



FROM THE FATHERS

“THE BEGINNING of a man’s true life is the fear of God. But the fear of God does not consent to dwell in a soul that is distracted over outward things.”

VENERABLE ISAAC THE SYRIAN, + 7TH CENTURY

“NOTHING is more unsettling than talkativeness and more pernicious than an unbridled tongue, disruptive as it is of the soul’s proper state. For the soul’s chatter destroys what we build each day and scatters what we have laboriously gathered together.”

VENERABLE PHILOTHEUS OF SINAI, + 9TH OR 10TH CENTURY

“THE DEMONS, as St Hilarion has said, are immaterial and sleepless, concerned only to fight against us and to destroy our souls through word, act and thought. We lack a similar persistence, and concern ourselves now with our comfort and with ephemeral opinion, now with worldly matters, now with a thousand and one things. We are not in the least interested in examining our life, so that our intellect may develop the habit of so doing and may give attention to itself unremittingly.”

VEN. PETER OF DAMASCUS, + 11TH OR 12TH CENTURY

HOMILY ON JOHN THE BAPTIST

SAINT PHILARET THE NEW CONFESSOR

OF NEW YORK, + 1985

IN THE NAME of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Today, when the Church glorifies a great righteous man - the honourable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord, John, one greater than whom, as says the Saviour of the world Himself, there has not risen among those born of women (Matt. 11:11) - on this day, I want to turn your attention to one event in the life of the Saviour which immediately concerns Saint John the Baptist.

The Holy Gospel records that John, when he was in chains in prison, sent his disciples to the Saviour, so that in his behalf they might put a question to the Saviour: *Art Thou he that should come, or look we for another?*" (Matt. 11:3), that is "Are you that One, Who must come (meaning, of course, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world), or must we await someone else that is not you?"

This question voiced by his disciples in the name of their holy teacher might well arouse thoughts in a man that John, who had in his time borne witness with conviction to the Divine worthiness of the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sins of the world, suddenly had doubts when in prison. One theologians straightforwardly makes the supposition that John had a strong temptation in prison, that when his prophetic ministry came before him, he was, as it were, afflicted by the doubt: maybe this was not the Messiah, and all that I have done was done in vain. Actually, this might indeed appear to be the meaning of such a question.

But such an explanation in no way accords with what the Saviour Himself said after the disciples of John had departed. When they put their question to Him, the Gospel says that the Lord told them: *Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see. Speak of the miracles, says the Saviour, the lepers are cleansed, the poor have the Gospel preached unto them, the dead are raised up* (Matt. 11:4-5). They were to announce all these miracles to their teacher. Indicating that this instruction was not directed at John himself, after this the Lord said to those who were around Him, *What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?* (Matt. 11:7). No answer was necessary. The mighty Prophet and Forerunner of the Lord was, in his firmness and steadfastness, so unlike a reed shaken in the wind, that no answer was necessary, - it was understood without question. *But what went ye out for to see?* The Lord asks again. *A man clothed in soft raiment?* (That is someone who lives in the normal way, like the majority). No, such are to be found in royal apartments, says the Lord. And again as before, no reply was necessary. Everyone understood, and they knew John.

And then, at last, the Lord says: *What went ye out for to see? A Prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a Prophet* (Matt. 11:9). Then the Lord says he is the *Voice of one crying in the wilderness*, of whom the prophets of old had spoken (See Mark 1:3-4, Luke 7:27, Mal. 3:1). And then He says: *Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist* (Matt. 11:11). These words, with which the Lord confirmed both the authority and spiritual excellence of His Forerunner, who had formerly borne witness concerning Him, wholly refute the explanation which I have just mentioned, that John in some way doubted. With exactness the Lord indicates his firmness, steadfastness and [spiritual] height. As John Chrysostom so subtly and profoundly notes in his exegesis of the Holy Gospel, the question was posed not for John's sake, but for the sake of his disciples.

That wise director, Saint John the Baptist saw that his disciples would doubt and be shaken. Furthermore, the Holy Gospel

gives us cause to believe with undoubting confidence that they had their own relationship with their teacher, one of zeal. Formerly John had been an authority from on high, - then his preaching had thundered forth, then the *Voice of one crying in the wilderness* had thundered over the Jordan waters. Subsequently, as the Evangelist John reports, there came the moment when the disciples of John came to him and said unto their teacher John: *Rabbi, He that was with thee, ... to Whom thou barest witness, behold the Same baptizeth, and all men come to Him* (John 3:26). Here we have a clear indication of their sincere, but irrational, zeal for the reputation of their own teacher.

And so, seeing all this in his disciples, John sent them to the Saviour so that they might be convinced through their own eyes Who it was before them, for the works which the Saviour did, - as He himself said, - bore witness concerning Him (see John 5:36).

In the instance reported above we see how the Lord, in His turn, bore witness to His Baptizer, as the greatest born of women.

