



## FROM THE FATHERS

“IF ONE BRINGS to mind someone who has caused him upset, ridiculed him, hurt him, or has in any way caused him some evil, he should think of him as a physician and from the depths of his heart thank him for these things. If, however, he entertains in his mind thoughts against such a person, then he is giving thought, like the demons, to something contrary to his soul.”

ABBA ZOSIMAS

“WHATEVER grief a humble man suffers or hears about, he takes it as an opportunity to demean and to deride himself, as Abba Moses [the Black] did; that is, when the clergy once threw him out of the Holy Altar and insulted him, he insulted himself even more strongly than they had insulted him. And if someone should succeed in upsetting a humble man by an attack or injustice visited upon him, he immediately takes refuge in prayer, by which he quickly soothes his heart. And not this alone, but, at the very moment that he becomes upset, he vehemently censures himself, continually checking himself and saying to his soul: ‘Why, my wretched soul, are you acting crazy? Why have you become upset, like those who foam at the mouth? With precisely this upset you show that you are ill; for, if you were not ill, you would not have felt pain. Why, hapless soul, have you forsaken self-reproach for the condemnation of your brother, since it was he who revealed your illness, which was hidden within you and of which you were ignorant until now?’”

ABBA EVAGRIUS

TWO EXTRACTS FROM “THE EVERGETINOS.”

# *A Sermon by Archbishop Sophronii of St Petersburg and Northern Russia*

GIVEN AT THE ROCA CHURCH CONSECRATION IN  
MOUNTAIN VIEW, MIDDLEBURG, NY, 21ST JULY, 2013<sup>1</sup>

***Christ is Risen!***

***Truly He is Risen!***<sup>2</sup>

I WOULD LIKE to preserve this feeling throughout the entire Liturgy, that we are celebrating a Paschal service, that Christ is with us, bringing us good cheer and comfort on this great and holy day. Today Saint Nicholas is with us invisibly at the consecration of the church, through his holy and myrrh-streaming image,<sup>3</sup> and know that this type of God's blessing and this kind of Grace of God is always present in a church, for worshippers who enter with a pure heart to pray to the Lord and to ask of God forgiveness of their sins. Not so that you may enter to say to the Lord: "Lord, all is well with me, all is normal. I will light a candle for You, while You help me keep it that way in future." The Lord does not attend to such people. The Lord established a Church of the repentant, and if a person recognizes himself or herself as repentant, then let him come to this spring, fall down and be sated by the life-giving Body and Blood of Christ; then you will be revived and will be able to sail forth through the waves of the sea of life.

Therefore, my dear ones, do not forget what we have; what the Lord has given us, what the Lord has handed us - the Holy Eucharist on Earth, and we, as so often is the case, neglect to spend our time at the Liturgy. Something else, some worldly worries distract us, and sometimes we do not hasten to attend the Liturgy. We do not hurry to the place where the Lord Himself has come with his disciples, arrived and waiting, asking when will my children

come to ask for forgiveness for the sins they have committed? When will the prodigal son arrive? And the Lord, unseen, looks out from the church at us, greets us, all those who come to church for repentance, and those who have only just thought of going to church. The Lord certainly helps us, blesses our intention, kisses us; but know that Satan is fighting against our salvation, he also is trying to ensnare us. Just as the Lord tries to ensnare us in the nets of salvation of our souls, so does Satan wish to ensnare us in the nets of his world, as he schemes to place obstacles before us. You all know this quite well and I should not need remind you and speak of this, but you must remember on every Sunday or at every Liturgy that you cannot battle your sins alone, but only with the help of the Church, with the Lord's help, with the protection of the heavenly powers can we conquer our sins.

The Lord may give us His Grace to conquer sin, but if we remain alone outside of the vessel, then we are floundering in the waves of life. It seems to us that outwardly all is well with us, it seems we are living well, but in our souls, when we are alone with ourselves, we notice some sort of longing; that all is not well with us after all, if we rarely attend Liturgy. We sense it and our conscience reminds us that all is not well with us inside, if we rarely fall before the source of living water, the immortal source of the Body and Blood of Christ. When we hunger for water or food, we do everything to fulfil our bodily needs. If we are travelling, we stop somewhere to strengthen our body. If we are at home, we run immediately to the kitchen, open the refrigerator and do everything possible to feed our bodies and satisfy our flesh.

If our thoughts do turn to prayer or repentance, then it is good for those who then feed their spiritual needs the same way; it is good for those who immediately arise to pray, but usually we only remember, "Oh, yes, Lord, forgive me a sinner." And that is where it ends, forgotten, as if by this we have nourished our soul, while we should think with tears in our eyes and a broken heart of our lives and ask, "Lord, help me, change my way of thinking,

change my attitude to sin, let me be Your son or Your daughter.” These are the kinds of thoughts we must engender in ourselves, these are the words of prayer with which we can sate our souls and at the first opportunity, we should run to church, go to church and attend the Liturgy.

