



## FROM THE FATHERS

“ON THE FOREHEAD, and over the eyes, and on the mouth, and on the breast, let us place the life-giving Cross. Let us arm them with the invincible armour of Christians, with this hope of the faithful, with this gentle light. Let us open Paradise with this weapon, with this support of the Orthodox faith, with this saving praise of the Church. Not for one hour, nor for a moment, let us forget the Cross, nor let us begin to do anything without it. Whether we sleep, whether we arise, whether we work, whether we eat, whether we drink, whether we go on our way, whether we sail on the seas, whether we cross the river, let us adorn all our members with the life-giving Cross. And let us not be frightened by *the terror of the night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the thing that walketh in darkness, nor for the mishap and demon of noonday* (Ps. 90:5-6). If, O Christian, you always take up the Cross of Christ on yourself as a help, then *no evils shall come nigh thee, and no scourge shall draw nigh unto thy dwelling* (Ps 90:10): for the opposing power, seeing it, trembles and leaves.”

VEN. EPHRAIM THE SYRIAN, + 373 A.D.

“AMONG the ascetics of old, as it is today, the sign of the Cross was the most powerful weapon against the temptations of the demons. The most horrible fears of the devil vanish into nothing, like smoke, when a person traces the sign of the Cross over himself.”

SAINT NICOLAS OF ZICA, +1956

# The Unity of Dogma and Love

## From Misguided Zeal to the Cesspool of Heresy\*

*“There is no opposition between dogma and love.”*

WE DEEM IT worthwhile, on the occasion of the commemoration of the Third Holy Œcumenical Synod in Ephesus (9<sup>th</sup> September), to return to the ever-timely subject of our proper attitude and behaviour towards heretics and, in general, those who have differences of opinion with us.

We must become profoundly conscious of the fact that, if the attitude of Orthodox towards those in error is not in harmony with the Tradition of the Fathers, it entails many dangers and leads to negative results.

A. Patriarch Nestorios of Constantinople is an eternal example of a fervent champion of the Orthodox Faith who—on account of his misguided zealotry and unbridled fanaticism—was led to his notorious and blasphemous Christological heresy and was, moreover, responsible for the Monophysite controversy, with all of its ruinous consequences.

1. No sooner had Nestorios, who came from Antioch, been consecrated a Bishop in the Imperial City, than he showed himself—according to the historian Socrates—to be an “ardent persecutor” of heretics and one who “acted contrary to the usual way of the Church,”<sup>1</sup> ceasing not to quarrel with and plot violence against heresies; in this way he came to be hated and “single-handedly turned the city upside down.”<sup>2a</sup>

2. First and foremost, he became immediately known “for his unrestrained (loquacious, insolent) tongue.”<sup>2b</sup> At his consecration (10<sup>th</sup> April, 428), “he promptly uttered those famous” and

arrogant “words: ‘Give me, O Emperor, the earth purged of heretics, and I will give you Heaven as a recompense. Assist me in destroying the heretics, and I will assist you in vanquishing the Persians!’”<sup>3a</sup>

All of those who had a loathing for heretics, as Socrates makes clear, “gladly accepted” these words; however, “neither the frivolous mind nor the violent (wrathful, irascible) temperament” of Nestorios escaped those of “upright disposition.”<sup>3b</sup>

3. On the fifth day after his consecration, Nestorios turned with fury against the Arians, attempting to demolish their church. In their despair, the Arians set fire to the church; the fire spread to the adjacent houses, the city was thrown into disorder, and the heretics made preparations to defend themselves.<sup>4a</sup>

Hereafter, everyone called Nestorios the “firebrand” (the “incendiary”); “and it was not only the heretics who did this, but also those of his own faith.”<sup>4b</sup>

4. After this, he turned against the Novatians, “but the ruling authorities, by their admonitions, checked his fury.”<sup>5a</sup>

5. Next, he ruthlessly persecuted the Quartodecimans; and when strife broke out, “multitudes perished...around Miletus and Sardis.”<sup>5b</sup>

6. Thereafter, he began to attack the Macedonians, whom he severely tormented with the aid of Bishop Antony, who was of like mind with him; thereupon the heretics, “unable any longer to bear his harsh treatment,” “assassinated him [Antony]”!<sup>6</sup>

7. Finally, however, Nestorios, having striven in a fanatic and un-Christian manner to persecute others, “was himself expelled from the Church”;<sup>7</sup> when he began to support those who called the All-Holy Mother of our Saviour, not the *Theotokos* (the “Bearer of God”), but *Christotokos* (the “bearer of Christ”) or *anthropotokos* (“man-bearer”), and to proclaim his heresy, he came

into conflict with his own Faithful and turned his persecutory fervour against them.

