



FROM THE FATHERS

“IF THE SAINTS accused or convicted those who were living in sin or irreligion, they did at the command of God, as their duty, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, not at the instigation of their passions and demons. Whoever decides of his own self-will to convict his brother or make some reprimand, clearly betrays and proves that he considers himself more prudent and virtuous than the person he blames, and that he is acting at the instigation of passion and deception and diabolic thoughts. We need to remember the Saviour’s injunction: *And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me first pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye* (Matt. 7:3-5). What is a *beam* in this connection? It is the earthly wisdom or carnal outlook, hard as a beam, which deprives the heart and mind of all capacity for true vision, so that one is quite unable to judge either one’s own inner state or the state of one’s neighbour. Such a person judges himself and others as he imagines himself to be, and as his neighbours appear to him outwardly, by his carnal mind (see Rom. 8:6), mistakenly. And so the Word of God is extremely just in calling him a hypocrite. A Christian, after being healed by the Word of God and the Spirit of God, gains a true view of his spiritual state and of that of his neighbours. The carnal mind, by striking his sinning neighbour with a beam, always upsets and confuses him, often ruins him, never does any good and cannot bring any benefit, and has not the least effect on sin. On the other hand,

the spiritual mind (Rom. 8:6) acts exclusively on the soul-sickness of one's neighbour, compassionates, heals and saves him."

SAINT IGNATIUS (BRIANCHANINOV) OF THE CAUCASUS, + 1867 A.D.

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THIS MONTH we celebrate the feast of the holy Prophet Elias (Elijah) the Thesbite, who is renowned and hymned for his zeal. Unfortunately many of us who have not lived his life of asceticism and spiritual endeavour are nonetheless tempted to ape his zeal, often with disastrous consequences for ourselves and for others. We thought it appropriate, therefore, to re-publish this short instruction by our recently reposed Metropolitan, both to counter this evil and to pay a tribute to a hierarch who, in his archpastoral love, adopted us into his flock, when, in 2007, our former hierarchs abandoned the traditionalist confession of the Faith.

The Enlightened Zealot

*"The servant of the Lord must not strive,
but be gentle unto all"*

(II St. Timothy 2:24)

*His Eminence, Metropolitan
Cyprian of Oropos and Fili*

OUR PIOUS lay brethren in Christ would do well to pay particular attention to the question of zeal.

The holy Fathers say that the person who is not possessed by genuine zeal in Christ

*"never arrives at peace of mind," seeing as he forgets
that "the root of the wisdom of God is forbearance
and meekness."*

(Abba Isaac the Syrian)

It is truly a blessing to find a person who is aflame with longing for the glory of our Lord and the observance of His holy Law. It is, however, very disheartening if, even when such a blessed soul is finally found, he should be found in danger of being captured from the right, by the evil one, with his undiscerning zeal which is *“not according to knowledge.”*



Saint Nectarios of Aegina gives us, in a few lines, the image of the genuine Christian zealot:

“The zealot who has knowledge, being stirred by love for God and his neighbour, does all things with love and self-denial. He never does what might cause his neighbour sorrow. His zeal is enlightened and according to knowledge, and it never impels him to misconduct.”

The blessed zealot in Christ is the model of the true Christian, whose primary traits are fervent love for God and one’s neighbour, meekness, religious tolerance, forgiveness of wrongs, and, generally, all of the fruits of the Holy Spirit dwelling in his heart.

The enlightened zealot who has knowledge is beneficent and considerate to everyone, does not act improperly, does not wound his brother, rejoices at another’s progress and sorrows over his misfortunes; he is aflame with desire that the Divine word be disseminated, that the Faith be confirmed, that the world be made transformed in Christ, and that the demon be exorcized.

The genuine Christian zealot of true faith presents a heart of fire—yet one that is also sympathetic—, knowing that the truth separated from love not only does not benefit, but rather resoundingly demolishes, and breaks to pieces, the unity of the Theanthropic Body.



On the contrary, the unfortunate Christian who is animated by a zeal not according to knowledge is a ruinous person. There is perhaps no more unfortunate person than the zealot of the Divine Law who is without knowledge; for, though he believes that he works for the glory of God and has an easy conscience, in reality he completely subverts the Gospel of Grace and Love.

Let us see how the Saints of Orthodoxy perceive the zealot who is without knowledge:

- *his zeal is a “corrupting fire, a consuming fire”*
- *“destruction precedes him and desolation follows”*
- *“he prays to God to send fire down from heaven to consume all of those who do not accept his principles and beliefs”*
- *he “is characterized by hatred for those of other religions or beliefs, envy and persistent anger, an impassioned resistance to the true spirit of the Divine law, an irrational obstinacy in the defence of his own convictions, a passionate zeal for dominance in everything, ambition, contention, strife, and turmoil.”*

(St. Nektarios)

Orthodox spirituality has always deemed necessary the guidance of zeal by love, that it might not go astray:

“The zeal of piety is good, but when held in check by love.”