Therefore, my dear ones, I call upon you to treasure that which the Lord has bequeathed to us today, that which He has given us today. He has given us today this magnificent, wonderful and extraordinary altar of the Lord, in which the Divine Liturgy was celebrated. Hold onto it; hold onto this blessing, so that you may want to say every Sunday, “Christ is Risen! Truly He is Risen! I will start on this day forth to battle my transgressions, I will begin to change, I will start on this day to stop answering evil with evil to others, I will start to respect my neighbour. If he or she says something against me, I will remember that the Lord sent me this person also.” There is no happenstance in this world. Remember that the Lord is always thinking of our salvation. It is pleasing to Him that we achieve this salvation through others, that is, through our neighbour. “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Mark 12:31). We must constantly remember that the person whom you meet is sent from God. That one who speaks evil against you, who judges you, is sent from God to you today. How can I turn my neighbour away, how can I chastise or answer back to my neighbour? My neighbour is sent by God for my salvation, to test me. The Lord has sent this person. The Lord has sent the person who praises me, who is pleasing to me, for that person is also sent by God. The Lord has allowed this to test me, my faith, and to what degree I love God. When I hear flattering, pleasant things said about me, will I forget God at that moment? Will I think at that moment that this is all possible because of my actions, that I deserve such praise?

Therefore remember, my dear ones, that the Lord concerns Himself with our salvation every day. Every day on earth the Great Eucharist, the Mysterion of the Body and Blood of Christ takes place. You all understand and know how God created the earth’s

sphere and that somewhere the Liturgy is beginning, somewhere it is in the middle and that somewhere it is concluding. The cycle continues all day, the Divine Liturgy continues constantly. Love the Divine Liturgy with all your heart. Hurry to it and try to remain still and reverential during the Liturgy and restrain your thoughts here inside the church. Do not allow them to stray to earthly concerns. “Lay aside all your cares...” These cares are not going anywhere, while the Liturgy will end. It will last an hour and a half, maybe two hours, and that is that, only once a day. You have the whole day to occupy yourself with some chore or with work, but the Liturgy lasts two hours. Therefore, every time at the Liturgy try to focus your thoughts, and stand there not only physically, but be present mentally, because it is here that the Lord presides unseen on the altar. He looks into our hearts to see if our hearts are ready to be an altar for Him.

Therefore, my dear ones, on this glorious and holy day of the consecration of this church to the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, I not only want to congratulate you, but to instruct you to be just as faithful to the commandments as were the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, as their lives and their struggles have shown us. Hold fast to that which you have, to that which the Lord gives us. This time is precious and it is time for prayer. We do not know what lies before us and what awaits us in the future. A time may come when we may not be able to gather together and pray like this, openly, and calmly celebrate the Eucharist without rushing off somewhere.

Treasure this time, appreciate it. Do not attend church to see what others are wearing and what others may be saying, but attend church to determine how the Lord looks upon you. Try to feel God’s gaze upon you while in church. The gaze of the living God, who looks into our hearts, and ask yourself, will you behave carelessly before the eyes of God? Certainly not! Certainly, we should have a fear of God and we must not look to either side and we should not think of earthly concerns. We should look to the

East; we must await the coming of the Lord from there, for the Lord may come to us today. We do not know which day will be our last. Therefore, my loved ones, try to be present in the church physically and mentally. May the Lord, our Jesus Christ, and the prayers of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia and all the saints help us. Amen.

### ***Footnotes:***

- 1) The consecration ceremonies of the church were led by Archbishops Andronik and Sophronii, assisted by the Archpriests Gregory Kotliarov, Wsewolod Dutikow, Elias Warnke, and Andrew Kencis, and the priests Nikita Grigoriev, John Hinton, and Andrew (*surname not recorded*).
- 2) The sermon was not, of course, given in the Paschal period, but His Eminence begins in this way to make a point.
- 3) The Myron-Streaming icon of St Nicolas the Wonderworker, which is kept in the care of Fr Elias Warnke at the St Nicolas Mission in Las Vegas, was present at the celebration.

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# Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

by Archpriest Alexander Rudakov

Published in 1890 in Saint Petersburg

3) The sanctuary or altar forms the eastern part of the church, and there stands the Mystical Throne (the Holy Table). It is called the altar, that is the highest place of sacrifice, and it is always so arranged as to be in the most elevated part of the church. The altar is separated from the nave by a continuous screen, which is called the iconostas or icon-screen, because thereon icons are displayed. The iconostas has three doorways; the central one is the widest and is called Royal, because through it the Holy Gifts of the King of Glory Himself are brought out. The other doors to the north and

the south are often called the deacons' doors, because the deacons enter and leave through them in intoning their litanies. A large church may have more than one altar. The ones which adjoin the main altar are referred to as side-altars.