8. The clergy who broke communion with Nestorios endured “what was done not even among the barbarian nations”:<sup>8</sup> arrests, imprisonment, exile, public ridicule, beatings, scourgings, starvation, etc.

“They pilloried us, flung us down, and kicked us, naked and bound as we were,” the victims recounted; “what people would not endure even in secular trials as laymen—much less clergy, Archimandrites, and monastics—, we suffered unlawfully in the Church at the hands of this transgressor.”<sup>9</sup>

9. In his indiscretion, the fanatic Nestorios showed no respect even for the most holy Archbishop Cyril of Alexandria, who in anguish advised the “firebrand” to correct his heretical preaching, “so as to bring a worldwide scandal to an end.”<sup>10</sup>

Nestorios responded very discourteously, looking at the concern shown by St Cyril as deriving from “his Egyptian origins” and characterizing his epistles as “insults” that would “try the patience of a physician,” since they were supposedly filled with “obscure and indigestible long-windedness” and provoked “nausea.”<sup>11</sup>

10. Ultimately, the wretched Nestorios’ crudity was directed against the Third Holy Œcumenical Synod, which, meeting in Ephesus in June of 431, summoned the Hierarchy of the Imperial City by proper protocol—three times in writing, through Episcopal emissaries—and, indeed, entreatingly (“we beseech you to come”<sup>12</sup>) “to attend this Holy Synod.”<sup>13</sup>

Nestorios, who was in Ephesus, ordered “a throng of soldiers with cudgels” to stand at the threshold of his place of residence, “so as to allow no one from the Synod to enter”!<sup>14</sup>

Nestorios did not go to the Holy Synod; the Holy Fathers passed judgment on him *in absentia*: “Shedding many tears,” they declared that “the same Nestorios be excluded from the Episcopal rank and from all Priestly association.”<sup>15</sup>

B. On the basis of the foregoing, it is abundantly clear that Nestorios suffered a most grievous fall, because he did not follow the Tradition of the Fathers in his attitude towards heretics; he ignored in word and deed the crystal-clear teaching of his great predecessor in Constantinople, the most holy John Chrysostomos, as well as that of another predecessor, St Gregory the Theologian....

1. Although he of Golden Discourse was distinguished as an antiheretical pastor of uncommon power, he never taught or did anything like Nestorios, regarding love as the most important weapon of the Orthodox against heretics.

The goal of our struggle is not the extermination of heretics or their forcible subjugation to the Church, for such measures would show that our Faith does not “work by love.”<sup>16</sup> According to St John, “to believe is not all that is required, but also to abide in love.”<sup>17</sup>

2. In addressing ourselves to those in error, St John of Golden Word teaches us that we should not forget the following:

a) “we do not speak in enmity, but so as to correct them”;<sup>18</sup>

b) our purpose is not “to strike our adversaries down, but to lift them up when they have fallen down”;<sup>19</sup>

c) the power of our words “does not inflict wounds, but heals wounds”;<sup>20a</sup>

d) we should not “be angry with them, nor make a show of our wrath, but we should converse with them gently; for nothing is stronger than gentleness and mildness.”<sup>20b</sup>

3. Likewise, let it not escape us that we express our genuine love for heretics not only in words, written and spoken, but also in fervent prayer: “Let us leave everything to prayer,” says St John Chrysostomos; “the more impious they are, the more [we should] beseech and entreat on their behalf that they might at some point back away from their madness.... Let us not cease making supplications for them.”<sup>21</sup>

4. Our persistence in the task of showing love for those in error should be unailing; and even if heretics insult us and treat us inhumanly, we should not retreat, but “weep,”<sup>22</sup> “lament,”<sup>23</sup> and “mourn”<sup>24a</sup> for their spiritual infirmity. “Lamentation...is a varied remedy, and of great efficacy in admonition.”<sup>24b</sup>

5. And one final assurance: if heretics do not repent, it is due largely to the absence among the Faithful of a “radiant life,” a saintly way of life, the chief mark of which is love.