Now you and I are celebrating the memory of the holy John, the Forerunner. When the feast of the Beheading of John the Forerunner falls, in the *prokeimenon*, which is a fundamental verse expressing the main import of the feast, the Church cries out: *The righteous man shall be glad in the Lord, and shall hope in Him* (Ps. 63:11). This refers directly to John the Forerunner, both when he was yet in prison and when he was beheaded.

It means that John did not entertain any doubts, but that he, as a righteous man, rejoiced in his Lord even when he was suddenly subjected to that violent death imposed upon him by King Herod, who had witlessly sworn away *unto the half* of his kingdom (Mark 6:23). Let us remember this.

Such steadfastness was St John's everywhere, always, and in everything! And it is this very example of steadfastness that should especially nowadays encourage believing people. How many temptations there are nowadays! Temptations to sin seed themselves

around everywhere, but one can repent of sin; and there are other temptations: spiritual deceptions; spiritual fakery; Churches that are not true, and others, which nowadays are spread everywhere - this is the most dreadful thing. And it is exactly with this that a person must be steadfast and manly, and not let go of standing in the truth.

Thanks be to God that you and I belong to that Church, which sacredly maintains the Orthodox precepts and traditions and the whole structure of the life that Orthodox people should have. Let us thank God for this.

How many people are there nowadays who sincerely seek the truth, but, nonetheless, are led astray and fall, following paths that are not right. We must grieve for them and pray for them, and not judge them as certain people do nowadays. Many are the people who seek salvation, but the enemy beats them down with his persuasions and nudges them along a wrong path, whereon they think they see the True Church but where in reality there is only something counterfeit and false.

Of old the Lord said to His faithful one (the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia): *Hold that fast which thou hast* (Rev. 3:11). And, through His seer of mysteries, the Lord addressed us with this word: *Hold that fast which thou hast*.*

Give thanks to the Lord that you belong to the True Church, for this gift of His mercy is more precious than all else. And just as He is always faithful to His promises, so remain until the very end faithful unto Him, as He says in that same [Book of] Revelation: *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life* (Rev. 2:1). Amen.

Footnote:

* These same words were found on the day on which St Philaret reposed, 8th/21st November, the feast of the Angelic Powers of Heaven, on a paper still in his typewriter, when his death was discovered. They are his last testament to us.

Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

§ 6. **The inner arrangement of the church.** Following the division of the Old Testament temple into three parts, for the gentiles, the faithful and for the pastors, our churches are also arranged in three principal parts: 1) the narthex; 2) the nave or the church in its most limited sense; and 3) the sanctuary or altar.

1) The **narthex** is the westernmost part of the church building and is usually separated from the church proper by a solid wall. It is appointed for the catechumens and penitents; and there Jews, heretics and pagans were permitted to stand. Of old, the font for Baptism was set up there, as was the table for the common meal together after the Divine service. In front of the entrance to the narthex there would be a small area or porch called the parvis, and there those penitents who were considered to be beyond protection used to stand.

2) The central part of the church, which we call **the nave**, was reserved only for the faithful, but even here some penitents and catechumens were permitted to stand near the doors at the back, namely those whose spiritual disposition was more advanced. Men stand on the right side of the church, and women on the left. In ancient times in the centre of the church there would be an *ambon*. This is an elevated place reached by several steps. The Bishop or the priest would ascend it to deliver his sermon, the deacons to read the Gospel and the readers to read the Acts and the Epistles of the Apostles. In those days, the ambon was con-

structed of stone, to remind us of the stone on which the Angel sat when he announced the glad tidings of the Resurrection of Christ. Nowadays, the Apostle and Gospel are more commonly read from the *soleas*. This is the elevated area in front of the iconostas, which is, in fact, an extension of the floor-level in the sanctuary itself. The central part of the soleas, that immediately in front of the Royal Doors, where the Gospels are often read and from where instruction is given is also called the *ambon*. Properly on either side of the soleas are the *kliroses* or choir places, and often the banners which bear icons, usually embroidered or sewn with gold thread are kept by the *kliros*. These banners are carried in processions by the faithful, as emblems of our Faith. In cathedral churches there is a hierarchal ambon in the centre of the church, on which the Bishop stands to be vested, during the initial part of the Liturgy, during the services of supplication, and at various other points in the church services.

... to be continued with "The Sanctuary."



THE COMING MONTH

IN AUGUST we have the two **Great Feasts of the Transfiguration of our Saviour** and the **Dormition of His All-holy Mother**. A third feast, that of the **Beheading of St John the Baptist**, also falls at the end of this month, and is the reason why, this month, our first piece is a sermon on that feast by **St Philaret of New York**. To remind us that in every moment of life we can choose one of two ways before us, on the Beheading of St John, though it is a feast day, we keep a fast, in this reminding ourselves to align ourselves with the ascetic struggler, the Saviour's Baptist, and not with the ways of the world, with Herod and Herodias and those enjoying the "good life" with them.

