



## FROM THE FATHERS

“CONSIDER from how many plotters, how many spies, the Church suffers. If they come upon a slight crack, they plant a dart in it.”

SAINT AMBROSE OF MILAN, + 397 A.D.

“THIS, if anything, is the subversion of the Church: being in divisions. This is the devil’s weapon; this turns all things upside down. For as long as the body is joined into one, he has no power to get an entrance, but it is from division that offence comes. And whence the division? From opinions contrary to the teaching of the Apostles. And whence come opinions of this sort? From men’s being slaves to the belly and the other passions.”

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, + 407 A.D.

“LET THEM [*the schismatics*] not flatter themselves if they think they have Scripture authority for their assertions, since the devil himself quoted Scripture, and the essence of the Scriptures is not the letter but the meaning. Otherwise, if we follow the letter, we too can concoct a new dogma and assert that such persons as wear shoes and have two coats must not be received into the Church!”

BLESSED JEROME, + 420 A.D.

# *On the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ*

HOMILY ON THE DAY OF THE LORD'S TRANSFIGURATION

*By our Venerable Father Ephraim the Syrian, the Deacon*

+ 373 A.D.

OUR SAVIOUR led the Apostles up into the mountain to show them the glory of His Divinity and to grant them to know that He is the Redeemer of Israel, as He had declared through the Prophets, and so that they would not be tempted concerning Him, when they would see His voluntary Passion, which He was to suffer for our sakes in His human nature. For they knew Him as a man, but they did not comprehend that He was God. They knew that He was the Son of Mary, a man, living with them in the world. And on the mountain He gave them to comprehend that He is the Son of God, and God. They saw that He ate and He drank, that He was wearied and that He rested, that He became tired and that He slept, that He experienced fear and that He poured forth sweat, but all of this did not correspond to His Divine nature, but pertained only to the human. Therefore He led them up into the mountain, so that the Father might proclaim His Son, and so that He might show them that He was in actuality the Son of God, and God.

He took them up into the mountain and He showed them the glory of His Divinity before the Resurrection so that when He rose from the dead in the glory of His Divine nature, they would understand that He had not received that glory as a reward for this feat, or as one who had been in need of such glory, but that before the ages the glory had been His together with the Father

and of the Father, as He Himself said when going to the voluntary passion: *O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own Self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was* (John 17:5).

Thus this glory of His Divinity, invisible and hidden in the human nature, was manifested to the Apostles on the mountain. They saw His face shining like lightning, and His clothes white as light. The disciples beheld two suns: the one was visible to them and was shining upon the world from the firmament, and the Other manifested His face to them alone. His clothing appeared white as light, because from His whole Body the glory of His Divinity poured forth, and in all the members of His flesh the light shone forth. It was not as with Moses; it was not something exterior to Him that lightened His flesh with splendour, but rather the glory of His Divinity pouring forth from Him; His light rose up from within Him and in Him was it concentrated; it did not transfer from Him to something else, thus leaving Him; it did not strike Him from the side so as to adorn Him, and it was not something borrowed for Him. Nor did it show them the whole abyss of His glory, but only as much as the pupils of their eyes could apprehend.

*There appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him* (Matt. 17:3). Thus the ascent of the mountain was a joy to the prophets and the Apostles. The prophets rejoiced seeing His humanity, which they had not known; the Apostles rejoiced seeing His Divinity which they had not apprehended. And when they heard the voice of the Father, bearing witness to the Son, they understood thereby what had not formerly been clear to them: that He had become man. And together with the voice of the Father, the glory of His body, with which unalterably and unconfusedly the Divinity was united in Him, and which glory had become manifest, bore testimony to them. And the testimony was sealed by three voices, that of the Father, as well as those of Moses and Elias, who stood before Him as servants.

And they looked one upon another, the prophets upon the Apostles and the Apostles upon the prophets. The leaders of

the Old Testament and the leaders of the New Testament beheld each other there. Moses the holy beheld the sanctified Simon. The steward of the Father's house saw him who had given lodging to the Son. The one had divided the sea, so that the people might cross between the billows; the other had proposed a tabernacle so that he might build the Church. Elias looked upon John; he who had ascended in a fiery chariot upon him who had leaned upon the burning breast. Thus this mountain became an image of the Church, and Jesus unites therein the two Testaments which the Church accepts, and He gave us to comprehend that He Himself is the Giver of both Testaments: the one received His mysteries and the other manifested the glory of His works.

And Peter said: *Let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias* (Matt. 17:4). Simon was sent to build the Church in the world, and behold he makes three tabernacles on the mountain, because he still regarded Jesus as a man and places Him on a level with Moses and Elias. But the Lord immediately shows him that He does not require his tabernacles, because He is the One Who for the course of forty years provided a tabernacle of cloud for his forefathers in the wilderness. For as he yet spoke, such a bright cloud overshadowed them (Matt. 17:5). Behold, Simon, a tabernacle made without travail, a tabernacle which protects from the heat and in which there is no shadow, a tabernacle which is like lightning and radiant.