If we want our anti-heretical assertions to have credibility, let us make sure that we are first and foremost distinguished by our orthopraxy, the lack of which, according to St John Chrysostomos, “has defamed the seemly things of our Faith; this has turned everything upside down.”<sup>25</sup>

6. One who most genuinely continued the teaching of St John Chrysostomos, and of the Fathers in general, with regard to our attitude towards heretics, was the humble and meek Saint of Aegina, Nectarios of Pentapolis: “Dogmatic differences, reduced to an issue of faith, leave the matter of love free and unchallenged; dogma does not set itself against love. . . . Christian love is constant, and for this reason the deformed faith of the heterodox cannot change our feelings of love towards them.... Issues of faith must in no way diminish the feeling of love.”<sup>26</sup>

Misguided zealotry and unbridled fanaticism, in our days, have become a violent and perilous current, which, like Nestorios’ indiscretion, even when it does not give rise to new heresies in our struggle against the panheresy of ecumenism, nonetheless renders a genuine anti-ecumenist witness ineffective and devalues its saving message: “...this has turned everything upside down.”

***“Let us stand aright; let us stand with fear!”***

## Notes

1. *Patrologia Graeca*, Vol. LXVII, col. 808A.

2a,b. *Ibid.*, col. 805A.

3a,b. *Ibid.*, col. 804B.

- 4a,b. *Ibid.*, col. 804C.                      5a,b. *Ibid.*, col. 805A.  
 6. *Ibid.*, col. 808AB.                        7. *Ibid.*, col. 808C.  
 8. Proceedings of the Holy Œcumenical Synods [in Greek], ed. Spyridon Melia (Holy Mountain: Kalyve of the Venerable Forerunner, 1981), Vol. I, p. 462b.  
 9. *Ibid.*, p. 463a.  
 10. *Ibid.*, p. 436a; see also, *PG*, Vol. LXXVII, col. 41.  
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 438a.                              12. *Ibid.*, p. 470a.  
 13. *Ibid.*, p. 469b.                              14. *Ibid.*, pp. 470-471.  
 15. *Ibid.*, p. 490a (*emphasis ours*).            16. Galatians 5:6.  
 17. *PG*, Vol. LXI, col. 666.                    18. *Ibid.*, Vol. XLVIII, col. 742.  
 19. *Ibid.*, col. 707.                              20a,b. *Ibid.*, col. 708.  
 21. *Ibid.*, col. 743.                              22. *Ibid.*, col. 718.  
 23. *Ibid.*, Vol. LXI.                              24a,b. *Ibid.*, col. 661.  
 25. *Ibid.*, Vol. LX, col. 331.26. Pastoral Theology [in Greek], p. 192.

\* *Translated from the Greek by Hieromonk [now Archimandrite] Patapios from the periodical Άγιος Κυπριανός, No. 280 (Sept.-Oct. 1997), pp. 265, 278-279, 282. And taken from the website of the former Synod in Resistance.*



## Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

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**§ 61. The Chanting of the Trisagion.** After the Little Entrance, while the choir chants the appointed hymns of the day, the priest, standing before the Holy Table, silently prays that the Lord will be graciously well-pleased to accept from the faithful the Thrice Holy Hymn (Trisagion), and this silent prayer ends with the exclamation, said aloud, *For holy art Thou, O our God, and unto Thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever.* The deacon takes a blessing from the priest and, coming out through the Royal Gates,

exclaims, *O Lord, save the pious and hearken unto us*, which the chanters repeat. Then standing before the Royal Gates and facing the people, holding his orarion aloft as a sign to the chanters that the time of the Trisagion approaches, he completes the priestly exclamation, *And unto the ages of ages*. The faithful, observing that the Gospel Book lying on the Holy Table manifests that the Lord has appeared in the flesh, chant unto him as God, following the example of the Heavenly Powers: *Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us*.

The provenance of this hymn is told in the following tradition. During the time of the powerful earthquake in Constantinople in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius II, the Christians with their Patriarch, Proclus, came out of the city to make supplication. During this entreaty, a small child reported that he had heard the Angels in the Heavens chanting, *Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal*. The people, recognising this as a divine revelation immediately began to chant this hymn, added to their own supplication, *Have mercy on us*, and the earthquake ceased. From that time this hymn entered into use in all the churches of the Christians.