We also have the **fourteen day fast** in preparation for the Dormition, of course. It begins on 1st / 14th August, and is observed with the strictness of the Great Fast before Pascha. On weekdays, here at Brookwood, after Vespers we chant the **Supplicatory Canon to the Mother of God** (*Paraklesis*) throughout this fast, alternating the Great Canon with the Little one, day by day. These canons are found in the Prayer Book, and, if it is simply impossible for you to get to church for these services, you should at least read them at home, adding them to your daily prayers. As if to emphasize the importance of this particular fast, on the very first day we celebrate the feast of the **Old Testament Martyrs, the Maccabees, their mother Solomone, and their teacher Eleazar**. Eleazar, though an old man, would not even pretend to break the Judaic fast to save his life, lest he scandalise his people. How his example shames those of us, who have not only the promise of the Saviour but participation in Him through the Church, and yet are lazy in keeping the fasts or observing the holy days of the Church, and instead turn to worldly pursuits and interests.

Among the saints in August, we have: **Saint Basil the Blessed**, Wonderworker of Moscow (2nd / 15th), was born in 1468 near the Elokhov church of the Vladimir Icon outside Moscow. His parents were poor and sent their son to be trained as a cobbler. During Basil's apprenticeship, the master happened to witness a remarkable event, which showed him that his student was no ordinary man. A certain merchant came to order boots, specifying that they be made in a particular way, since he would not pick them up for a year. Basil wept and said, "I wish you would cancel the order, since you will never wear them." When the perplexed master questioned his apprentice, he explained that the man would not wear the boots for he would soon die. After several days the prediction came true. When he was yet sixteen, the saint moved to Moscow and began the difficult exploit of foolishness for Christ. In the burning summer heat and in the winter's harsh frost, he walked about barefoot through the streets. His actions were strange: he would upset a merchant's stand or spill his produce. Angry mer-

chants would beat him, but he endured the beatings and thanked God for them. Then it would be discovered that the spoiled goods were somehow unfit for use. The reputation of St Basil quickly grew, and people saw him as a holy fool, a man of God, denouncing wrongs. A certain merchant wanted to build a church in Moscow, but it collapsed three times. The merchant asked the saint for advice, and he directed him to Kiev. "Find there John the Cripple," he said. "He will tell you how to build the church." Travelling to Kiev, the merchant sought out John, and he was rocking an empty cradle. "Who are you rocking?" asked the merchant. "I weep for my beloved mother, who was made poor by my birth and upbringing." Only then did the merchant remember his own mother, whom he had thrown out of his house. Then it became clear to him why he was not able to build a church. Returning home, he took care of his mother, begged her forgiveness, and was able to build the church. The saint harshly condemned those who gave alms for selfish reasons, not out of compassion for the poor, but hoping for an easy way to attract God's blessings for themselves. Once, the saint saw a demon in the guise of a beggar. He sat at the gates of the All-Pure Virgin's church, and he gave speedy help in their affairs to everyone who gave alms. The saint exposed the wicked trick and expelled the demon. For the salvation of his neighbour, St Basil also visited inns, where he tried to see a grain of goodness even in people very much gone to ruin, and to strengthen and encourage them by kindness. Many observed that when the saint passed by a house in which they made merry and drank, he wept and clutched the corners of that house. They inquired of the Fool what this meant, and he answered: "Your Angels stand in sorrow at the house and are distressed by your sins. I beg them with tears to pray to the Lord for the conversion of sinners." Purified by great deeds and by the prayer of his soul, the saint was also given the gift of foresight. In 1547 he predicted the great fire of Moscow; through prayer he extinguished a fire at Novgorod, and once he reproached Tsar Ivan the Terrible, because during the Divine services he was preoccupied with plans to build a palace on the Vorobiev hills. St Basil

died on 2nd August, 1557. St Macarius, Metropolitan of Moscow served the funeral with many clergy. His body was buried in the cemetery of Trinity Church, where in 1554, the Protection Cathedral (which is popularly know as St Basil's) was built in memory of the conquest of Kazan.

The **Venerable Drithelm of Old Melrose** (17th / 30th) was a married family man, living in Northumbria. One day he was seized by a sickness, and died one evening while his wife and family were keeping watch at his bedside. In the morning, to the terror of those mourning his repose, he arose and told his family that he had been sent back to this world to lead a different life. While dead he had seen the mysteries of the life beyond the grave. He repaired to the church and prayed there for some time and then took leave of his family and went to Melrose Monastery, where he was received by the Abbot Ethelwold and numbered among the brethren. King Aldfrid, hearing of this miracle, came to see him and thereafter often visited the monastery to converse with him. Drithelm led a most austere life as a monastic. He would stand for hours up to his neck in the River Tweed and recite the Psalter. On leaving he would not change his dripping clothes. When asked whether he suffered from the cold, he would simply reply, "I have seen colder places than that." Again when asked about his other austerities, he would simply reply, "I have seen harder things than that." He reposed for the second time and entered into rest about the turn of the ninth century. Through his witness he brought many to a better way of life.