On the iconostas to the right side of the Royal Gates, there is usually depicted an icon of the Saviour, and then beyond this one of the saint to whom the church was built. On the left side, first of all there is an icon of the Mother of God. On the deacon's doors, often the Archangels Michael and Gabriel [This is because the deacon's ministry is seen as emulating that of the Angels - *transl.*], or the Archdeacons Stephen and Philip are depicted. Above the Royal Doors, there will be a depiction of the Mystical Supper. In larger iconostases where the icons are arranged in several rows, on the second level there are icons of the Twelve Great Christian Feasts. On the third level there will be icons of the Apostles and in their midst Jesus Christ, flanked by the Mother of God and Christ's Forerunner, John the Baptist. At the fourth level one would have the prophets and in the middle of the row, an icon of the Mother of God with the Pre-Eternal Infant. At the very top the Cross is placed, with the Mother of God and St John the Theologian on either side. [On the Royal Doors, the four Evangelists are usually depicted with the Annunciation, because that feast opens to us our way into the Heavenly Kingdom, and it is through the Gospels that we learn that way - *transl.*]

The most important and absolutely essential accoutrement in the altar is the quadrangular table, which stands in the very centre, and is called the Throne [or Holy Table] for thereon the Lord Himself, the King and Master of the Church, is mystically enthroned. In form the Holy Table is always square as a sign that everyone from the four corners of the earth is invited to the Divine feast. Holy Tables may be constructed of stone, gold or silver, but in our churches the greater part of them are of wood. The holy Cross, the Book of the Gospel and a tabernacle, for the keeping of the Holy Gifts to be taken for communion of the sick,

are kept on the Holy Table. During the consecration of the church, a vessel is affixed under the Holy Table containing portions of holy relics; this is to recall the custom of the Christians of the earliest times who celebrated the Eucharist over the tombs of the martyrs.

Besides the Holy Table, in the altar there are other notable things: namely the High Place and the Proskomidi Table. The High Place is behind the Holy Table adjacent to the east wall, and is more elevated than the main part of the altar. Here we have the throne for the Bishop, and seats for the priests who concelebrate with the Bishop. The High Place represents the heavenly throne of the highest of High Priests, Christ Himself, and the places for the priests represent the thrones for the Apostles (see Matt. 19:28). To the north side of the altar\* there is a special table, called the Proskomidi Table, or Table of Offering, from the fact that here the offerings [of prosphoras] made by the faithful are prepared for the offering of the Holy Gifts. During the service of the Proskomidi [the first part of the Divine Liturgy, when the bread and wine are prepared for the Liturgy and commemorations of the faithful are made - *transl.*], the Nativity and the Passion of Christ are both commemorated and, according to the Church's teaching, the table on which this is effected represents both the cave in which Christ was born, and Golgotha, the place where the Lord suffered.

\* ***Footnote in the original*** - In ancient times the Proskomidi Table was placed in a side chapel, connected to the altar and on its north side, but not in the altar itself.

*.... to be continued with "The Sacred and Church Ministers"*

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“IF IT IS a mark of extreme meekness, even in the presence of one's offender, to be peacefully and lovingly disposed towards him in one's heart, then it is certainly a mark of hot temper when a person continues to quarrel and rage against his offender, both by words and gestures, even when by himself.”

VEN. JOHN OF THE LADDER



# THE COMING MONTH

SEPTEMBER, like August, rejoices in two Great Feasts: the **Birth of the Virgin** on 8th / 21st, and the **Exaltation of the Cross** on 14th / 27th. The latter feast is kept as a fast day, because of the solemnity of the celebration. In cathedral parishes and in the larger monasteries, the Vigil Service for this feast is one of the most beautiful of the whole year, because it includes the ceremony of the Exaltation, during which the celebrant raises the Cross over the faithful in all four directions, while each time the choir chants a hundred “Lord have mercies.” Thereafter the faithful come up and prostrate before the Cross and kiss it, and it is left in the centre of the church for the veneration of the people throughout the eight days of the feast, so that throughout that whole period they may come and receive a blessing.