On the feasts of the Nativity of Christ, the Baptism of the Lord, Pascha and Pentecost, and on Lazarus Saturday and Great Saturday, the Trisagion is replaced by the verse: *All ye that in Christ have been baptized, Christ have ye put on. Alleluia*. On the feast of the Elevation of the Lord's Cross and on the Sunday of the Worship of the Cross, we have instead: *Thy Cross do we worship, O Master, and Thy holy Resurrection do we glorify*.

**62. The Reading of the Apostle and the Gospel.** After the Trisagion, the clergy proceed to the High Place [the area east of the Holy Table, where the Bishop's throne is situated and seats for the concelebrating clergy], offering praise and worship to the One Who is seated on the throne of His Kingdom. Standing there, facing the congregation, they begin to prepare them to listen to the Apostolic epistles, for which the subdeacon or reader stands in the centre of the church. The deacon summons all to attention with



the words, *Let us attend! Wisdom!* This indicates that we should be attentive because that which is to be read will be full of wisdom. The priest pronounces the *Peace be unto all*, for such peace is an indispensable requirement for those who hope to hear the word of God. He who is going to read, speaking on behalf of all those present, replies to this good entreaty with the words, *And to thy spirit* (that is, we hope that you will have that same peace). He then intones the *prokeimenon*, the psalmic verses of David which precede the Apostolic teachings, just as did the proclamations of the Prophets. These verses either emphasise what is contained in the following reading or reflect the essence of the feast being celebrated. Two verses are intoned by the reader and the choir responds by each time repeating the first one; the reader then intones the first one again to the halfway point, and the chanters complete it. This form of repetition is not simply for effect, but to instruct us how we learn; first by listening and then by taking up the teaching ourselves. It is so important that it is used many times in our church services. After the *prokeimenon*, the deacon exclaims, *Wisdom!* again and the reader announces which of the Apostolic books he is about to read from. After another bidding, *Let us attend!* the reading from the Apostle begins. [We should perhaps note that in Orthodox usage, the word *Apostle* refers not only to the persons of the Apostles, but to the Book of their writings. In English usage this might more commonly be referred to as the Epistle, but the Orthodox usage is more precise in that the reading is not always taken from the Apostolic epistles, but throughout Pentecost (the fifty days after Pascha) and on certain other celebrations it is taken from the Acts of the Apostles.] During the reading of the Apostle, the priests sit in the High Place, indicating that like the Apostles they have been given authority to preach. Properly, unless one is very elderly or infirm, the other clergy and the lay people should stand to listen to the Apostle, indicating that they are hearers of that teaching. During the Apostle, the deacon censes in preparation for the Gospel reading, symbolizing the Grace which is spread abroad, like the fragrance of the

incense, by the evangelical teachings. The reading ends, and after the one who read has been blessed, we end this portion of the service with the chanting of the *Alleluia* of praise.

There follows a prayer read by the priest silently in preparation for the Gospel reading, the faithful are then called to attention again, and the Peace is bestowed upon them through the ministry of the priest. The Gospel is then read, but after it is announced, the chanters make the joyous acclamation, *Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!* During the Gospel reading not only the laity but the priests also stand with their heads bowed, as a sign of their reverence and submissiveness to the Lord, Who is Head of the Church. After the Gospel reading, during this part of the Liturgy which is devoted to teaching, the sermon (if there is one) is given.

**§ 63. The Litanies and the End of the Liturgy of the Catechumens.** After the Gospel and sermon come the following litanies: 1) that of Fervent Supplication in which we pray for the Church and for the needs of the faithful; 2) (except on Sundays and in Pentecost) that for the Faithful Departed, in which we pray for the rest and the remission of sins of those Orthodox Christians departed this life for whom offerings have been made; 3) the Litany of the Catechumens, in which we pray that the Lord will have mercy upon them, that He catechize them with the word of truth, reveal unto them the Gospel of righteousness, unite them to His Church, and save them by His grace. After these litanies, the deacon exclaims, *As many as are catechumens, depart. Catechumens depart. As many as are catechumens, depart.* With this exclamation the catechumens leave, and this brings to an end the second part of the Liturgy.