The **Venerable Martyr George of Lemnos** (24th August / 6th September) lived in the monastic discipline form earliest childhood, and struggled on Mount Olympus in Bithynia. During the Iconoclastic persecution of the Christians under Leo the Isaurian (A.D. 717-741), he remained steadfast to Orthodoxy. At the age of ninety-five, he was arrested and put to torture, and died under torture when they cut off his nose and, in their barbaric fury, burned his face. He died praying for his tormentors.

BOOK REVIEW

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PARENTING CULTIVATING GOD'S CREATION

Published by Zoë Press, Dunlop, CA 93621
Softback, 284 pages

THE TONE of the following review may appear to be somewhat negative, so at the outset let me say two things. First, this book is a much needed addition to any Orthodox family library. It contains essential instruction for parenting at a time when even seemingly sincere and serious Orthodox Christians are prepared to follow the ways of the world in the upbringing of their children, and only when it is too late wonder why they are “lost.” And secondly the publication is strong enough to bear criticism. It is an excellent book - let that be our base line. It is a book which every Orthodox parent of young or teenage children should have, not necessarily to read through (a rather daunting task considering its length), but to dip into frequently, to re-assess whether in the upbringing of their offspring they are indeed “cultivating” them or destroying them spiritually.

One only has to notice the draining away of our young people to appreciate how important a book such as this is. In earlier generations of Orthodox in the Western diaspora, grandparents and parents often identified their Church allegiance so completely with their love of a Mother Country, that their children often felt alienated. They wanted to live in the here and now of the society in which they were growing up, where their friends and peers also lived. Often the older generation simply taught various folk usages and customs, but little of the saving teaching of the Church. Parents believed that getting them involved in church-centred activities, even if these only superficially touched on what the Church was really about, was sufficient to bind their children into

Church-life. But what is the point of carrying a star with a lamp in it at a Christmas party if you do not know what that star represents, or why its prototype was important? Why even be pressed into the choir, if you have no comprehension of the words you are singing? Or serve as an altar-boy, if you are told nothing of the Mystery of the Eucharist, but just when to go out with a candle or move an analoy? Or read in church, perhaps even impressively in a language which even your grandparents do not fully understand, when you have no inkling of prayer? Later come more adult things: concerts, summer camps, balls and the like - deemed good because of some supposed link with a by-gone culture and therefore assumed to be "of the Church." Naturally, kids flee. Who, with any spirit, wouldn't?

The more recent immigrants do not appear to regard the culture of their Mother Land with such rose-tinted spectacles - they have lived through Soviet times and the post-Soviet deconstruction. But these fall into an opposite error. They readily adopt the liberal, *laissez-faire* attitudes of the materialistic West which seduce them. They not only fail to raise their children according to traditional Christian practice, but they do not even bother to find out what that is. They are more interested in seeing them "get on in the world." Their children too will be lost. This is why a book like the present one is essential reading, but now let me be negative, as I promised at the beginning.

The book has no author because it is in fact an anthology. This has one negative consequence. Some of the pieces are from the writings of Church Fathers and Saints, others are from revered Elders of more modern times, yet others are church ministers and leaders, yet others from private individuals. This means that one cannot give equal credence to all the pieces. A careless reader might thus be led to assume that everything in the book is of equal value; it is not, and care should be taken not only to read the teaching but to assess its spiritual weight. Some, a few, of the contributors, no doubt speaking from their own experiences,

seem to mouth the views of the American Moral Majority rather than expressing specifically Orthodox Christian teaching. A minor quibble too: I found some of the contemporary American jargon a little jarring, although at times it can also help one to “wise up.”

The scope of the book is broad: from early infancy to late teens. It not only covers Church-centred aspects, such as how to behave in church, preparing for church, fasting, prayer at home, almsgiving, etc., but also matters which, I suspect, in most “conservative” Orthodox Church instruction classes are never even touched upon, but which young people must needs face: friendships, dating, sexual relations, drugs, homosexuality, internet and television usage. This is excellent, but it does make the book rather cumbersome. And this is my second negative point. It seems that nowadays people have very short attention spans, even in the generation of those with the responsibility of bringing up children; perhaps a slimmer volume would have reached a wider audience.