Among the Saints this month, we celebrate:-

The **Holy Hieromartyr Athanasius of Brest-Litovsk** (5th / 18th) was born in the province of Minsk about the year 1597 into a pious Belorussian family named Philippovich. He received an excellent education and became thoroughly acquainted with theological and historical literature, and he was fluent in several languages. As a young man, Athanasius worked as a tutor in the houses of Polish merchants, before taking up the monastic life and, in A.D. 1627, being tonsured by Abbot Joseph of the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Vilnius, receiving the name Athanasius. He was ordained hieromonk in A.D. 1632, and appointed head of the Dubovsk monastery near Pinsk. However, four years later the monastery was seized by the Jesuits and the monks moved to Kupiatits Monastery. The Saint was given the task of collecting donations for rebuilding the Church of Kupiaticka and its icon of the Theotokos. He prayed before the icon for help in this obedience. The Theotokos directed him: “Go to the Tsar. He will build the church for me.” Under her protection, he made the dangerous jour-

ney through hostile territory to Moscow where Tsar Michael Feodorovich welcomed him warmly and made a generous donation. In 1640, the monks from St. Simeon Monastery in Brest elected Fr Athanasius Abbot, and here he continued his fight against the Union of Brest, which subjected the Orthodox to the Papacy. In A.D. 1641 and again in A.D. 1643, he petitioned King Władysław IV of Poland, who favoured tolerance, on behalf of the persecuted Orthodox Christians. However, his attempts to get a decree of tolerance were unsuccessful because of the influences of the Jesuit and Greek Catholic authorities. He was imprisoned three times during these years for his stand against the false Union. The King eventually ordered his release and he was sent to Kiev to remain in the Caves Lavra. He returned to Brest in A.D. 1648, just as an uprising broke out. Fr. Athanasius was arrested on July 1, 1648 and unjustly accused of taking part in the uprising. As he continued to withstand the Union, the Saint was imprisoned again. The Jesuits were unable to get him to renounce his Orthodox faith and join the Union and, on 5th September, A.D. 1648, he was summarily taken to the forest near Brest and shot without any official warrant, and was buried there. Some accounts record that he was flayed and burned before his execution. For eight months the body of Saint Athanasius lay in the ground without a church funeral. The place of the martyr's burial was then made known to the brethren of the Simeonov monastery. At the time the ground belonged to the Jesuits. The Orthodox monks therefore had to work secretly. At night they dug up the body, which was found to be incorrupt, and eventually brought it to their monastery. On 8th May, they buried him with honour, in the main church of the monastery dedicated to St Simeon the Stylite. In A.D. 1815, St. Simeon's Church burned down, but remains of the relics were found in the ashes and placed under the altar in the monastery *trapeza* (refectory) church. In A.D. 1823, they were enshrined again, so that the faithful might approach them in prayer. In A.D. 1893, the relics were taken to the newly built St. Athanasius of Brest Church in Grodno. The next year part of the relics was given to the Lesna Icon Convent.

When the nuns were evacuated from Russia during World War I, the relics were taken to Serbia and then eventually to Provemont in France. The saint devoted all his strength to refuting the false Union with Rome and in calling back those who had strayed from the Holy Orthodox Church. Oddly enough, such was his renown in the region that even the Roman Catholics and the Uniats were known to revere his memory.

The **New Martyr John of Epirus** (23rd September / 6th October) was born to Muslim parents in Konitsa, Epirus, near the present Albanian border of Greece. His father was a prominent ruler among the Muslims and a member of the Sufi order, sometimes called dervishes. John himself became a prominent Sufi and settled in Ioannina. Though not a Christian, he attended to his conscience and lived a sober and prayerful life. Over time, he became increasingly attracted to the Christian faith and, in time, asked for holy Baptism. No Christian in his region dared to baptize him, knowing the reprisals that would follow. So John migrated to Ithaca, was baptized, and settled there in a village called Xiromeron, where he married and lived as a simple worker of the land. In A.D. 1813, John's father somehow learned where he was, and that he had become a Christian. He sent two Sufis to bring him back and restore him to the Muslim faith. Thus the Ottoman authorities on Ithaca learned who he was and brought him before a judge. To each of the judge's questions John would only reply: *I am a Christian and I am called John*. Realizing that no amount of persuasion or coercion would move him, the authorities sentenced him to death by beheading. At his execution, since they would not loose his hands so that he could make the sign of the Cross, John emulated the Good Thief and cried out: *Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom!* With these words he gained a Martyr's crown on 23rd September, A.D. 1814. The Turks intended to leave his body for the dogs to devour, but pious Christians retrieved it and secretly gave it honourable burial. Later his sacred relics were taken to the Monastery of Proussos.



**Our Holy Synod  
Supports the European Citizens' Initiative**

**“ONE of US”**

*The Europe of tomorrow is in our hands!*

We have an obligation, as Orthodox Christians, to take part in helping the initiative “One of Us” collect ONE MILLION signatures in 2013.