While the disciples yet wondered, the voice of the Father was heard from the cloud: *This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him*. The Father speaks of the Son, not separating Him from the glory of the Divinity. For the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit are of one Nature, one Power, one Essence and one Kingdom. And He addresses the One with a name which is not exalted, but is awesome in its glory. Mary also calls Him Son, Who in His human body is not separated from the glory of His Divinity. For One is God, Who was manifest in the world in the body. His glory proclaims His Divinity which is from the

Father, and His body proclaims His human nature which is from Mary, for both natures have been united in the one hypostasis. The Only-Begotten of the Father is the only One born of Mary. And whosoever would separate the natures in Him will themselves be separated from His Kingdom, and whosoever should confuse them will have no part in His life. Whosoever denies that Mary gave birth to God will not see the glory of His Divinity; and whosoever denies that He bore flesh free from sin, such a one will not be granted salvation and life, which are granted through His body. His deeds themselves and His Divine powers instruct those of sound judgment that He is true God. And His sufferings show that He is true man.

And if this does not convince those who are weak of understanding, then they shall be given over to punishment on His dread day. If He were not flesh, then for what reason did Mary bring Him forth? And if He were not God, Whom did Gabriel name as Lord? If He were not flesh, then who lay in the manger? And if He were not God, Whom then did the Angels who had come down glorify? If He were not flesh, who was bound in swaddling clothes? And if He were not God, Whom did the shepherds adore? If He were not flesh, whose hands and feet were pierced with nails? And if He were not God, why was the veil of the Temple rent in twain, and the rocks split asunder, and the graves opened? If He were not flesh, who cried out *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me* (Matt. 27:46)? And if He were not God, Who said, *Father, forgive them* (Luke 23:34)? If He were not flesh, who was crucified on the Cross with the thieves? And if He were not God, Who said to the thief, *Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise* (Luke 23:43)? If He were not flesh, to whom did they offer the gall and vinegar? And if He were not God, at Whose voice did Hades tremble? If He were not flesh, whose side was pierced with a spear, and blood and water flowed forth? And if He were not God, Who broke the gates of Hades and burst the bonds, and by Whose command did the dead held captive there come forth? If He were not flesh, whom did the Apostles see in the Upper Room? And if He were not God,

Who entered there, the doors being closed? If He were not flesh, in whose hand did Thomas feel the wound of the nails and in whose side that of the spear? And if He were not God, to Whom did Thomas cry out, *My Lord and My God* (John 20:28)? If He were not flesh, who ate by the Sea of Tiberias? And if He were not God, by Whose decree were the nets filled? If He were not flesh, who did the Angels and Apostles see received into Heaven? And if He were not God, to Whom were the Heavens opened, Whom did the Powers worship with trembling, and to Whom did the Father say, *Sit Thou on My right hand* (Heb. 1:13), as even David says, *The Lord said unto my Lord: Sit Thou at My right hand* (Ps. 109:1) and so on? And if He were not God and man, then, as a consequence, our salvation would be false, and the proclamations of the Prophets false too.

Yet the Prophets abode in the truth and their testimonies are not lies. For what they were commanded, that they spoke through the Holy Spirit. For this reason also the chaste John, who leaned upon that flaming breast, confirming the prophetic saying, theologising in the Gospel, instructs us, and says: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us* (John 1:1, 3, 14). The One Who is of God, God the Word, the Only-Begotten Son of the Father, of one essence with the Father, the One Who is from the One Who is, the pre-eternal Word, inexpressibly begotten of the Father without mother before all ages, the Same in the last days was born of a daughter of mankind, from Mary the Virgin without father; He was born God incarnate, bearing in Himself flesh taken from her, made man, which formerly He was not, and remaining God, which He was, so that He might save the world.

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# Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

**§ 24. The Weekly Cycle of Services** / The sacred commemorations for the days of the week. On the first day of the week, Sunday, the Church celebrates the Resurrection of Christ, for which reason [in Russian] it is called Resurrection day. [In Greek, it is called the Lord's day]. The day after, Monday, glorifies the Bodiless Powers, which, after the Mother of God, are blessed daily and occupy the first place in the choir of the holy ones; on Tuesday, the Church glorifies the Prophets as the most ancient workers in the Church of God, and particularly the Lord's Forerunner, John; on Wednesday, She remembers Judas betraying the Lord to the leaders of the Jewish peoples. Thursday is consecrated by the Church to the memory of the Holy Apostles and the holy hierarch Nicolas [the Wonderworker]; Friday to the commemoration of the death upon the Cross of the Lord; and Saturday is the day of rest, the Sabbath, and is dedicated to the glorification of the Mother of God, the holy Martyrs and All the Saints, who have been deemed worthy of repose in the Lord, and at the same time we commemorate all those who have fallen asleep in the Faith and in the hope of life eternal. In accord with the commemoration of these events and persons in the unchanging cycle of the weekly services, there are various appointed hymns and prayers for each day of the week. There are particular services for each day of the week to manifest the weekly cycle of services.