It should be noted that during the Litany of Fervent Supplication, the *antimension* on the Holy Table is partially unfolded. This is often done as the Bishop is commemorated to indicate that the priest is serving on his behalf. During the Litany of the Catechumens, it is completely unfolded usually at the words, *reveal unto them the Gospel of righteousness.* On the *antimension*, the

Saviour is depicted after He was taken down from the Cross, surrounded by His Mother, St John the Theologian, the Myrrhbearing Women and Saints Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Here the Gospel of righteousness is revealed to us, in His love towards us in that He suffered for our sakes, and in the response that it should call forth, that we love Him.

.... to be continued with *“The Liturgy of the Faithful”*



# THE COMING MONTH

BECAUSE in September, we celebrate the **Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross** (14th / 27th September) in this issue we have included quotations from the Fathers which speak of the importance of making the sign of the Cross and defending ourselves with the Cross in every activity and endeavour. As one who is now growing old in Orthodoxy (if not in sense), I remember my first impressions of attending services at the old Russian Cathedral at Emperor’s Gate in London. The congregation would be making the sign of the Cross at nearly every petition and at points of the services which had special meaning for them. Nowadays one sees that our congregations seem to stand as if they were at a masonic ceremony, hands clutched in front of them (something I was told was bad practice: think where the hands are) and hardly ever crossing themselves. I may be judging but I suspect that this is not so that they can attend to inner prayer more deeply, but simply from lack of applying themselves to attending to the services. One hopes the teachings from the Fathers will help such people. We do not have congregational singing in our churches, and our standing, making the sign of the Cross, bowing and making prostrations signify our participation in the Divine services, rather than our mere attendance as spectators.

Throughout the year, there are four principal feasts of the Cross, Great Friday, the Procession in August, our present feast, and the Sunday of the Cross in Great Lent. Besides this, every Wednesday and Friday is dedicated to the Cross. This shows what importance the Fathers, inspired by the Holy Spirit, attached to it. Furthermore, for this particular feast of the Cross, not only do we have the usual forefeast and after-feast, with the leavetaking falling on 21st September / 4th October, but on the preceding Saturday and Sunday and on the Saturday and Sunday which follow the day of the feast, special Apostle and Gospel readings are appointed. These readings instruct us in our understanding of the Cross's significance, and should also encourage us to have recourse to the power of the Cross in our every need.

Besides the feast of the Cross, in September we celebrate the **Birth of the All-holy Mother of God** (8th / 21st). This is the first Great Feast in the Church Year, which begins on 1st September, just as her Dormition is the last. So the Church Year is contained within the life of the Theotokos, as our Saviour and True God was contained within her womb. Saint John of Damascus says of this feast: "The day of the Nativity of the Theotokos is a feast of joy for the whole world, because through the Theotokos the entire human race was renewed and the grief of the first mother, Eve, was changed to joy. For whereas the latter heard the Divine sentence, *In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children* (Gen. 3:16), the former heard, *Rejoice, full of grace* (Luke 1:28). The latter heard, *Thy desire shall be to thy husband* (Gen. 3:16), and the former, *The Lord is with thee* (Luke 1:28)." So a path towards sorrow and sin was opened up for our race by Eve, but by the Mother of God a new path is opened to us: that to salvation and joy. Thus we chant in the troparion of the feast:

*Thy nativity, O Theotokos, hath proclaimed joy to the whole world; for from thee hath dawned the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God, annulling the curse, and bestowing the blessing, abolishing death and granting us life everlasting.*

In September we also have the feast of the **Enshrinement of the Sacred Relics of Saint Edward at Brookwood**, the dedication festival of our Church (*see below*).