(St. John of Damascus)

The marvellous epistle of St. Dionysios the Areopagite to the monk Demophilos, in which he expounds in a God-inspired manner on the issue of the excesses of undiscerning zeal, bears witness to the fact that this temptation of pious people is an old one.

But may the genuine zealots of Patristic piety stand in opposition to the demon of misguided zeal, calling to mind the patristic counsels:

“We will not approve of your rages that are foreign to genuine zeal, even should you invoke Phinees and Elias a thousand times.”

(St. Dionysios the Areopagite)

Let us likewise remember that our Saviour, through the Holy Apostle Paul,

“instructs [us] to educate with meekness those who refute the teaching of God”; “The ignorant must be taught and not punished, just as we do not chastise the blind, but lead them by the hand.”

(Idem)

May the pious never forget that the criterion of the genuineness of our love is not undiscerning zeal but the refutation of all of our passions:

“Struggle to love all people equally, and you will collectively expel all of your passions.”

(St. Thalassios)

As is the case with every other ascetic practice, our zeal for piety is of dubious purity and genuineness if it does not generate love and humility in our heart:

“Every study and every ascetic practice performed with great labours which does not result in love, in contrition of spirit, is in vain, and in no way does it end up being useful.”

(St. Symeon the New Theologian)



Let us pray to the All-holy Spirit to vouchsafe us blessed and holy zeal according to knowledge, that we might become true builders of the Body of Christ. Then we shall struggle and pray, not that fire be sent down from heaven to consume all of those who do not accept our principles and beliefs, but that the Divine Comforter might come and unite us all in His love and His Truth.

Hence: ***“The zeal of piety is good, but when held in check by love”!***

*Second Sunday of St. Matthew
Saints of Athos, 20 June/ 3 July 2005*

*THE COMMENT below and the reply in the form of a reflection by **Father Archimandrite Akakios of the Saint Gregory Palamas Monastery in Etna, California**, was circulated to the Exarchate Clergy, Faithful and Friends of our Synod in the United States by email. It answered so many points pertinent to contemporary Church life and in such a succinct way that we asked Fr Akakios' blessing to publish it here, which blessing he readily gave.*

REFLECTIONS ON A COMMENT

THE question/comment below was sent to Archbishop Chrysostomos, who has asked me to respond to it. I will do my best, asking him to read and augment whatever I have to say.

THE QUESTION/COMMENT

I don't fully understand why you don't want to tell others about the miracle with Met. Cyprian's effects. People need miracles. I have heard a lot of people say that our synod doesn't have much of a presence because it concentrates on canons and theology and not on the charisms of Orthodoxy. We would show that at least once in awhile we have miracles happen.

MY [FATHER AKAKIOS'] REFLECTIONS:

I REMEMBER when I was asked the following question by someone who eventually left our synod and embraced "official" Orthodoxy: "Have your Bishops performed any miracles?" I was pressed until I said, "God performs miracles. If this happens through individuals, that is insignificant. But there is one miracle in which all of us participate each time that we Liturgize: the Eucharist. That miracle comes from God the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and the Holy Spirit, with the

direct participation of the clergy and the people. All I can say, then, is that our Bishops, who serve the Liturgy, regularly participate, along with all of us, in miracles.” Frustrated, this individual said, “No, I mean where are your miraculous Icons, your healings, and visions and prophecies. These are Scriptural and are Orthodox. Why do you ignore them? And if the New Calendarists are on the wrong track, why do they have them and you do not?”

I had no answer to this, of course. One should not measure the Faith of anyone in a silly and unserious way. Firstly, miracles can be faked. Secondly, they can come forth from negative spiritual forces. Thirdly, they are always secondary to something like the Eucharist. Let me explain myself. The Eucharist gives life, cures illnesses both spiritual and physical and unites us to God, entering into our heart and our whole body. It makes us spiritual beings.

What miraculous Icon, myrrh-gushing or weeping though it may be, is greater than the Body and Blood of Christ? What healing of some ailment and what supernatural event can even be compared to what the Eucharist does?

In fact, of course, we have among the spiritual treasures of our Synod in Resistance a number of miraculous Icons, Relics that exude fragrance (even in our monastery), supernatural phenomena that we cannot explain, and certain very personal experiences, such as the one following our Metropolitan’s repose that His Grace, Bishop Auxentios shared with just a few of us and which the question above is referring to. But we do not bring these things out in public. Nor do they always and at all times show miraculous properties. Instead, we confess people, give them spiritual counsel, and offer them the greatest miracles of all: the Church’s Mysteries!

The miraculous items to which I refer and other inexplicable things are not the source of our Faith, and we would certainly never be so foolish as to use them to demonstrate that our teachings about Orthodoxy and our observance of it are correct or true (and especially over and against those of others!). It is in the living of the Faith and in the Mysteries (“sacraments”) that the Church passes down to us that we find

our belief. If among us God shows forth through certain individuals and certain events, it is only to encourage us and to comfort us. And if this happens in jurisdictions which have gone astray and innovated, this is not proof that innovation is right and traditional Orthodoxy is wrong.