**§ 25. The Cycle of Annual Services.** Every day of the year is dedicated to the commemoration of a particular sacred event, or to the memory of particular saints. Special hymns, prayers and rites have been appointed in honour of these events

and persons, and they form the basis of the annual cycle of services. Among them the services appointed for the Great Feasts and the fasts are pre-eminent.

### **§ 26. Teaching on the Feasts and their Distinctions.**

In general we call those days feasts which are dedicated to the glory of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, or which are in honour of the Mother of God, or, again, in honour of holy personages and the Bodiless Powers. Thus according to these dedications, they are distinguished as feasts *of the Lord*, *of the Theotokos*, or *of the Saints*. They are also distinguished according to the time of their celebration: *immovable feasts* fall every year on the same day of the same month; *moveable feasts* fall in a certain week or on a certain day depending on the changes of the date of Pascha, but not always on the same date. There are distinctions also of the solemnity of feasts, and so they are categorized as *great*, *intermediate* or *little*. The first of these are always celebrated with an All-night Vigil; the second not always, but in the Matins service there is a *polyeleos* and the reading of the Gospel; the third do not have a *polyeleos*, and they are distinguished from the normal daily services only by the hymns appointed in memory of the saint of the day and by the chanting of the Great Doxology with the opening of the Royal Gates. The most important feasts number twelve in all, and are called the *Twelve Great Feasts*, but in this number we do not include Pascha itself, which is greater still and is the Festival of festivals.

*.... to be continued.*

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“YOU COMPLAIN about the lack of time, about the waves of the sea of life and about the impossibility, consequently, of taking care for your soul. But amid the waves in our relationships with people we are given the means of caring for the soul, that is, of fulfilling the commandments of God.”

VEN. MACARIUS OF OPTINA, + 1860 A.D.



# THE COMING MONTH

AUGUST is the last month of the Church Year, and it crowns the whole year with two glorious Great Feasts. The first is the **Transfiguration of our Saviour on Mount Tabor** (6th / 19th), in which as the words of Saint Ephraim the Syrian (above) tell us the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ is clearly made manifest. And the second is the **Dormition of the All-holy Theotokos** (15th / 28th), in which we see His Mother clothed upon with that Divinity by Grace. More often than not, icons of our Saviour show Him clothed in a red tunic with a blue cloak wrapped over it. The red signifies His Divinity and the blue His humanity, and so this indicates to us that He is God Who has become man. Conversely the icons of the Virgin show her clothed in a blue tunic covered by a red wrap, indicating that she is human but by the Grace of God has put on the Divine, becoming a god by Grace. None of us will ever achieve such glory as is hers, for she is *more honourable than the Cherubim and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim*, but our Christian confession does call us not simply to be good, to escape judgment, to go to heaven, but also to become, through God's mercy and love towards us, *partakers of the Divine nature* (2 Peter 1:4). So many of us pay little heed to this truth, and consider that our church commitment only means attending the service on the occasional Sunday (if it is convenient), saying prayers when we feel in the mood, going to a perfunctory confession now and again and taking Communion. The holy Apostle Peter teaches us another way: *Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity*. These things require constant attention and struggle, but the recompense thereof is gloriously revealed to us in these two feasts in August. Let us then start the New Church Year with a renewed and sober resolve not to live a merely

outward “Orthodox” life, as if we were following the precepts of one of the many denominations, but one of genuine inner renewal.

The **Holy Martyr Vassa and her children, Theognius, Agapius and Pistus** (21st August / 3rd September) suffered under the persecution of the Emperor Maximian against the Christians. Vassa was the wife of a pagan priest who lived in the Macedonian town of Edessa, and she lived as a secret Christian. However, she instilled the Christian Faith in her three children. Eventually her husband discovered this, and handed her and his children over to the persecutors. Vassa was forced to watch her sons being tortured and finally executed with the sword because they stood steadfast. Then she was subjected to various tortures, but as a witness to the Faith, was kept unharmed. Finally she was thrown into the sea, but three radiant persons, believed to be her martyred sons, appeared and miraculously conveyed her to an island in the Sea of Marmara. Here again she was apprehended by the pagan authorities, sentenced to death and beheaded thus joining her children in receiving the crown of martyrdom.