That said, if you have a child that you love in the way that you should, **obtain this book**. Dip into it frequently, learn from it, and give your child a firm spiritual foundation in life. We certainly have it on our bookstall at Brookwood. **A.A.**

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POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

“WERE the church of St. Paul and what is now called the Orthodox Church one and the same? Did the Orthodox Church begin with Constantine?” - L.D., Bristol

OF COURSE the Church which St Paul belonged to and the Orthodox Church are one and the same. Were it not so, we would not commemorate him as a Saint and read his teachings in our Divine Services - we do not commemorate as Saints those who died outside the Church or read the writings of those separated from Orthodoxy in our churches.

And the Orthodox Church certainly did not begin with Saint Constantine; it began with its Head, our Lord, and God, and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Day of Pentecost is looked upon by many as the “Birthday of the Church.”

I am rather bemused by the thought that anyone would suggest it began with Saint Constantine. Why him? The city of Constantinople was founded by him, and the First Council convoked under his auspices, but these things, though important, are far from founding the Church. Indeed, it was not until the mid-fifth century that Constantinople was given recognition as a Patriarchate - this long after the repose of the Emperor St Constantine. At the first Council of Constantinople itself (381 A.D. - also generations after St Constantine’s repose), the incumbent of that see is still referred to as a Bishop and not as Patriarch. Presumably had St Constantine founded the Church we would be known as Constantinians and not as Christians, but St Constantine, though rightly hymned as a Saint and Peer of the Apostles, was not God incarnate; he is not the only Mediator between God and man.

I notice that the website of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America proclaims: “The Vatican is the heart of Roman Catholic Christianity. The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople is the heart of Orthodox Christianity.” This is patently an un-Orthodox notion, but perhaps it has given rise to the idea that you have obviously heard that Orthodoxy somehow depends on Constantinople. And this would lead to the incredible idea that it was somehow a foundation of St Constantine’s. We cannot ignore the important rôle that the Hellenistic culture has played in Orthodoxy and the invaluable part its language and its philosophical tradition have played in expressing the mysteries of our Faith, but the idea that the Faith somehow depends on Constantinople, and therefore on St Constantine, is all quite obviously a puerile and improper way of paying homage to those valued contributions to our Tradition.

I suspect a very misguided Greek nationalism has crept in here. But if it all depends on Constantine, let us claim it as an **English** triumph and not as a Greek one! St Constantine was proclaimed Emperor in York after all, - and no matter that the English did not exist when he was there, surely we are all allowed to twist history to suit our own nationalistic proclivities! I say this just to highlight the complete nonsense of the proposition you have heard.



NEWS SECTION

POLICE THREATEN ATHONITE MONASTERY

THE GREEK government has deployed armed police to forcibly remove the defenceless monks of the Holy Monastery of Esphigmenou from their monastery property in Karyes again, according to a press release posted by the Monastery on 20th July. “Armed police are on the scene and roads to the building have been blocked by Greek Police vehicles in anticipation of the planned assault. The police have given the monks a deadline of today, 12pm local time to vacate or **face an armed assault**. The Greek government has authorized the use of force to resolve a religious dispute after failing to starve the monks into leaving their monastery during a decade-long blockade. For a number of years they have denied the monks deliveries of food, medicine, heating oil, and access to medical attention while simultaneously subjecting them to a non-stop campaign of official harassment and intimidation. **This waste of taxpayer dollars has continued unabated during the financial crisis that has rocked Greece and crippled social services to the poor and for which the UN has criticized the Greek government for falling behind on its human rights obligations**” (*emphasis throughout ours*). The confrontation stems from the fact that the Fathers of the Monastery refuse to commemorate the **Œcumenical Patriarch, Bartholomeos I**, because of his ecumenical activities. Be-

sides the socio-economic issues mentioned in the release, the approach to the “problem” adopted by the Patriarchate and the Greek Government seems to fall well short of showing Christian love.

REPOSE OF MOTHER MARIA (RULE)

MOTHER MARIA, who is perhaps best known for her excellent work in translating **Saint Nikolai Velimirovic’s** classic “Prologue from Ochrid,” reposed in the Lord on the feast of the Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles, 30th June / 13th July, in Oxford. In the eighties, when her health was better, she several times visited us at Brookwood, rejoicing in the fact that she had grown up in this area. She had been one of five Anglican nuns who went to a Serbian monastery in an exchange agreement, but the experience brought her to Holy Orthodoxy, and in 1973 she became Orthodox. She subsequently received tonsure as an Orthodox nun, and returned to Serbia to help **Archimandrite Julian** restore the ancient monastery of **Gradac**. Besides the Prologue, she was instrumental in translating, or helping to translate, many Orthodox works into English, for which we owe her a great debt of gratitude. Her funeral was held on Monday, 22nd July at **St Nicholas Orthodox Church (MP) in Oxford** after a Memorial Divine Liturgy and she was laid to rest in Wolvercote Cemetery, Oxford. May her rest be with the saints, and her ***Memory Eternal***.