\* \* \*

- “One of Us” is one of the first registered European Citizens’ Initiatives (ECI) of the twenty-eight member states of the European Union.
- The goal of the initiative is to ensure the protection of human life from the time of conception until physical death.
  - Since all of us believe in the validity of the Divine commandment “Thou shalt not murder,” we should not remain passive when millions of embryos are killed, either through abortion or through their use in various research centres for experimental purposes.
- The European Parliament has decided to fund scientific research on embryos; that is, it accepts the view that embryos are guinea pigs, thereby disdaining human life and opening it up to commercial exploitation in the name of science.
- Our Holy Synod is calling on all of its parishes in Europe to undertake a veritable crusade for the collection of signatures:

- We undertake this movement on behalf of human life and to awaken Christians to their responsibilities as citizens, so that the political authorities will not use our money for the degradation and devaluation of life.
- The Treaty of the European Union provides that every citizen has the right to participate in the life of the European Union by means of the European Citizens' Initiative (participatory democracy).

\* \* \*

YES to the Right to Life and to respect for the integrity of every human being “from the moment of conception”!

- We must support the initiative “One of Us” so that it will be proposed as legislation to the European Commission.

\* \* \*

Where you can add your signature:

- **online at [www.oneofus.eu](http://www.oneofus.eu)**
  - by filling out a paper form\*
- All of the forms have to be gathered by mid-October of 2013 for proper handling.

**NOTE FROM S.E.B.:** *If any of our readers do not have an internet connection, we will copy off and post them the requisite paper forms. Those who sign the petition, either on-line or on a form, do NOT have to be members of our Church or even Christians. There is nothing on the website connection or on the paper forms to indicate religious affiliation. The only requirement is that they have the misfortune to be “citizens” of the European Union.*

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“THERE is no question about that which is bred in the womb, ... we must think that the point of commencement of existence is one and the same for body and soul [i.e. conception - ed.]”

ST GREGORY OF NYSSA, BROTHER OF ST BASIL THE GREAT

# POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*“DO THOSE, who on learning/hearing/or reading about the Orthodox Church—who yet fail to comprehend/understand its significance as the ONLY church of Christ - become victims of a blindness brought on them by the Devil? If so, do they, in respect of having neither actually ‘received’ (understood) nor ‘denied’ the real Christ, perhaps remain in a state of innocence over which, by the mercy of God, even the devil has no real power? The biggest and worst lie told in our age is the idea that all churches are the same but everyman believes this now and with conviction. And yet they have been blinded, surely, by this devil whose very existence most people now deny to their great danger. Will these be the ones of whom Christ said, chillingly, that at the End He will deny their claim that they knew Him?” A.v.d.L, London, NW1*

RE YOUR QUESTIONS, I suspect that those who fail to comprehend fall into many categories: some may just be too stupid to grasp it; some may have a desire not to comprehend because they realize that it would seriously upset their way of life; some may already be blinded by their passions; some may decisively choose not to understand. I suspect that the culpability of these individuals will depend on which category they fall into, but surely to some extent everyone is responsible for how they react to what they learn. This is why we have to be careful in not forcing knowledge on people: we may push them into greater guiltiness.

I suspect (I can only say that: I am not a theologian and certainly not an elder) that those who are too stupid to grasp it are innocent, but the others to greater or lesser extents will, of course, be responsible either for accepting or rejecting Christ.

The ones that the Lord says He never knew appear always to be the Orthodox! But those who lived carelessly. We have Luke 13:23-30, when the people “not known” claim that they ate and drank in His presence - who does this but the Orthodox at the Eu-

charist? We have the parable in Matthew, chapter 25, of the five wise and five foolish virgins; all were virgins, all were ostensibly waiting on the Bridegroom, all were then Orthodox, but five were careless of their salvation and so made themselves “unknown” to the Saviour. So it is much, much worse than you thought for you and me!

**TO THIS REPLY**, we might add that now Orthodox Ecu-  
menists are loathe to give the impression that they believe that the  
Orthodox Church is the One, True Church. Thus people are led  
astray, and given the impression that there are several Churches  
or that the Church has various branches. Again in this instance, it  
is the “Orthodox” who bear the greater responsibility.

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*MAY I PLEASE ask a question: The reason the Holy Fire  
comes on Pascha only to the Orthodox and not to other religions  
(when Easter falls on the same date), would it be because the other  
religions do not recognise Jesus as God? -A.H., London, NW10*

I THINK you are being a little too technical about the Pas-  
chal Fire. I cannot, of course, know the mind of God or why He  
does some things and not others, but I suspect the answer is sim-  
pler than you suggest. There was an occasion when the Armenians  
tried to obtain the Holy Fire, and they arranged for the Orthodox to  
be excluded from the Church, and the Fire came not in the Church  
that year, but outside: a pillar cracked and the Fire came forth. The  
pillar can still be seen at the entrance to the Church of the Resur-  
rection. Now the Armenians believe that Christ is God, albeit in  
an erroneous way. Officially (I say that, because it is hard to know  
what the generality of Western Christians believe these days) the  
Roman Catholics, Anglicans and the more conservative Protes-  
tants, the Copts and other denominations believe Christ is God. I  
suspect that the reason they do not receive the Fire is simply that  
they are outside the Church. It is a witness to the fact that the Or-  
thodox Church is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of  
the Creed.