Our holy Father, **Aidan the Bishop of Lindisfarne** (31st August / 13th September) is one of the greatest saints of our land, and one whose icon is among the sixteen that we have recently acquired for Saint Edward’s Church. He was probably born in Ireland in the seventh century, and became a monk of the monastery founded by his fellow Irishman, the Venerable Columba on the island of Iona. King Oswald of Northumbria had lived there in exile in his youth, his kingdom having been taken by a rival dynasty. However, in God’s providence, his exile brought him into contact with the monks of Iona, and it was through them he was converted to Christianity. When later he regained his kingdom, he desired to convert his people also, and naturally turned to his spiritual fathers at Iona. A bishop, called Corman, who was sent to lead the mission, proved unsuitable, for he alienated many people by his strictness, and he blamed his failure on the hostile disposition of the English. When he returned to Iona to report this, Saint Aidan

suggested that, instead of being so severe with an ignorant people, he should have fed them with milk rather than solid food (I Cor. 3:2). Saint Aidan was, therefore, consecrated as Bishop and sent to replace him. King Oswald gave him the island of Lindisfarne near the royal residence of Bamburgh, where the Saint founded a monastery in A.D. 635, as his mission centre. Bishop Aidan became renowned for his humility and piety. He was not attached to the things of this world, nor did he seek earthly treasures. Whenever he received gifts from the king or from rich men, he distributed them to the poor. On Wednesdays and Fridays he would fast from all food until the ninth hour (about 3 p.m.), except during the paschal season. He travelled all over Northumbria, visiting his flock and establishing missions. St Oswald the King, who knew Gaelic from the time he and his family were exiled to Iona, himself acted as an interpreter for the Saint, who did not speak English. One year, after attending the services of Pascha, King Oswald sat down to a meal with Bishop Aidan. Just as the bishop was about to bless the food, a servant came in and informed the king that a great number of needy folk were outside begging for alms. The king ordered that his own food be served to the poor on silver platters, and that the silver serving dishes be broken up and distributed to them. Aidan, deeply moved by St Oswald's charity, took him by the right hand and said, "May this hand never perish." Accordingly, St Oswald's hand remained incorrupt for centuries after his death. The holy King Oswald was killed in battle against the superior forces of King Penda on 5th August, A.D. 642 at a place called Maserfield, and is now numbered among the Saints. His successor, St Oswin, took up Oswald's mantle, and fully supported the mission of Saint Aidan. He once gave the Bishop a horse and a cart for his journeys (the bishop usually travelled on foot). Soon after this, the Saint met a beggar and gave him the horse and cart. The king heard of this and was disturbed by it. He asked St Aidan why he had given the royal gift away when there were ordinary horses in the stables which were more suitable for a beggar. Aidan rebuked him, asking if the king regarded the foal of a mare more

highly than the Son of God. At first, he did not understand. Then he fell at the bishop's feet, weeping tears of repentance. Asking for forgiveness, Oswin promised never again to judge St Aidan's charitable deeds. St Aidan raised the king to his feet, declaring that he had never seen a king who was so humble. He prophesied that Oswin would soon depart from this life, since the people did not deserve such a ruler. His prophecy was quickly fulfilled, for St Oswin was murdered at Gilling on 20th August, A.D. 651. St Aidan departed to the Lord eleven days later, on 31st August. He died at Bamburgh, by the west wall of the church. The beam on which he was leaning to support himself still survives, even though the church was twice destroyed by fire. The beam may still be seen in the ceiling of the present church, above the baptismal font. On the day St Aidan departed this life, St Cuthbert was a young man tending his master's sheep. Looking up, Cuthbert saw a vision of angels bearing someone's soul to heaven in an orb of fire. Later, he learned that Bishop Aidan had died at the very hour that he had seen the vision. Saint Aidan was laid to rest at Lindisfarne on the right side of the altar in the church of Saint Peter. In A.D. 664, the Synod of Whitby declared for the Roman practices, and that Celtic customs were to be discontinued. St Colman, the third Bishop of Lindisfarne, was unable to accept this decision. Therefore, he decided to retire to Iona, taking the bones of St Aidan with him. Celtic customs survived on Iona until the eighth century.

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“CLEAR SIGNS of the coming to us and action upon us of the fallen spirit are the sudden appearance of idle and sinful thoughts and fancies, heaviness of the body and an increase of its animal needs, hardening of the heart, arrogance and haughtiness, vainglorious thoughts, rejection of repentance, forgetfulness of death, despondency and boredom, a special inclination for earthly occupations. The coming of the fallen spirit is always associated with a sense of confusion, disturbance, gloom and perplexity.”

SAINT IGNATIUS (BRIANCHANINOV), + 1867 A.D.

# **ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD**

IT IS HOPED that when **His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni**, visits England in the Autumn for **the feast of Saint Edward the Martyr** (Tuesday, 16th September, n.s.), he will ordain **Father Deacon Borislav Popov** to the priesthood. With his customary light touch, His Grace has suggested **the feast of the Beheading of St John the Baptist** (Thursday, 11th September, n.s.) as an appropriate day for the ordination. It seems fitting, therefore, to give some teaching regarding the priesthood and the Mysterion of Ordination.