1,025th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAPTISM OF RUS’

COINCIDING with the feast of the Peer of the Apostles Saint Vladimir of Kiev at the end of July, elaborate celebrations of the 1,025th Anniversary of the Baptism of Rus’ were held in Moscow, Kiev and Minsk. The Patriarchs of Alexandria, Jerusalem, Russia, Georgia, Serbia and Bulgaria, and the heads and representatives of other Local [National] Orthodox Churches participated. The reports on the official church websites indicate that in each city the leaders of the governments of the three countries (Russian Federation, Ukraine and Byelorussia) found this

a useful propaganda forum. The Œcumenical Patriarchate appears not to have been highly represented, though the Patriarch did address a letter to the devout Ukrainian people on the occasion. On the positive side, the Hierarchs participating in the celebrations used the opportunity to issue a statement deploring the persecution and harassment of Christians throughout the contemporary world. One wonders, though, how many of these anniversaries one can have! This year the Russian Church has already celebrated the 400th year of the Romanov dynasty, and 400 years of “Russian Victory.” Did these years not also include the seven decades of Soviet horror? And will there be a celebration of the 1,050th anniversary of the Baptism of Rus? To celebrate the millennium was credible, but how far can this new “tradition” be pushed? The answer, one suspects, lies in what is politically expedient and profitable, rather than in what expresses the *pious mind of the Church*.

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SIR-UK NEWS

BISHOP AMBROSE’S VISIT

IN MID-JULY, His Grace **Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** came to England to celebrate the **65th Wedding Anniversary** of two of the most distinguished Convent parishioners, **Artemii (Tëma) and Irina Ananin**. His Grace arrived in London on Thursday, 18th July, and on the next day made his own way by train to Brookwood, staying with us overnight and celebrating the Divine Liturgy with our clergy on Saturday 7th / 20th July, the feast of the Holy Martyr Kyriake. On Sunday morning, he went with Fr Sabbas to the Convent, where they were joined by **Fr Stephen Fretwell and his presbytera, Joanna, and Fr Deacon Borislav Popov**, for the Sunday Liturgy. For the occasion the Convent was packed with people, and after the Divine Liturgy a Thanksgiving *Te Deum* was sung for **Tëma and Irina**. To them: **Many Years!** After the church services and congratulations to the couple, **Mother Vikentia** and her sisters provided refreshments for those who had attended. On this occasion, too, His Grace signed papers making him a trustee of the charity which administers the Convent, the **Christian Ortho-**

dox Convent of the Annunciation, registered charity number 1120545. In this capacity His Grace replaces Mother Vasilia, who reposed in the Lord earlier in the year.

BISHOP SOFRONIE'S VISIT

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** baptized **Cassiane**, the infant daughter of **Christian and Nina Toma**, and **Melania**, the infant daughter of **Constantin and Daniela Virlan**, on Saturday 23rd June / 6th July at Saint Edward's Church. **Ecaterina Rogojina** was the godmother of Cassiane, and **Anna Virlan** of Melania. God grant that they all be kept in the confession of the Faith. On the following day, the Sunday, His Grace returned to Brookwood to celebrate the Divine Liturgy on the feast of the **Birth of Saint John the Baptist**. He was assisted in the altar by **Fr Stephen Fretwell, Hierodeacon Sabbas and Deacon Borislav Popov**, and the Romanian faithful formed a choir to augment our own.

NEW ICONS

TWO new hand-painted icons have arrived from the **Convent of Saint Elizabeth, Etna, California**, for Saint Edward's Church. One is to commemorate the consecration of the church on 30th August / 12th September, 2010. It depicts the **Guardian Angel of the altar**, the heavenly patron of the Brotherhood **Saint Edward the Martyr**, and **Saint Alexander the Patriarch of Constantinople** and the **Right-believing Prince Alexander Nevsky**, because the consecration fell on the day of the commemoration of these two Saints. The second icon is of the **Venerable Abramius of Mesopotamia** and his niece the **Venerable Maria** (feast day: 29th October / 11th November). The icons are currently being framed for us by **Easels of Chobham**, and icon cards have been produced for us by **Knaphill Print & Web Limited** and are now available.

NEW CATECHUMEN

TERENCE SMITH of York, who travels down regularly for services at Brookwood, was made a catechumen on the Sunday of All Saints, 17th / 30th June. He was named for the holy **Martyr Terence of Carthage**, feast day 10th / 23rd April. Pray that he makes progress in faith, in life and in spiritual understanding, and thus in due time be granted the grace of Holy Baptism.

BABY BORN & NAMED

A SON was born to **Petru and Gabriella Grigoras** at Barnet Hospital on 8th July, and the Brotherhood clergy visited the hospital that day to read the first-day prayers for mother and baby. On the eighth day, 15th July, they visited the family at home in Stanmore to read the prayers and name their new-born son. He was called **Pavel** after the Holy Apostle Paul. He has an older brother, **Petru**, who serves in the altar at our Convent, and so they will share a Name Day.