If one is looking for miracles, then most Orthodox would long ago have followed Oral Roberts or some other sectarian religious character, basing their faith on what are highly questionable “miracles” and on things that, if they are not tricks, are simply things coming from the hearts of seekers and not from hucksters and those who abuse religion. Orthodoxy gives us a way of life that may lead to miracles, but these miracles are totally secondary. They are the simply products of true belief and our adherence to the canons and traditions of the Church. This is what we must understand.

Scripture tells us that, despite the fact that Christ performed miracles to bring people to belief, those who are “blessed” are the ones who believe and have not seen. Their belief conforms them to the Church and its teachings and Mysteries, and they are transformed by these. They are blessed and are themselves “living miracles”: miracles in flesh and blood. Christ performed miracles to attract the first believers to the Truth, not to miracles themselves.

Moreover, the miracle-working Saints in Orthodoxy have always been those who lived the Faith, not those who performed miracles for the sake of the faithful and to gain money or gather numbers. When miracles result from the sanctity of miracle-working Saints—since supernatural things are normal to those who change their very substance and nature—they are often unaware of these things, or hide them and tell others to do likewise. In this way, the faithful are not distracted by secondary things and those through whom miracles are made manifest do not become arrogant and destroy their souls.

And that is the issue in a nutshell for me. People today want to be distracted from the world by glitzy, comfortable religion. They want to be spiritually entertained with signs and miracles. They are seldom interested in living their Faith, changing themselves by fasting, prayer, and

overcoming their passions. They want something to distract them from all of that, so that they can feel holy.

Orthodoxy is being used more and more in this way, and through its misuse, many faithful are leaving the Faith that it teaches. They are living a distorted Orthodoxy. They are following the course of all confessions that have deviated from the teachings of undivided Christianity. The greatest tragedy of all is that they increasingly do this by being distracted by the union of churches, rather than union with the Truth and with God. This is why ecumenism produces such hokey, silly worship services and gives birth to doubt about the survival of true Christianity from the time of Christ. This distraction is giving birth to doubt!

If you want Orthodoxy from Patriarchates, it is better just to become a Papist and give up the search for what Orthodoxy is. It can be preserved in Patriarchates or abandoned in the name of a Patriarchate. (Rome is the prime example of its abandonment). It can be spread by officialdom or ethnicity. But these can lead to betrayal and compromise, as in the state Churches under communism and in other political circumstances. Tribalism can help form Christian identities, but it can also become a curse and a heresy, if ethnicity becomes more important than Orthodoxy (preserving Hellenism, Russianism, or this or that cultural identity, instead of sacrificing everything, if necessary, for Orthodoxy).

Like miracles, all of these things (distractions) are not the substance of Orthodoxy. They do not lead to the Truth unless, like miracles, they are placed in a secondary position. When they are first and the Faith is second, Orthodoxy withers and heresy and separation and deviation from united Christianity, the criterion of the Truth, occurs. And then the Faith suffers. The Church is a spiritual hospital where those who are ill are cured, live healthy lives according to the Canons and Holy Tradition. Distractions that take away from the regimens of the Church are deadly.

The moment that anyone runs after miracles, justifies his or her actions by miracles or officialdom or any other thing that takes one from living the life of the Church, we see symptoms of illness: a love of man over God, ethnicity over Orthodoxy, miracles over adherence to the Faith,

and so on. We have seen before our own eyes the transformation of traditional jurisdictions that fell to these distractions into something foreign to Orthodoxy: out go the hair and beards, the priest's cassock, and the reserved attitude towards wealth, fashion, and worldly distraction. The moral lives of Christians collapse. Fasting is talked about but ignored. The Church becomes an attachment to the world, not the world to the Church. Wealth becomes not a means to help the Church, but the Church bows to the wealthy. And finally faith itself is lost. A great tragedy!!!

The Church is the miracle. And its miracles draw one into it, where talk of miracles is subdued and regulated. Those who want to be distracted by miracles are eventually distracted by them and, as in the case of the search for officialdom, relevancy, and all of the other worldly things that distract people, Orthodoxy becomes an empty shell. Miracles coming forth from that shell may exist, but they could not be real. And thus miracles slowly become a horrible temptation, instead of a natural product of Orthodox living. The Church becomes an opera, a drama, a matter of external emotions, and the place of external miracles and not inner ones.

Thank God, then, that there are no “miracles” among us and that our Bishops will not exploit the “natural” spiritual comforts that God gives us to gain numbers! Thank God!



“BE CAREFUL not to bring your hands and your feet close to other bodies, especially of the young. Be especially careful not to stretch out your hands to touch anything, unless it is necessary.”

VENERABLE NICODEMUS OF THE HOLY MOUNTAIN, + 1809 A.D.