In reiterating the teaching of Saint Dionysius, Simeon of Thessalonica tells us that the priest is the celebrant of the Holy Mysteries of Communion and Baptism but does not have the grace to ordain another, which thing is reserved for the episcopate. Also an ordinand to the priesthood must be thirty years of age, having come to maturity, and as a figure of Christ who began His teaching ministry at that age, for the priest is also a teacher.

On the day of the ordination, the ordinand serves as a deacon until the Cherubic Hymn, thus completing his diaconal ministry. As a sign of this, during the Great Entrance he is left in the centre of the church and holds the *Aer* (the largest chalice veil) over his head. When he gives it up, so that it may cover the gifts offered on the Holy Table in the usual way, it signifies that he gives up his diaconal service. After the Cherubic Hymn, he is led by the other deacons to the Royal Gates. There they leave him, signifying that he is going on from them to a higher ministry, and the priests receive him into the sanctuary. The candidate bows down before the Bishop, who signs his head with the sign of the Cross. The priests then take him around the Holy Table, and as he processes he kisses the four corners of the Table, and coming to the Bishop again kisses his hand and knee. This is repeated twice more. By his kissing the Holy Table the candidate dedicates himself always to serve there, and by kissing the Bishop's hand and knee he signi-

fies both his gratitude to him and his godly obedience to him. As these three processions are made the choir chants first a hymn to the Martyrs, then one to Christ, *The Apostles' boast and Martyrs' joy*, and lastly one based on the prophecy of Esaias concerning the Virgin being with child and bearing a Son. The first of these reminds the candidate that his commitment must be like that of the Martyrs: unto death; the second that his ministry, like that of the Apostles and Martyrs, must be to our Saviour; and the third that the foundation of the priestly ministry itself is the incarnation of the Word of God. The Bishop then stands, and the candidate kneels on both knees. A man being ordained deacon kneels on one knee, but a deacon being ordained priest kneels on both, signifying the fuller ministry. He places his palms crossways on the edge of the Holy Table and lays his forehead upon his hands. The Bishop then blesses him three times, signifying the strength he will need to fulfil his ministry, for he is strengthened by the power of the Cross. The Bishop then lays his hand on the candidate's head and prays that that which is infirm or wanting Grace Divine might heal, and he calls upon us to pray for him. The clergy and then the people chant a threefold *Lord have mercy* slowly while the Bishop reads the prayer of ordination quietly over him. The Protodeacon then intones a litany praying for the Bishop and the new priest, and during this the Bishop, keeping his hand on the candidate's head again prays for him. After the ending of this prayer and the litany, the newly-ordained priest is raised to his feet and the Bishop takes from him his *orarion* (stole), and replaces it with the double priestly stole (*epitrachelion*), crying out three times: *Axios!* (Worthy!). The clergy repeat this acclamation, and then so do the choir. Then the Bishop gives him the cincture, and again the thrice threefold *Axios* is chanted. In the same way he is vested in the priestly *phelonion*, and he is given the priestly service book (*hieratikon*). The newly ordained priest in turn kisses the Bishop's omophorion and his hand, and then greets the concelebrating clergy with the kiss of peace and takes his place by the side of the Holy Table so as to participate

in the most important part of the Divine Liturgy, the consecration of the Divine Gifts. When, later the Lamb is consecrated the Bishop breaks the portion marked *XC* and gives it to the new priest, saying: *Receive thou this pledge, and preserve it whole and unharmed until thy last breath, for thou shalt be held to an accounting therefor in the Second and Dread Coming of our great Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.* The new priest does not then partake of that Bread, but stands with head bowed at the east end of the Holy Table holding It in his cupped hands which he rests on the Table, and reciting to himself silently the fiftieth psalm. He also silently prays for all the faithful, living and departed, whom he can remember, calling to mind that in his hands he holds the very Body of our Lord. At the elevation of the Gifts, he returns the portion entrusted to him to the diskos, and he receives the Holy Mysteries in due order with the other priests. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, being the junior priest, the newly ordained priest reads the Prayer Beyond the Ambon, *O Lord, Who blessest those that bless Thee....* This is to indicate that he is now a father among his children, interceding for them. After ordination, the priest is referred to and called Father (with or without his Christian name), and is not referred to by the Orthodox faithful by his Christian name alone. His wife, if he is married, is also addressed with similar respect, either as Presbytera (Greek and English), *Matushka* (Russian), *Preoteasa* (Romanian), *Khouria* (Arabic) or *Popadija* (Serbian), again with or without her Christian name. And again, recognising her share in the ministry and honouring the ministry of her husband, she is not disrespected and referred to by the Orthodox faithful by her Christian name alone. From his ordination, a priest always wears his cassock (except perhaps when his secular employment precludes this), and when out and about he wears the cassock and rason and a clerical hat. In this way, he confesses that he is a minister of the Church at all times, as was promised by his kissing the four corners of the Holy Table three times during his ordination, and he does not simply wear his clerical habit when he goes to church or is about specifically church business. From

this time also he wears his hair and beard uncut, or, if his secular employment precludes this, only trims them slightly to be tidy. In the Russian practice, he is also given a pectoral cross to wear, but in other national Churches this is usually only granted to the most senior priests.