# NEWS SECTION

## *MURDER OF A RIGHTEOUS PRIEST*

ON MONDAY of this week [5th August, 2013, n.s.] we received the dreadful news, that **Fr Paul Adelheim**, a priest well-known in Russia and abroad, was murdered in his house in the city of Pskov. He was fatally stabbed by a mentally disturbed young man who came to him for pastoral guidance. He was 75 years old. Fr Paul's long life was the life of a confessor. Here are some glimpses from it: When Paul was 4 years old, his father was arrested and later executed. His mother took the boy in her hands and went to the NKVD in order to place a complaint. There she was also arrested, and little Paul was sent to an orphanage, where he stayed for several years. After her term in [the] gulag, his mother was exiled to Kazakhstan and was able to take her son with her. It was the post-war years. In Kazakhstan at that time there were many exiled priests of a high spiritual level. Paul became a spiritual son of Fr Sebastian, the former cell attendant of St Nectary of Optina. Fr Sebastian was himself a clairvoyant elder and he awakened in Paul a desire to serve the Church. This companionship formed in him a spiritual foundation for the rest of his life. Paul entered the Kiev seminary, but was expelled after three years for the following reason: The rector of the seminary, Archimandrite Philaret Denisenko (now Patriarch of Kiev) organized a celebration of the Soviet feast, 1st of May, which fell on Great Friday that year. Student Paul protested and was expelled. However he was accepted and ordained a deacon and a priest by Archbishop Hermogen of Tashkent, who was later exiled for his resistance to Khrushchev's persecution of the Church. The young priest was sent to his first parish in Uzbekistan. The Soviet authorities didn't allow the building of new churches, but gave permission to renovate the existing ones. Fr Paul, on the pretext of renovation, actually built a new church. By this he angered the authorities. In 1969



there was a trial and Fr Paul was sentenced to three years in the gulag for anti-Soviet propaganda. The chief of the concentration camp disliked him, and orchestrated an attempt on his life in the guise of an accident. During works on the rails suddenly a crane started to move towards him, Fr Paul managed to jump back, but his foot was cut off. Then the chief of the camp forbade providing any medical aid for him until gangrene would set in and his leg would be amputated, so that Fr Paul would be unable to serve as a priest. It happened thus, and Fr Paul lost his leg up to the knee. Nevertheless he kept serving all his life with a prosthesis. Having been released from the gulag, he soon moved to Pskov, where the KGB supervisors, as before, paid special attention to him. Finally Perestroika put an end to the persecution of the Church. During the first years of freedom, Fr Paul, despite his disability, was able to open two parishes, to build a church, to create an orphanage for disabled children and an Orthodox college for choir-directors. The favourable period of the Church revival was short; the Moscow Patriarchate quickly began to shape the vertical of power, - the dictatorship of bishops acting as a bureaucratic corporation. Fr Paul was a talented man; he published books and articles. By his word and writings he resisted this process of the spiritual destruction of the Church from within, and as a result became an object of fierce persecution on the part of the hierarchy. Though many sympathized with him, he was alone in this struggle. Fr Paul was just an honest and sincere priest, who acted and spoke according to his conscience, but the structure of the MP is such that it rejects sincere faith. Shortly before his death he wrote to his friend: "The fact is that church life in Russia is fading away. And no matter how much they might talk in the Patriarchate about golden domes; unfortunately, the golden domes express only the power of the Church authorities and growth of its wealth at the expense of government revenue, no more. And spiritual life is destroyed and eliminated, and it is destroyed, of course, deliberately by the MP. It destroys everything that can be destroyed in the Church. It creates its material well-being, but

