE ARE ALL witnesses to a particular drama that parents are facing in these difficult days of ours: the disobedience and rebelliousness of their children.

Fathers and mothers exhaust all of their resources of admonitory reasoning, use strictness and leniency, threaten and implore...; yet the angry child listens to nobody and to nothing.

The atmosphere which prevails in such a family environment is well known. And we constantly hear parents' complaints and their proclamation—ringing with conviction—that they have done everything they can, but the children just do not seem likely to improve....

But let us approach this important subject in greater depth, in order briefly to see how the Holy Fathers advise us with regard to the manner in which we must counsel others, so that our words might be accepted.

First of all, our instruction must be done with fear of God. That means that a profound awareness of our sinfulness and inadequacy is required.

*Just who are we who [dare to] instruct? How is it that we have the pretension to make others submit to our words, when we do not submit ourselves to the Divine will?*

Such thoughts lead us to self-reproach and to pray that the Lord might enlighten our children to understand and accept our admonition.

In other words, first and foremost we must speak to God about our children; and then, to a lesser extent, we can speak to

our children about God.

As a consequence, a profound spiritual activity is required of parents, that they might attract the Grace of God and dispel their children's agitation and hardness of heart, as well as the demonic energy of disobedience and rebelliousness.

Let us not forget that the God-bearing Fathers advise us to be "*models and not lay down laws*" to others; for, undeniably, "*it is truly wise to teach not by word, but to instruct by deed.*" "*One who teaches and does not do what he teaches*" toils in vain.

How will we make the Lord known to our children, when we have not created the preconditions for Him to be made known first of all to us?

The experience of our Fathers securely guides us: the Lord is hidden in His commandments. He who will keep His commandments will see God:

*"His presence is hidden in his commandments: 'He that loveth me will keep my commandments and shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.'"*

In this way, then, that teaching that is done with fear of God, with humility and self-reproach, but also with the necessary precondition of the carrying out of the commandments, is, in the end, a spiritual seed that must be cast in the field of a child's heart, simultaneously with the prayer and supplication that it be blessed by our Lord, such that it may take root, inform, and bring about a positive change.

One wonders: do contemporary parents see and confront the problem of their children's disobedience in this manner?

Could it be that their words are authoritative when they have not yet submitted themselves to the sole authority of the Evangelical word?

Third Sunday of St. Matthew  
All of the Holy New Martyrs  
27 June/ 10 July 2005