Please pray for Fr Borislav, his diaconissa Marina, and their children, Marina, Sophia, Paul and Anna that they all be strengthened and protected as Fr Borislav's ordination approaches.



## POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*“THE ORTHODOX mission in this country does not appear to be anything like a total success. It is fragmented, people seem to come and go, there are rivalries between different parties - the whole scene is rather depressing. What do you think are the main enemies of a strong, consistent growth of Orthodoxy here?” - W.A., Chelmsford, Essex.*

THE BRIEF ANSWER, of course, is the devil and our own sinfulness. But to leave matters at that would probably be short-changing you. Over the years, I have noticed various things which seem to have been very destructive of Orthodoxy in this country.

First of all, what I shall very unfairly call its **Anglicanisation**. By this I do not in any way wish to denigrate any faithful Anglicans. They have their own way of doing things, and we are not their judges. However, I use the term, as an ex-Anglican, because I have seen much in Orthodox circles which closely reflects the Anglicanism that I left in the mid-nineteen-sixties. To soften the blow, I must say that I can understand that many of the earlier Orthodox immigrants to this country, who came into a country



which was much less multi-cultural than it is today, were anxious to be accepted, not to stand out, not to be odd. I remember one old Russian priest telling me when I returned from America as a priest, not to wear my rason in the street, but to get an overcoat. Why? In case I looked foreign! But this was a real fear. Sadly it had consequences in church life. Stress was put on conformability, on respectability, on outward decency, but the inner work of Orthodoxy was neglected. More stress was put on wearing a suit in church (not a requirement! - and after 1961 it must have put dozens of teenage boys off the idea of church going!) than saying your daily prayers or reading spiritually edifying things each day. The rites of the Church remained the same, and there was often great stress on maintaining the liturgical language of the Mother country (often itself to the detriment of the understanding, particularly among the young, because there was a concurrent failure to teach this language adequately), but in practice, things were toned down. Church attendance became Sundays only and some Great Feasts, sometimes simply Liturgy attendance; fasts were reduced to avoiding meat only, confession became perfunctory, home prayer-life became minimal, and any attempt to separate yourself from the world, which *lieth in wickedness* (1 John 5:19), was actually frowned upon! This was something like the Anglicanism that I had left, but “Orthodoxy” (if it was) seemed to be preserved by strong doses of stress on the culture and language of the mother country of the immigrants.

So, the second thing I would mention is **nationalism**. Love of one’s country, patriotism, is generally an excellent thing and something which should be more vigorously promoted in our own times, and not simply by politicians trying to win votes cheaply. However, it cannot be denied that the nationalism which characterised the immigrant Orthodox communities in this country played a rôle in alienating many of the potential converts, especially when they were almost required to engage in long dead political issues as well. It also alienated many of the second, third and fourth generation descendents of the original immigrants,

who no longer spoke the language of the “old country,” who did not want to feel part of it, who wanted to live in the here-and-now of the society they had been born into and lived in. It is true that some of these people, and indeed some converts, also adopted this nationalism with gusto, but generally that did little to bring them to compunction, to help their spiritual development, but appears to have been simply faddish, a preoccupation with re-living old disputes, living in a past which will never be retrieved and probably never existed, - something akin to the “fables and endless genealogies” that St Paul deplors.

But we must also remark that the nationalist error is not solely the fault of the immigrant communities and their descendants. Perhaps much less defensible is a **counter-nationalism on the part of many converts** to Orthodoxy, who want to make an Orthodoxy devoid of all connection with any foreign culture, and in so doing saw off the very branch that they are sitting on. This leads them in turn to replacing a solid foundation with fables. If we can only look back to Orthodoxy in our own land, then we have to make a jump of a thousand years, to the pre-Conquest English Church and to the mis-named Celtic Church, but about these we in fact know very little, and some of the little we know the convert nationalists would reject out of hand! Would they like all our services to be in Latin for instance? Do they remember that the first seven Archbishops of Canterbury were “foreign,” for instance? Only in 690 A.D., almost a hundred years after the Augustinian mission, was a native “Englishman” to take that post. Such convert nationalism is a rejection of Tradition: of receiving that which has been handed down to us.