THREE BAPTISMS IN ONE DAY

ON THE FEAST of Sts Aquila and Priscilla, Saturday, 14th/27th July, three Baptisms were celebrated at Saint Edward's Church. In the morning **Fr Ioan Onofrei from Romania** baptized **Pavel**, the infant son of **Petru and Gabriela Grigoras** of Stanmore, Middlesex, and **Sophia**, the infant daughter of **Nicolae and Iuliana Ursache** of London NW9. Fr Ioan and his **Presbytera Maria** stood as sponsors for Pavel, and **Mihai and Cassiana Visanu** as the sponsors for Sophia. After the Mysterion, the newly-illuminated infants were imparted the Holy Mysteries of the Body and Blood of Christ. The families then offered refreshments to all who had joined them for this joyous occasion in the Old Mortuary. Earlier in the week, on the Thursday evening Fr Ioan and his Presbytera had visited us and stayed about two hours, brought to us by Petru Grigoras, who kindly acted as interpreter.

On the Saturday afternoon, **David**, the infant son of **Ioan and Georgetta Turcu** of North Harrow, was baptized at Saint Edward's after the churching prayers for Georgetta had been read at the church doors. **Sava and Magdalena Turcu** were the sponsors at the Mysterion. After the sacred ceremonies, again family and friends offered refreshments in the Old Mortuary, and they kindly left a special Christening cake for the Brotherhood! The family had specifically asked that the Baptism be celebrated in English, as "David will grow up English." The next day at our Parish Divine Liturgy, he received the Holy Mysteries for the first time.

God grant His mercies to our new brethren in the Faith, Pavel, Sophia and David, and keep them in the confession of the Faith all the days of their lives. To them and their sponsors and families: ***Many Years!***

SAINT BONIFACE MISSION, IoW

FACED with insuperable difficulties after the loss of their chapel in Ryde Cemetery, the members of the **Saint Boniface Mission** in the Isle of Wight held a meeting on Saturday 6th July, and decided to formally close the Mission. Members will attend the Divine Services at Brookwood as often as possible (which most already do), and will still hold reader services among themselves. They are also setting up a website so that the fact that there is an Orthodox presence on the Island will become more widely known, and perhaps at a future date something more positive will be possible. St Boniface himself suffered a similar setback in his mission to the continent. May his prayers help them.

KEOTCoLtd AGM

THE AGM of the **King Edward Orthodox Trust Co Ltd**, the charity which administers the Orthodox property at Brookwood (registered charity number 284929/0) was held on Sunday, 1st / 14th July at the Brotherhood. This year, with one apology for absence, all the directors and members were present. Perhaps the most news-worthy aspect

of the otherwise run-of-the-mill proceedings was that we considered the prospect of **re-roofing the Old Mortuary chapel**. The roof is in need of some attention and the slates, now nearly 160 years old, are deteriorating. Preliminary enquiries indicate that the total cost, including interior insulation, would be in the region of **£65,000**, more than we have at the present. The Building Fund, however, is still open, and many people are still contributing to it. In the coming months, we shall probably have more information and will issue an appeal for what we hope will be the last major work on the property here. The accounts for the past year, approved at this meeting, should soon be displayed on the **Charity Commissioners website**, and may easily be obtained, as they may for any charity, by typing in our registered charity number.

JOURNEY TO THE FAR ENDS OF ESSEX

ON 25th JULY, the Brotherhood clergy journeyed to the far northern reaches of Essex to chant a *pannikhida* at the grave of **Constantine Oliver**. His family gathered for the occasion, as did two close friends who had come over from Spain for the service. Afterwards we were very kindly treated to lunch by the family in a restaurant overlooking the River Stour. On our return journey, having been given plenty of time to study the area approaching the Dartford tunnel, because of traffic congestion, we were also able to visit an Orthodox lady in a care home in that region.

VISITORS

ARCHPRIEST JOSEPH SKINNER of the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Ennismore Gardens, London** and his Matushka visited St Edward's Cemetery on 3rd July to chant a *pannikhida* at the grave of **John Clarke**. After the service, they were provided with refreshments in the Old Mortuary building.

EUGENE AND MARINA MANOILOFF who belong to **Arch-priest John Stukacz's parish** in Queensland, Australia, visited us on Thursday 11th July. Fr John served as the priest of our Convent in

Willesden in the early 1970s, and his people placed themselves under the *omophorion* of **Archbishop Tikhon** (RTOC) when the Church Abroad subordinated itself to the Moscow Patriarchate. The Manoiloffs visited the church and exhibition room and told Fr Niphon something of the situation of the Church in Australia. They also presented us with a beautifully produced and much appreciated book on the House of the Romanovs for our library.