“TOUCH alone is sufficient for bodily defilement, for nothing is so dangerous as this sense. Remember him who wrapped his hand in his cassock when about to carry his sick mother.”

VENERABLE JOHN OF THE LADDER, SEVENTH CENTURY

Impressions from the Funeral of Metropolitan Cyprian

By Boryana Gagova

THE LATE Metropolitan Cyprian is known to have said that his strong desire was to spend the rest of his earthly life in the Sts. Cyprian and Justina Monastery. Addressing the brothers, he added that the only thing which could force him to leave the monastery is if there is a lack of love between them. His Grace spent five and a half years in a state of coma, though he was able to understand what others spoke to him and would change his expression, for example when acknowledging that a beloved visitor has come to see him. The ways of God are incomprehensible. Perhaps the late Metropolitan's condition was sent to him as a spiritually beneficial preparation for the eternal life, enabling him to practice an extremely ascetic and prayerful life, deep patience and hope, as well as enabling the other monks to demonstrate in deed their love for their beloved Elder.

The funeral of Metropolitan Cyprian was very peaceful. It left unique personal impressions upon every individual who attended it. Compared to photos prior to the illness, His Eminence's face was difficult to recognise because it looked very ascetic. At first the sight of his widely open mouth seemed shocking, yet one felt at peace when being near Metropolitan Cyprian's body. One of the most impressive events was the behaviour of the children – they revered the Metropolitan's body in the same way as they would an icon. These children included not only babies brought by their parents, but also older children that went to the coffin unaccompanied. Following the Liturgy was the Funeral service itself, at the end of which several of the Bishops expressed their love and reverence in Christ to the late Metropolitan through beautiful eulogies. Then followed a Procession where a flock of seagulls which had appeared some moments earlier in the sky flew slowly in a beautiful circular arrangement above the Metropolitan's body. His Grace was buried

in a chapel dedicated to St. John of Shanghai located on the right hand side of the main monastery Cathedral.

Metropolitan Cyprian's death brought together clergy, monastics and faithful from all over the world. It was wonderful to see visibly the Catholic Church gathered in a spirit of love and peace.

May God grant Metropolitan Cyprian eternal life with all the Saints.

Miss Gagova's family live in Sofia, Bulgaria, but while she was studying at university in this country, she attended Divine services at Brookwood, and so we consider her one of our parishioners. She had returned to Bulgaria just before the Metropolitan's repose, and was thus able to attend the funeral with a group of the faithful from that country.



Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

Concerning the Church

§ 3. **Teaching about the church.** The church is that building in which the faithful gather for the Divine services. The building is usually of a special design and must be consecrated by a hierarch. It may also be called the House of the Lord, and the churches in which the services on the most festive days are celebrated and which are used for the gatherings of people from all the parishes in the town are called *sobors*. [This refers to the practice in Old Russia of having the greater celebrations together in the main church in the area, where the clergy and the choirs would be better trained to cope with them. There is no real translation into English of the word *sobor*, although it is sometimes rendered cathedral. As the next sentence in Fr Rudakov's work shows this is a misusage - *transl.*]. Of all

the *sobors* in a diocese, the one in which the Bishop's *cathedra* (throne) is found is called a cathedral.

§ 4. **The origin of churches.** In the times of the [Old Testament] Patriarchs, there were no churches, and the Divine services were celebrated under the open sky, more often than not in those places which were significant because of some particular religious association, or places which inspired a prayerful disposition: mountains or groves. At the time of Moses, at God's command, for the very first time a special place was set aside for the communal Divine services of the Israelites. This was the Tabernacle, a moveable temple, wherein God received the prayers of the people, the sacrifices, and granted His revelations. Subsequently, the Lord permitted Solomon to replace the Tabernacle with an actual Temple. This Temple he built in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, and it was declared that it should always be the one lawful place for the communal Divine services of the Israelites.

Jesus Christ, though He taught that one can worship the Heavenly Father in every place, nonetheless attended the Temple in Jerusalem. At first, the Apostles went to the same Temple for their particular prayers, but for the celebration of the Mysterion of Communion they assembled in special places, which subsequently were called churches. During the days of the Apostles, these churches were not specially constructed buildings, but were located in private houses, and were distinguished only from ordinary houses by their high purpose. After the time of the Apostles, the Christians under persecution were unable to have special churches and had to conduct their Divine services in private houses, in the catacombs (underground), and in other isolated places, where they were able to remain hidden from their enemies. The Christians were first able to build special and splendid churches for their prayer meetings from the third century onwards, and particularly from the time of Constantine the Great, who declared the Christian religion lawful within the Roman Empire.