A third “enemy” is surely the moral tone of the times we live in. I remember a convert lapsing from Orthodoxy about 35 years ago now, and another convert, now laid to rest in our cemetery, from an earlier generation, who simply could not believe it. “But,” she exclaimed, “he made a vow to be faithful unto death!” Such scruples would appear almost Victorian now, in a society where fickleness, shallowness, superficiality, excitement and enjoyment

are the “order” of the day. The **spread of Ecumenism** is yet another deleterious aspect of this decline; through it and its offspring, syncretism, people no longer believe in Truth; everything is relative, everything is subject to change, everything is, in the final analysis, subject to personal opinion. And particularly since the reign of the Leaderene, everyone has become their own “leader.” Everything in my life must centre on me, on what suits me, on what I think is right. This is the exact opposite of Orthodoxy which is rooted in discipleship, and flowers in humility. So, now is not a time to see a flowering of the Church in our society. It is a winter period.

And lastly (I expect you have had enough!), to come back to Anglicanisation, as far as the convert community is concerned (i.e. those who have come to Orthodoxy from other confessions), sadly many are “received” without proper instruction; they join communities where there is perhaps only a Liturgy served infrequently by a visiting priest with no other liturgical life; often having “become Orthodox” they seem to be of the opinion that they have made it, rather than that they have started on a long and arduous journey; many, having accepted one or two basic precepts of Orthodox teaching, assume that everything they believed in their former confession can stay with them; some even seem to have a pick-and-mix attitude towards Orthodox teachings; many do not find opportunities to learn more or deepen their understanding; and so for a time they flourish, often celebrating their “coming home,” or some such modern concept, only later to fall away. The “cradle Orthodox” too often lapse because of the lack of depth of their understanding of Orthodoxy, and more seriously their failure to address that lack. Once the ethnic, familial, social shine fades, they have nothing, but perhaps bad memories of being forced to do certain things which were never explained to them.

But not all is black; when I became Orthodox, we had one Liturgy in English once a month. There were in our community about fifteen people, although we pretended there were thirty. The community I joined was not unique but it was one of a few. We had service books only for a tiny portion of the services, and those

mostly in abominable and often incorrect translations. Now most of the liturgical library of the services has been translated into English, and the translations are of a higher calibre. We have an immense library of Orthodox spiritual works, writings of the Fathers, lives of Saints - much to be thankful for. Maybe this is the seed lying dormant in the ground through the present winter.

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

***BAPTISM AT BROOKWOOD***

CECELIA, the infant daughter of **Nicolas and Nektaria Papanicolaou of St Albans**, was baptized and chrismated at Saint Edward's Church on Saturday, 6th / 19th July, the feast of the Venerable Sisoës the Great of Egypt. **Maria von Sabler** stood as Cecelia's godmother and on the next day brought her to receive the Holy Mysteries at the Divine Liturgy. May our Saviour grant that Cecilia, who is named for the holy Martyr Cecelia of Rome (feast day: 22nd November / 5th December), be granted ***Many Years*** and to end her days in the faith of a good confession.

***HIERARCHAL LITURGY AT THE CONVENT***

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava**, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the **Convent of the Annunciation** on Sunday, 23rd June / 6th July for the Traditionalist Orthodox Romanians living in the London area.

## ***MARRIAGE AT BROOKWOOD***

ON SUNDAY, 30th June / 13th July, the Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles, **Father Gabriel Lawani of the Joy of All Who Sorrow parish in Droylsden, Manchester**, officiated at the wedding of **Robert Steel** and **Aquilina Coussmaker** in Saint Edward's Church. Earlier in the day, Fr Gabriel had concelebrated with our **Fr Stephen Fretwell** at the parish Liturgy. May God grant unto the newly-weds, Robert and Aquilina, a peaceful life, length of days, chastity, mutual love in the bond of peace, and may He also give them every beneficence that they in turn might bestow upon the needy.

## ***FUNERAL AT BROOKWOOD***

THE FUNERAL of **Raisa Glukhareva** was chanted at Saint Edward's Church on Tuesday, 18th June / 1st July. For many years, Raisa, the mother of **Elena Holden**, had been reclusive, and she died after a short spell in Basingstoke Hospital, where before her death she was visited by the Brotherhood clergy. After she had been laid to rest in our cemetery, Elena and her family provided a mercy Meal in the Old Mortuary hall in her memory for all those who attended the service. May Raisa's rest be with the saints and her ***Memory Eternal.***

## ***NEW ICONS FOR THE CHURCH***

DURING THE MONTH a consignment of sixteen icons, commissioned from the sisters of the **Convent of Saint Elizabeth in Etna, California**, arrived from America. Twelve of them were framed by **the Lady Shanni of Easels in Chobham**, and returned to the church and blessed, so that we were able to put

them up on the feast day of St Elizabeth of Russia (5th/18th July). We had to wait a little longer for the remaining four until Easels could obtain the framing materials necessary, but these four were delivered personally by Shanni, and have now been put up too. The sixteen are icons of: Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, Athanasius the Great, Gregory the Great, James the Brother of God, Photius the Great, Cyprian of Carthage, Martin of Tours, Irenæus of Lyons, Germanus of Auxerre, Alphege of Canterbury, Aidan and Cuthbert of Lindisfarne, Ninian of Whithorn, and Patrick of Ireland. May their prayers cover us.