ALAN SELWOOD of the **Horsham** branch of the **University of the Third Age** led a group of about fifteen of their people on a visit to our church on 11th July. They stayed about 40 minutes and asked many questions. On the 15th, a second group from the same branch of U3A visited. Both visits had been previously arranged by **Margaret Hobbs** of the **Brookwood Cemetery Society**.

HIEROMONK NICANOR (Lepeshev) and two other pilgrims visited us on 25th July. After visiting the church, they were offered refreshments by the Brotherhood. Fr Nicanor was visiting England from Russia's Far East.

THE REVEREND **Father Sorin Chirila**, his presbytera and children, and another Romanian family visited us unexpectedly on Monday 29th July. They were shown the church and the exhibition room, given refreshments, and then visited some of the Romanian graves in our cemetery, before joining us in church for Vespers. Fr Sorin is the priest of the **Romanian Patriarchate Parish of All Saints and St Stephen in Cardiff**, and the group were *en route* to make a pilgrimage to the **Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of St John the Baptist at Tolleshunt Knights, Essex**.

JAPANESE EVENT AT BROOKWOOD

WHEN we first established the Brotherhood at Brookwood in 1982, we found a number of Japanese graves on our property, hidden under the all-pervading rhododendron bushes. We wrote to the Japanese Embassy with details of these graves and were surprised and somewhat alarmed (we then still lived in the caravan) when the Japanese Ambassador of that time phoned and then visited us. Subsequently we sold

that part of the property on to the **Serbian Orthodox Church of St Sava**. On 2nd July this year, a monument was unveiled near those earlier graves to **Professor Alexander Williamson** (1824-1904) and his wife, **Catherine** (1831-1927), celebrating the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the first Japanese students in this country and their enrolment in **University College London**. These students from the *Chosun* and a subsequent group from the *Satsuma* played a pivotal rôle in the modernisation of Japan at that time, and they were sponsored and supported by the Williamsons. Professor Williamson was himself an eminent chemist and is renowned in the scientific world. **His Excellency Mr Keiichi Hayashi, the Japanese Ambassador**, unveiled the monument. A statement issued by the organizers of the tribute states that the erection of the monument is “not only an acknowledgement of the deep human compassion shown to young students from a far away country on the other side of the globe by a leading British scientist of the day, but also an enduring reminder of the pure unconditional love for one’s fellow man that underpins the very start of our long-lasting Anglo-Japanese relationship.” His Excellency read a letter in Japanese and in English addressed to the Williamsons by the present Prime Minister of Japan, and he presented a framed copy of this to the **UCL’s President and Provost, Professor Malcolm Grant**. Other presentations were also made, an instrumental ensemble played traditional Japanese music, and descendants of the students buried here laid wreaths at their graves. Over a hundred of those attending had come specially from Japan for the ceremony. The Serbian Orthodox Church had apparently asked that there be no religious ceremonies within their cemetery, and so after the unveiling many of the participants visited the graves of the Williamsons, who are buried in the main part of Brookwood Cemetery, and laid wreaths there, and then, led by their priests, they held a Buddhist ceremony at the Three Wheels *Stupa*, just beyond the Serbian section. We were impressed that simply for writing a letter thirty years ago, our Brotherhood was remembered by the Japanese and invited to the unveiling - an excellent example of gratitude! Also the fact that the present Prime Minister should address a letter to people who died about a hundred years ago demonstrates a belief in the afterlife which would doubtless shame many who call themselves Christians today. How often we can learn from, and be edified by, those who are far from our Faith.

PRACTICAL TIP

DO NOT be satisfied with simply attending church. Many people are, thinking that thereby they have fulfilled some religious duty. It is necessary not only to attend church but **to pray church** (to coin a phrase!). It is also extremely important to teach children this from the earliest possible age, and it will help them not simply to endure being taken to church, but to experience something which they can benefit from and cherish.

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SAINT EDWARD'S DAY

THIS YEAR, the day of the **Enshrinement of the Sacred Relics of Saint Edward the Martyr** falls on a Monday, 16th September n.s. **His Grace Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** is coming to be with us for the celebration, but both because His Grace has a tight travelling schedule (having to leave immediately for Russia) and because Mondays are difficult for most people, we have the Bishop's blessing to keep the feast on the previous day. Therefore, the Bishop will celebrate the Divine Liturgy at the Convent of the Annunciation on the Saturday morning, 1st /14th September, the Church New Year.

At Brookwood our schedule will be:-

Saturday, 1st / 14th September: VIGIL service for the Resurrection and St Edward at 6 p.m, Bishop Ambrose presiding, and the Sacred Relics opened for veneration.

Sunday, 2nd / 15th September: HIERARCHAL DIVINE LITURGY at 10 a.m., Bishop Ambrose presiding, followed by Lesser Blessing of Waters. Then Parish Breakfast for all who attend.

On the Monday we will have the Liturgy according to our normal weekday schedule, immediately after Mattins.