destroys spiritual life”. Fr Paul constantly spoke and wrote that the Church is the Body of Christ and not a bureaucratic structure for the management of profits; that formal, army-like discipline is out of place in the Church; that obedience in the Church should be based on love, conscience and freedom, and not on fear, self-interest and brute force. Such is the picture of the MP depicted by Fr Paul in his blog: “The MP goes contrary to the canons and traditions. Church Councils are abolished, parishes are converted to retail outlets, the people of God are deprived of participation in church life. The Patriarchate ignores legitimate protests, doesn’t respond to questions from the flock, banishes those who disagree. - Eat what you are offered or go away. - The MP is based not on the Gospel and church canons and not on its own laws. It is based on the security forces of the Russian Government, crushing dissent, regardless of church canons. Under the name of ‘ecclesiastical court’ an uncanonical institution was created to crack down on unwanted clergymen or parishes. There is no place to appeal.” Knowing personally many priests and bishops of the ROCOR, Fr Paul warned them openly against the union with the MP, but his voice went unheard. The last twenty years were for Fr Paul a time of constant attack from his bishop. Fr Paul was removed from his position as rector of the parishes, which he had organized. His pastoral efforts were hindered and destroyed; the school created by him was closed. They did not defrock him simply to avoid scandal, since Fr Paul was a world-wide known figure. Other priests were afraid to communicate with him, for fear of the bishop. An interesting detail: at his funeral there was only one local priest from Pskov,\* the one who was appointed by the bishop, others did not dare to come. Fr Paul was a righteous man, who was a moral authority for many. All of his life he suffered for Christ, His truth and His Church. Now this life of a confessor was crowned with a martyr’s end. (*Information sent to us by Marina Soubotin*).

\* *Clarification:* There were, in fact, many priests there but only one from the Pskov area.

## **SOLEMNITY AT CANNES RUSSIAN CHURCH**

EVERY YEAR on 15th August (n.s.) the memory of a parishioner of the Archangel Michael Church in Cannes, **Helena Vagliano**, is celebrated. She is a national symbol of resistance to fascism in France. Helena was a Greek Orthodox Christian, but with her family she attended the **Cannes Russian Church of St. Michael** before the war. Later (after the German-Nazi invasion and occupation of France), she joined the ranks of the French Resistance of General de Gaulle in the south of France. In late July 1944, she was arrested and within 17 days of her arrest, she was subjected to torture and interrogation by the Gestapo. The interrogations took place in the presence of her parents, but she did not betray any of her colleagues and did not provide information of interest to the fascists. On 15th August, 1944, when the Allies had landed, she was shot. She was 35 years old. In Cannes, a street has been named after her. She was buried in the crypt of the Russian Orthodox church, and each year on the anniversary of her execution a ceremony is held in the presence of the mayor or his representative, the deputies of various eminent personalities and, of course, ex-combatants who have all come to honour her memory. A memorial service is chanted, and the President of the Union of Ex-combatants says a word, and then all go to the crypt where their banner is given a solemn salute, and then in the church garden all are invited to a small reception hosted by the mayor's office. This year, the *pannikhida* was served by **Fr. Hristo Petkov**, together with **Protodeacon Gemain**. It was the first ROCA (Synod of Metropolitan Agafangel) service in the church for seven years, during which time the church had been in the hands of the Moscow Patriarchate's autonomous ROCOR. The church will remain closed until the resumption of worship at the beginning of September. It is closed due to necessary cleaning, and also because it is necessary to make a thorough inventory, to establish all that was lost during the period when the possession of the church was the subject of a long legal dispute, which has now been settled by the French courts.

## ***ATTACK ON A CHURCH IN ALBANIA***

A BRUTAL ATTACK was made on a Greek Orthodox church in the city of Premet in southern Albania on 16th August by hired government thugs who smashed icons and crosses and beat up worshippers trying to defend the only Christian house of worship in the city, according to a release on ***GreekReporter.com***. The church served Orthodox Christians in the area for decades until 1967 when Stalinist dictator Enver Hoxha outlawed all religious worship in the country and it was turned into a cultural centre. After the collapse of Communism in Albania in 1991, it became a church once again and used for worship until 16th August, when security forces hired by the Mayor of Premet Gilberto Giatse moved into the church, and announced the municipality was reclaiming the building as a cultural centre. **His Eminence, Archbishop Anastasios, the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Albania**, called the brutal actions in Premet an attack not only on the Orthodox Church but also on Albania itself. “We are moved to ask if we find ourselves in 2013 where we enjoy democracy and have hopes of entering the European Union (*sic*) or if we are reliving the nightmare of 1967 when an atheistic party believed that it could uproot forever the religious faith of the Albanian people,” he said in a statement.

## ***PARIS EXARCH CANDIDATURE LIST***

ACCORDING to a report on ***Pravoslavie.ru***, a meeting was held by the **Council of the Archbishopric of Russian Orthodox Churches in the Western Europe (Patriarchate of Constantinople)** on 31st July in Paris. This repeats a report by ***Orthodoxie.com***, a French Orthodox website. A *communiqué* published after the meeting states that the council has approved the list of candidates put forward for election as the new Archbishop of Eucarpia, head of the Russian Archbishopric of the Patriarch-

ate of Constantinople. It includes: **Archimandrite Grigorios** (Papathomas), **Archimandrite Job** (Gecha), and **Archimandrite Simeon** (Kossek). *Pravoslavie.ru* notes that the “fact that among the candidates on (*sic*) the post of the Head of the Russian Archbishopric there are no clergymen who are Russian in origin, is very noticeable.” The list will be submitted to the Patriarchate of Constantinople for its approval by Patriarch Bartholomeos I of Constantinople and the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Constantinople; after that it will be submitted to the vote at the Extraordinary General Assembly that will take place on 1st and 2nd November, 2013.