### ***AGM of KEOTCoLtd***

THE Annual General Meeting of the charity which administers our property here at Brookwood, the **King Edward Orthodox Trust Company Limited** (registered charity number 284929) was held in the Exhibition Room after the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, 6th July, n.s. The meeting, which, after the normal business or reports, accounts (ably dealt with by our treasurer, **Elizabeth Castle**), election of Directors and the appointment of auditors, was taken up with a discussion of the court action which is being taken against us. In this we were greatly helped by **James Merritt**, a member of the legal profession. The meeting also decided to price grave reservations in our cemetery at **£2,000 for a single depth grave**, and **£2,500 for a double depth** for a married couple, husband and wife.

### ***NEW ICON CARDS PUBLISHED***

THE BROTHERHOOD has recently published new icon cards of the **Venerable Martyrs of the Prevlaka Monastery**. On the reverse of the cards, we have printed: "The Venerable Martyrs of the Prevlaka Monastery, a place also known as the Island

of Flowers and now in Montenegro, were slain in or around 1452 A.D. One who served in the monastery kitchen and had apostatized from Holy Orthodoxy contrived to poison the whole brotherhood of some seventy monks on the feast day of the monastery, St Michael and All the Bodiless Powers of Heaven. The original icon from which this print was made is revered in the sanctuary of Saint Edward's Shrine Church at Brookwood, and, at the consecration of our church, a small portion of the sacred relics of these holy martyrs was deposited under the Holy Table, along with relics of our heavenly patron himself and of the Venerable Martyr Elizabeth, the former Grand Duchess, of Russia." The Icon itself was painted by the Sisters of the **Convent of St Elizabeth in Etna**. The photography and the arrangements for printing the cards were both entrusted to **MRM Studios in Aldershot, Hants**.

## ***VISITORS***

ARCHIMANDRITE DANIEL (Toyne) visited Brookwood, and stayed with us overnight on 3rd July, n.s., before returning to Germany, where he is now stationed. Many years ago, Fr Daniel was for a short period a novice in our community; later he was ordained under the Patriarchate of Constantinople and was the pastor of their parish in Singapore. He had been in England visiting his elderly father and his sister.

ON SATURDAY, 29th June / 12th July, the feast day of the Holy Chiefs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, **Mother Vikentia**, the superior of the **Convent of the Annunciation in London** attended the Divine Liturgy at Brookwood, accompanied by the Convent's new novice, **Sister Anastasia**. The monastics were kindly brought to us by their parishioner, **Tanya James**. It was only the second time that Mother Vikentia had visited us since our foundation in 1982. After the Divine Liturgy and refreshments in the Old Mortuary, during which the Sisters were able to meet some

of our parishioners, we showed our visitors around the Orthodox cemetery, the garden, the Exhibition Room and our workshops.

ON Friday, 5th / 18th July, as we were working to put up the new icons in church, we were visited by **Archpriest Alexander Fostiropoulos**, who came with two of his parishioners to chant a memorial service at the grave of one of his spiritual children laid to rest in our cemetery. The guests were offered refreshments in the Exhibition Room.



## PRACTICAL TIP

SOMETIMES, rarely these days it seems but it does happen, someone gets the idea that they should increase their spiritual endeavours. This is good and excellent, but should be undertaken with a blessing, and seriously, not simply as a fad. Furthermore they often think that the first step is to say extra prayers, keep extra fasts, make vows, do some spiritual exploit - think of St Peter desiring to walk on the waters. All this can be beneficial and is perhaps needed by most Orthodox Christians living in the West today - all of us do so little. But we often forget a preliminary first step. We have to strive to give love to our neighbours. It is little use fasting like the Pharisee, if we neglect taking the old lady down the street to church or for a doctor's appointment; it is little use spending an extra hour in reading prayers if we leave someone in need of a helping hand or a visit when they are sick; making extra prostrations will not of great benefit to us if we fail to show love to our children by admonishing them and instructing them in the Faith. There is little use in our lighting candles before our icons, if we dishonour our spouses, or consistently cheat our employers by using their time, facilities and materials for our own purposes. We are not saved by "religious" practices devoid of efforts to live according to the principles of our Faith, but by love: first and pre-eminently by God's love for us, and to a little extent, but an important one, by the love that we show Him and His icons, our neighbours.