§ 5. **The outer appearance of churches.** The most ancient plan of the Christian churches was an elongated rectangle with apsidal endings, which gave them the appearance of a boat. From the fourth century onwards, churches began to be built on other plans, octagonal, circular, or cross-shaped. Each of these different forms applied to the churches had

its own significance. The boat-shaped plan taught the faithful that only the Church can take us across the sea of life to the heavenly harbour. The octagon form signified that the Church, like a travelling star lights up this world. The circular form referred to the everlasting existence of the Church, and the cross-shaped form meant that the Cross is the true foundation of the Church. Until this day, for the most part, churches are built according to these plans. All church buildings are now topped with cupolas or domes, which remind the faithful of Heaven, to which they must strive with their every desire and thought.* On the top of the dome a Cross is placed, as a sign that a Christian church is consecrated to the glorification of the Crucified One. The sanctuary of the church is built towards the East.

Footnote in the original:-

* The number of cupolas on a church may vary: one, three, seven, or thirteen. One dome is a sign that Jesus Christ alone is the head of the Church; three cupolas are used in honour of the Three Persons of the Godhead; five represents Jesus Christ and the four Evangelists; seven the Ecumenical Councils and the Mysteries; and thirteen, Jesus Christ and the Twelve Apostles.

... to be continued with the interior arrangement of the church.



THE COMING MONTH

JULY Falls between the Apostles' Fast and the shorter, but stricter, one of the Dormition. During the month, we keep only Wednesdays and Fridays as fast days, although the monastics also fast on Mondays.

Among the saints' days we celebrate in July, we have:-

The **Virgin Martyr Markella of Chios** (22nd July / 4th August) lived in the village of Volissos, sometime after the middle of the fourteenth century. Her parents were Christians, and among the wealthiest citizens of Volissos. The saint's mother died when she was young, and so her father, the mayor of the village, saw to her education. She had been

trained by her mother to be respectful and devout, and to guard her purity. She avoided associations with other girls who were more outgoing than she was, so that she would not come to spiritual harm through such company. Her goal was to attain the Kingdom of Heaven. Saint Markella increased in virtue as she grew older, fasting, praying, and attending church services. She tried to keep the commandments and to lead others to God. She loved and respected her father, and comforted him in his bereavement. The enemy of our salvation tried to lure her into sin by placing evil thoughts in her mind, but she resisted these temptations, and so the devil turned away from a direct confrontation with the young woman. Instead, he incited her father with an unnatural desire for his daughter. He changed in his behaviour toward her and became moody and depressed, forbidding her to go out or to speak with the neighbours. Unable to understand the reason for this change, the saint went to her room and wept. She would pray before an icon of the Mother of God, asking her to help her father. The unfortunate man spent a long time struggling against his lust, but finally he gave in to it. At times he would speak to his daughter roughly, then later he would appear to be gentle. He wanted to be near her, and to stroke her hair. Unaware of her father's intentions, St Markella was happy to see him emerge from his melancholy state, thinking that her prayer had been answered. Then one day, her father openly declared the foul nature of his feelings for her. Horrified, the saint tried to avoid him as much as she could. One day, a shepherd was tending his sheep near the beach, and was leading them into the shade of a plane tree to avoid the hot July sun. Just as he was about to lie down, he heard a disturbance and looked up. He saw a young woman with a torn dress running down the hill. She hid in a nearby bush, ignoring its thorns. The shepherd wondered who was chasing her, and how she had come to this spot. Then he heard the sound of a horse approaching, and recognized the mayor of the village. He asked the shepherd if he had seen his daughter. He said that he had not seen her, but pointed to her hiding place with his finger. The mayor ordered Markella to come out of the bush, but she refused. Therefore, he set fire to the bush in order to force her out. She emerged on the other side, and ran toward the rocky

shore, calling out to the Mother of God for help. Markella continued to run, even though blood was flowing from her face and hands. Feeling a sharp pain in her leg, she saw that she had been shot with an arrow. She paused to pull it out, then took to flight once more. She scrambled over the rocks, staining them with her blood. Hearing her father getting closer, she prayed that the earth would open up and swallow her. The saint sank to her knees, her strength all gone, and then a miracle took place, as happened also in ancient times with the Protomartyr among women, Saint Thekla. The rock split open and received her body up to the waist. Her father drew near and unable to draw her out of the rock he drew his sword and began to butcher his helpless daughter, cutting off pieces of her body. Finally, he seized her by the hair and cut off her head, throwing it into the sea. At once the calm sea became stormy, and large waves crashed to the shore near the murderer's feet. Thinking that the sea was going to drown him because of his crime, he turned and fled. His ultimate fate has not been recorded. In later years, pious Christians built a church on the spot where St Markella hid in the bush. The spot where she was killed became known as "The Martyrdom of St Markella," and the rock that opened to receive her is still there. The rock appears to be a large stone that broke off from a mountain and rolled into the sea. Soil from the mountain covers the spot on the side facing the land. On the side facing the ocean is a small hole, about the size of a finger. A healing water flows from the opening, which cures every illness. This is not due to the movements of the tide, because when the tide is out, there would be no water. The water is clear, but some of the nearby rocks have been stained with a reddish-yellow colour. The most astonishing thing about the rock is not the warmth of the water, nor the discoloration of the other rocks, but what happens when a priest performs the Blessing of Water. A sort of steam rises up from the water near the rock, and the entire area is covered with a mist; the sea appears to boil. Things return to normal as soon as the service is over. Many miracles have occurred at the spot, and pilgrims flock there from all over the world.