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# SIR-UK NEWS

## ***BENEFACTOR OF MISSIONS IN AFRICA DIES***

WE RECENTLY heard of the death in Ireland of a benefactor of our overseas missions, **Patrick Jones**, who lived in Bray, Co Wicklow. Patrick was a convert to Holy Orthodoxy and belonged to one of the New Calendar parishes in Dublin. Latterly he was severely disabled. About two years ago, he started corresponding with us and asking questions about the Faith, and then nearly every month sent at least £100 for the missionary work which **His Grace Bishop Ambrose** does in Africa, which we passed on to the Bishop during his visits. For his generosity and support of the missionary work of our Church, may Patrick find mercy. ***May his Memory be Eternal!*** Our hope is that others will be found to contribute to the work he supported so well and so generously, though not a member of our Church.

## ***BURIAL AT BROOKWOOD***

GOCHA (GEORGE) LOBJANIDZE, who reposed on 5th August, aged 49, was laid to rest in our cemetery on Thursday, 8th August. The funeral had been chanted at the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral, Ennismore Gardens, London**, and was conducted by **Archpriest Maxim Nikolsky**. A large number of people from the Cathedral attended the interment at Brookwood, including, besides Fr Maxim, **Archpriest Mikhail Dudko** and a visiting priest from Russia. After the burial the mourners held a Mercy Meal in our Old Mortuary building for all who attended, generously also leaving provisions for the Brotherhood. May George find rest with the saints and ***Memory Eternal***, and may his widow, children and loved ones find comfort in their bereavement.

## ***VISITORS***

3rd AUGUST: **Fr Joseph Skinner** of the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral at Ennismore Gardens, London**, visited graves in our cemetery at Brookwood with a parishioner of his, *en route* to Southampton, where Father serves once a month.

13th AUGUST: **Val Pretlove** brought the **Mothers' Union Group from St Michael's Church, Yorktown, Camberley** to see Saint Edward's. There were about twenty-five people in the group, including some men, and they showed a lively and intelligent interest in the church and our Faith.

Almost simultaneously, **His Eminence, Archbishop Anatoly of Kerch** visited our cemetery to chant a *pannikhida* at the grave of **Mother Serafima**, and coincidentally Fr Maxim and family mourners came about the same time to pray at the grave of George Lobjanidze, where His Eminence then served a second *pannikhida*. Unfortunately two of our four members were out on a sick call at the time, Fr Nippon was showing the Mothers' Union

the church, and we were unable to afford these guests the hospitality we should have done, but providentially George's family did provide refreshments for all in the Old Mortuary.

27th AUGUST: **Father Youeel Anba Bishoy** of the **Coptic Orthodox parish of St Augustine in Guildford** visited us and he returned on the following Monday, the Great Feast of the Transfiguration, to attend the Divine Liturgy at Saint Edward's. During his visit he told us about his life in his monastery in Egypt, which had almost two hundred monks, and about the deplorable persecution of the Copts during the present mayhem in Egypt.

24th AUGUST: About ten parishioners from **Saint Nectarius Greek Orthodox Church, Battersea**, visited and chanted hymns to the Mother of God in Byzantine style in the church. They spent about an hour in church praying, and then came over to the Exhibition Room where, because of the poor weather, they ate a picnic lunch. Most of the pilgrims were in fact Romanian.

## ***WOKING NEWS AND MAIL***

OUR LOCAL PAPER, which has improved immensely both in news coverage and presentation since it was taken into private ownership, carried a short article about Saint Edward Brotherhood by **Royer Slater** in its ***Things to do in Surrey*** column on 29th August. Royer is to be congratulated for managing to put a considerable amount of information in a very short column.

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## **PRACTICAL TIP**

IN THINGS great or small, do not be led by your emotions or feelings; they can be, and often are, deceptive. Be guided instead by the teachings of the Church.

# 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.

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“IF DURING the service your brother does anything irregularly or negligently, do not become irritated with him, whether inwardly or outwardly, but be generously indulgent to his fault, remembering that you yourself commit many, many faults; that you yourself are a man with every weakness; that God is long-suffering and all-merciful, and that He forgives you and all of us our offences time without number.”

SAINT JOHN OF CRONSTADT THE WONDERWORKER, +1908 A.D.