The **Dormition of Saint Anne, mother of the All-holy Theotokos** (25th July / 7th August). St Anne, the ancestress of God, lived for sixty-nine years, and her spouse Joachim, for eighty; according to

one account, Saint Joachim died two years before Saint Anne. The Theotokos had been orphaned of both her parents when she was yet a child living in the Temple. According to Procopius, during the reign of the Emperor Justinian I (527-565), a church was built to honour Saint Anne in Constantinople. The Emperor Justinian II (685-695; 705-711) restored her church, since St. Anne had appeared to his wife, who was then with child. Saint Anne is invoked for help in conceiving children, and for help in difficult childbirth. It was at this time that her body and *maphorion* (shawl) were transferred to Constantinople. The canon in the service of the Saint was composed by St Theophanes (+ 817 A.D.), but older parts of the service are ascribed to Anatolius of Byzantium (+ 458 A.D.). Her Dormition is celebrated on the 25th July, which may be also the day of the dedication of her first church at Constantinople or perhaps the anniversary of the arrival of her relics in Constantinople. The relics of St. Anne were brought from the Holy Land to Constantinople in A.D. 710 and were still kept there in the Church of the Holy Wisdom in A.D. 1333. The oldest and most revered Skete on Mount Athos is dedicated to *Yiayia* (grandma), as the monks at the Skete of St. Anne affectionately refer to her. Inside the main church of the Skete the left foot of St. Anne is treasured. This was brought to the Skete by one Symeon the Righteous on 26th October, A.D. 1666, according to a codex of the Skete. The relic is incorrupt and works many miracles, especially helping childless mothers with pregnancy issues. Also on Mount Athos, at the Holy Monastery of Koutloumousiou, the entire right leg of Saint Anne is kept. The Holy Monastery of Stavronikita treasures her hand. The Patriarchates of Jerusalem and Antioch also have a portion of her relics, as well as Kykkos Monastery on the island of Cyprus.

Our **Holy Father Lupus of Troyes** (29th July/11th August) was born in the mid-eighties of the fourth century in Toul. Being of an aristocratic background, he received an excellent classical education. When he reached adult years he married a lady called Pimeniola, who was the sister of St Hilary of Arles. After six years of marriage, they agreed to separate so that they could both devote themselves to the monastic life. St Lupus went to the renowned monastery at Lérins. When, a year later, Honoratus, the abbot of Lérins, was named Bishop of Arles, Lupus

returned to Maçon in Burgundy to dispose of an estate, distributing the proceeds to the poor. *En route* back to Lérins, he was met by deputies of the Church of Troyes, bringing news of the death of their Bishop Saint Ursus and that, because of his eminent virtue, he had been elected to the see. As Bishop he continued to lead a severely ascetic life, sleeping on the ground, eating only every other day, yet at the same time showing extraordinary care for the poor, the sick and those in prison. In A.D. 429, he accompanied St Germanus of Auxerre to Britain to preach against the Pelagian heresy which had been gaining ground here, and so became one of the benefactors of our Church here. On his return to Troyes he resumed his pastoral care for his flock. In A.D. 451, the Huns under Attila invaded the area, and Saint Lupus called upon his people to repent while he himself redoubled his ascetic labours, praying for their deliverance. When Attila neared the city, the holy Bishop went out to meet him and so impressed the “Scourge of God” that the city was spared, although for a short period Attila took Saint Lupus with him so that he might profit from his learning. When he was released to return to Troyes, there were suspicions that he was in some way in league with the Huns, and so for two years he retired to a place of retreat on Mount Lassois, and later at Maçon. So many were the healings that were wrought through his prayers that he could not be hid, and he was again recalled to his see, where, on 29th July, A.D. 479, he gave up his soul in peace, having been Archpastor of that city for fifty-two years. Such was the gift of grace that he received that St Sidonius of Clermont, with whom he corresponded, said that he was “the father of fathers and bishop of bishops, the chief of the Gallican prelates, the rule of manners, the pillar of truth, the friend of God, and the intercessor to Him for men.”



“THE VERY greatest prayer for people is during the time of the Divine Liturgy. And of all peoples those who most need our prayers and church prayers are the departed, because they can no longer help themselves. Prayers for them the Lord considers as an act of especial kind-heartedness.”

A dedication written in a commemoration book, given in 1949 to Mother Vasilia of the Annunciation Convent (then Sister Vera) by Archimandrite Antony, subsequently Archbishop of Los Angeles, then Head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem.

POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

“IN the Old Testament dreams were always taken as a sign from God. And also in the New Testament when an angel came to Joseph & told him to take Mother & child to Egypt. But in the Orthodox teachings we are taught to disregard them, why? - M.H., Woking

Well, for a start, I have never read all the Scriptures. Are you sure that in the OT dreams were **always** taken as a sign? More probably those dreams are recorded which were signs, and the others have not been recorded in the OT. After all, how many dreams did tens of thousands of people have over a period of 5,500 years? 365 nights in each of those years - all those people dreaming! Some taking a nap in the afternoon and perhaps dreaming.... how many dreams were there in that period? And how many are recorded in the OT? ... Secondly, the people whose dreams were indeed signs were people of spiritual maturity and stature. Joseph had been chosen of all men in the world to be the foster father of our Saviour and an icon of God the Father. He was not an office worker from the lower parts of xxx! We are advised not to pay attention to dreams for two very important reasons. First if we do, we are being proud; we are assuming that we are of the same spiritual stature as those Old Testament righteous ones. Secondly, we can easily be led astray - the demons can permit us two or three dreams which seem significant, to be true, to be fulfilled, etc, and thus gain our confidence and our trust in our dreams (or rather their insinuations); then they can plant one which leads us into sin.

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NEWS SECTION

PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW URGES HUMANITARIAN AID FOR SYRIA

IN AN APPEAL issued on 25th June, **His Holiness Patriarch Kyrill of Moscow** writes: “In the city of Damascus is the centre of one of the most ancient Orthodox Patriarchates—the Patriarchate of Antioch.

Human blood is currently being shed in the streets of this city which remembers the Apostle Paul, and the ascetic labours of ancient saints. On this Biblical land where Orthodox Christians and Muslims peacefully lived side-by-side, shrines and churches are being desecrated, Christians are being driven from their homes, persecuted, often tortured and killed. ... I ask you to follow the call of Christ and to help our neighbours—those who now particularly need our support and sympathy. To this purpose I bless, on the coming Sunday in all parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church, to organize fundraising in support of those in need in Syria. Money should be transferred to the accounts of the Synodal Department for Church Charity and Social Ministry which has been charged with coordination of this good undertaking.” Some no doubt will question the Patriarch’s motives in issuing this appeal, and may accuse him of doing so under political pressure, or of being hypocritical considering his reputed personal wealth, but, nonetheless, what the appeal says is true and we should rejoice that the plight of the suffering people of Syria has thus been highlighted (see Phil. 1:18). As one commentator has already pointed out, though, it may be an embarrassment to those in what we used to call the Free World, who have in recent years placed themselves under the authority of the Patriarch of Moscow, to fulfil his ordinance.

CHRISTIANITY NOW THE MOST HARASSED RELIGION IN THE WORLD

ACCORDING to the **Pew Research Center**, “Adherents of the world’s two largest religious groups, Christians and Muslims, who together comprise more than half of the global population, were harassed in the largest number of countries. Over the three-year period studied, incidents of either government or social harassment were reported against Christians in 130 countries (66%) and against Muslims in 117 countries (59%). Buddhists and Hindus—who together account for roughly one-fifth of the world’s population and who are more geographically concentrated than Christians or Muslims—faced harassment in fewer places; harassment was reported against Buddhists in 16 countries (8%) and against Hindus in 27 countries (14%). In proportion to their numbers, some smaller religious

groups faced especially widespread harassment. Although Jews comprise less than 1% of the world's population, government or social harassment of Jews was reported in 75 countries (38%). Incidents of harassment involving members of other world religions – including Sikhs, ancient faiths such as Zoroastrianism, newer faith groups such as Bahai's and Rastafarians, and localized groups that practice tribal or folk religions – were reported in 84 countries (42%).” The report, which can be read in full on <http://www.pewforum.org/Government/Rising-Restrictions-on-Religion%282%29.aspx#harassment> took into account both governmental restrictions and social hostility to the religions concerned.

BROOKWOOD CEMETERY SOCIETY A.G.M.

THE BROOKWOOD CEMETERY SOCIETY held their 21st Annual General Meeting in the hall of the Brotherhood's Old Mortuary building, on Wednesday 19th June. The meeting was led by their chairman, **Kim Lowe**, and about two dozen people attended. During the official proceedings the committee members were re-elected *en bloc*. Afterwards refreshments were provided, and members were given an opportunity to socialise and talk to each other. The Brotherhood is grateful for the leftovers which were given us and for the gift of two bottles of wine, and for the way in which the BCS people left everything so neat and tidy.

SIR-UK NEWS

BAPTISM AT SAINT EDWARD'S

EVANGELIA, the infant daughter of **David and Natalia Jewell** of Woking, was baptized at Saint Edward's Church on Saturday, 19th May/1st June, the feast of Saint Dunstan. The Godmother was **Elena Holden**, and after the Mysterion, the family provided a celebratory meal in the Old Mortuary for those who had joined us in prayer on the occasion. The next day, Evangelia partook of the Holy Mysteries for the first time during the parish Liturgy. May she be kept in the confession of the Faith, partaking of the Holy Mysteries unto salvation all the days of her life.

OBSEQUIES

STAN CLAPHAM, a parishioner of the **Romanian Patriarchal Parish of St George in London**, was laid to rest in the Orthodox Cemetery at Saint Edward's on Friday 31st May (n.s.), next to his wife Ingrid, who died last September. The funeral had been conducted by **Archpriest Silviu-Petre Pufulete**, the dean of the Patriarchal parishes in this country. After the interment, he and the other mourners were offered hospitality in the old Mortuary building.

ARIADNA ROGERS (née Botcharskaya), always known as Dina, fell asleep in the Lord, aged 91, at Dudwell St Mary Care Home in Burwash, Sussex. For many years she had been pastorally cared for by the clergy of our Brotherhood. Her only surviving relative was a cousin, **Katherine Lickwar**, the *matushka* of the **Very Reverend Father Vasily of the Dormition of the Virgin Mary Church, Cumberland, Rhode Island, USA**. The funeral was held in Saint Edward's Church on Mid-Pentecost, Wednesday 29th May, n.s., and Fr Vasily, who had travelled from the States with his *matushka* for the funeral, officiated at the interment later in **Brompton Cemetery**, West London. May Ariadna find rest with the saints and *Memory Eternal*.

BABIES BORN AND NAMED

ON Friday 1st/ 14th June, a baby son was born to **Ioan and Georgetta Turcu** at Watford Hospital, and our clergy attended later in the day to read the first-day prayers for the mother and baby. On the following Friday, they visited the Turcu family home in North Harrow to read the eighth-day prayers, and the baby was then named **David**.

On the Day of Pentecost, the fortieth day prayers were read at the **Convent of the Annunciation in London** before the festal Liturgy for **Ana-Maria Grocu**, after the birth of her son, who is also named **David**.

VISIT TO ST BONIFACE MISSION, ISLE OF WIGHT

ON SATURDAY, 2nd/ 15th June, the Saturday nearest Saint Boniface day (5th/ 18th), Fathers Alexis and Sabbas from Brookwood went to the Isle of Wight to serve a *moleben* to the Saint for the Mission in the **ancient, Norman Church, dedicated to him, at Bonchurch**, which is on a pre-schism site. This church is situated on a site near the spot where St Boniface landed on the island and preached, and we are thankful to the incumbent and parishioners of that beautiful church for allowing us to use it for this service. The fathers were met at the pier head by **Martin Smith**, and first we went to the cemetery in Ryde where we served a *pannikhida* at the grave of **Mary Bowler**, who died in 2010 just a few weeks short of 100. Mary had become Orthodox in her nineties and was the very first of the group there to come forward to be made a catechumen. The mission members were joined at her grave by members of her own family. Then we travelled to Bonchurch for the *moleben*, which was chanted with the canon of the Saint. After the service, we journeyed on to Newport, where we blessed the home of parishioners **Benjamin and Elaine Waterhouse** and were treated to lunch. In the afternoon we visited **Quarr Abbey**, where we spoke with the newly appointed **Father Prior, Dom Xavier Perrin**, who had arrived there from France only two weeks previously, and **Father Nicholas**. Fr Nicholas has been trying to help the Mission on the island find a place to hold their services, and was proposing something at the Abbey. Early in July, the Island parishioners are holding a meeting to discuss the options open to them. Please remember them in your prayers.

VISITORS

Friday, 31st May n.s.: **Father Evfimiy and Mother Evfrosinia** from the **Lesna Icon Convent in Normandy, France**, visited us briefly, *en route* to their mission in Guildford. They generously loaded us with provisions, and brought books and prayer-ropes to sell, the proceeds of which, they said, we could share with their Convent.

Sunday 2nd June, n.s: A group of people, led by **Val Pretlove**, visited Saint Edward's Church in the afternoon.

Tuesday 11th June, n.s: Ninety-five girls from the **Sir William Perkins School, Chertsey**, led by **Miss Caroline Hewitt**, visited us. Their annual visit is now an established tradition, and, as in previous years, we were impressed by the impeccable behaviour of the girls and by their many serious and intelligent questions. The visit lasted about an hour and a half, and after rejoicing us by their behaviour and interest, the school even left a donation after their visit.

Saturday 22nd June, n.s: A group of fifteen parishioners from **Croydon Minster**, led by **Canon Colin Luke Boswell**, visited Saint Edward's. They spent about an hour viewing the church and asking questions, and then we offered them hospitality.

ANIMAL MATTERS

OUR poultry population has increased, despite the death of two of the older birds. We now have twelve hens and two cockerels, of these five are young half-grown birds, and two of those are pedigree Campines.

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PRACTICAL TIP

DO NOT expect other people to be corrected by admonitions and exhortations, when you do not accept correction yourself.

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“IF YOU SAY something evil about your brother or sister, even if it is true, your soul suffers an unhealable wound.”

VENERABLE NIKON OF OPTINA THE CONFESSOR, + 1931 A.D.