On the very same day as St Edward (3rd / 16th September), we also celebrate the holy **Hieromartyr Anthimus, Bishop of Nicomedia**, and those with him who suffered during the persecution against Christians under the Emperors Diocletian (284-305) and Maximian (305-311). The persecution became particularly intense after a fire at the Imperial Court at Nicomedia. The pagans accused the Christians of starting the fire and reacted against them with terrible ferocity. In Nicomedia on the day of the Nativity of Christ, twenty thousand Christians were burned inside a church. (Through God's providence, this celebration is also very significant for our Brotherhood and mission, because it was on their feast day in 2006, that we were received under the *omophorion* of Metropolitan Cyprian the Elder. So it seems these saints are fervently praying for us). The holy Martyrs Dorotheus, Mardonius, Migdonius, Peter, Indes and Gorgonius died during this persecution. A soldier Zeno, witnessing the barbarity of the persecution, boldly denounced the Emperor Maximian, for which he was stoned, and then beheaded. The holy Virgin Martyr Domna, a former pagan priestess, perished at the hands of the pagans, as did one Euthymius, because they were concerned that the bodies of the holy martyrs should be buried. Saint Anthimus, who headed the Church of Nicomedia, had hidden himself in a village not far from Nicomedia at the request of his people, so that he could still minister to the decimated flock. From there he sent letters to the Christians, urging them to cleave firmly to the holy Faith and not to fear tortures. One of his letters, was intercepted and given to the Emperor Maximian. The Deacon Theophilus, who had been carrying it, was interrogated and died under torture, without revealing to his torturers the whereabouts of Bishop Anthimus. However in time the Emperor managed to learn the whereabouts of the holy Bishop, and sent a detachment of soldiers after him. The Bishop met them along the way, but the soldiers did not recog-

nize the saint. He invited them to join him and provided a meal, after which he revealed that he was the one they sought. The soldiers did not know what to do. Because of his kindness towards them, they wanted to leave him and tell the Emperor that they had not found him. The saint, however, would not consent to this. Through his admonitions the soldiers came to believe in Christ and received holy Baptism. Anthimus told them they were duty bound to carry out the Emperor's instructions. When Bishop Anthimus was brought before the Emperor, Maximian ordered that the instruments of execution be brought out and placed before him. "Do you think, Emperor, to frighten me with these tools of execution?" asked the saint. "No indeed, you cannot frighten one who wishes to die for Christ! Execution is frightening only for the cowardly, for whom the present life is most precious." Hearing this, the Emperor directed that the saint be fiercely tortured and beheaded by the sword. Bishop Anthimus joyfully glorified God with his last breath, and received the crown of martyrdom, as a hierarch faithful until the end.

The **Venerable Joasaph of Kubenskoye** (10th / 23rd September), was baptized with the name Andrew. His parents, Prince Demetrius of Zaozersk (a descendant of holy Prince Theodore of Smolensk and Yaroslavl) and Princess Maria, were known for their deep piety, which they imparted to the future ascetic. However, Prince Demetrius was slain by the Tartars, and, during a time of great civil unrest, the family were deprived of their family inheritance by the Great Prince Vasily II, the Blind. Through this the young Andrew came to see the vanity of the things of this world, and at twenty years of age, Prince Andrew took up the monastic life. He was tonsured at the Kamenny Monastery of the Saviour on Lake Kubenskoye, and he was given the name of another princely saint, Joasaph, the Prince of India (19th November / 2nd December). Despite his noble background, he lived in complete obedience, keeping the fasts, zealous in prayer and in spiritual reading. The brethren of the monastery were edified

by the gracious meekness and humility of the young ascetic. Under the spiritual nurture of the experienced Elder Gregory, St Joasaph progressed in virtue. He led the life of a hermit in his cell and attained to a high spiritual level. St Joasaph lived an ascetic life at the monastery of the Saviour for five years. In the final year of his life, he partook of food only once during the week and received the Holy Mysteries every Sunday. Before his repose, the venerable Joasaph took leave of the brethren, consoling and admonishing the monks not to grieve over his departure. When the brethren gathered in his cell, he asked that the prayers for the Departure of the Soul from the Body be read. He prayed to the Lord and to His All-Holy Mother, not only for himself, but for all the brethren of the monastery. Then he lay down upon his bed and died with prayer on his lips, on 10th September, 1453.



## POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*“IN the June issue’s “Practical Tip,” you imply that taking photographs in church is a sin. Why?” - H.B., Kirkby Lonsdale.*

Except under exceptional circumstances, I would think it was sinful on several accounts. Let me try and explain. First of all, I must admit that I have seen no guidance on this in the teaching of the Fathers or Elders. Of course, there are two reasons for this lack. First of all, modern photography was only invented at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and for decades was a very cumbersome affair. It was only later that portable cameras became available and it became popular with “the masses.” And until this time there was, of course, no problem. Further and much more tellingly, until a generation or so ago, even in non-Orthodox churches, no one would have dreamed of bringing a camera into

church and taking pictures during the services. Even today, among people who are not Orthodox, on the great occasions of state, for instance, one does not see people in the congregation taking photographs. Simply, I presume, on that Great British principle “It is just not done”! This is telling because it was not done because it was singularly inappropriate. Furthermore, our behaviour, as Orthodox Christians, should be an example to those people outside the Church, and not theirs an example to us. It should invite them to see something in us and in our conduct which will call them to Orthodoxy.

So what are the several accounts mentioned above? First of all, like talking in church, it is forgetfulness of the sanctity of God’s house. A church is consecrated, it is a sacred place, and one’s behaviour in it should correspond with that fact.

Secondly, we attend church, or should do, to give glory to God and His saints, to give thanks for all we have received, to pray and ask God’s mercy, the forgiveness of our sins, help in our daily lives, and for salvation. Surely this should consume our attention. Would a condemned criminal before his judge, hoping for clemency, be fussed about taking pictures of the judge? It is an activity entirely dissonant with the very purpose of our being in church.

Thirdly, the service is going on - in fact it is going on all the time. While we begin and end our services, the Church of the First-born in Heaven continue theirs perpetually. Our services are only joining theirs for a period, because of the weakness inherent in our bodily existence. During the services, we pass beyond this world and its concerns, we enter a heavenly realm. The very first audible words of the Liturgy, are *Blessed is the Kingdom*. Not *Blessed will be the Kingdom*. We should enter that Kingdom as we join the service, yet photography is an entirely this worldly affair.

The reason why in our services we have chants, reading and even words is to help us, to guide us, to instruct us, and to lead us from things earthly to things heavenly. If we are concerned about



other things, - getting a good shot, catching the Bishop as he blesses, etc., - surely we are distracted, inattentive, and not profiting from what the service offers us. If, for instance, you want to get a good shot of the Bishop blessing with the *dikiri* and *trikiri*, is your mind and heart set upon this, or is it disposing itself to receive the blessing that the Bishop is bestowing? Won't you have missed that blessing? Surely you are then simply attending some sort of show or pageant, rather than **participating** in the Divine Liturgy, in the life of the Kingdom.

And again, we are failing to show brotherly love, by causing a distraction for the others in church. Photographing often involves very distracting things, moving about, holding cameras up, flashes, etc. Even if we have those very discreet phone thingummies, our distraction and lack of reverent attention to the service will be a distraction to those around us.

Further, we are showing a lack of brotherly love by photographing people without asking their permission, thus showing them a lack of respect, which is surely the most fundamental base line of brotherly love. This is particularly abhorrent when people are photographed receiving the Holy Mysteries, kissing the icons, lighting candles, having confession, or other times, which doubtless are very precious to them. At such times, rather than taking photographs of them and literally making a spectacle of them, we should be praying for them, if our attention is in any way directed towards them, which perhaps it should not be.

We are also showing a lack of brotherly love by setting a bad example to our fellow worshippers, who will think this is somehow acceptable at the time of prayer and worship.

One person once told me, making excuse for their sin, that it was for "History." If I might make a trite remark but one which is perfectly true nonetheless, and cuts through such puerile nonsense: The services are something much more exalted than History, they are Mystery.

That brings me to the exceptional circumstances though, that I mentioned at the beginning of this letter. On this matter, as on most others in church life, we do not have to be rigidly and inconsiderately closed to any relaxation of the general practice. Perhaps on very special occasions, the consecration of a church or of a Bishop, or something of that sort, some one person in the congregation might be blessed to take three or four photographs. Perhaps also when a Baptism or Marriage is being celebrated and many of the family are unable to attend because they live abroad, with the blessing of the celebrant a similar relaxation can or even should be allowed. Generally, though, photographs for “History’s” sake, can be taken after the service, when the prayers will not be disturbed.

If I might add one very personal thought though: who has not been bored to tears by the “History” collection of photographs? A few are interesting and perhaps valuable, but Fr Q blessing koliva on the Soul Sabbath in 1952, and Fr Q blessing koliva on the Soul Sabbath in 1953, etc., etc., makes even a lover of history like myself glaze over and yearn for a hot cocoa and for bed!



“I PREFER a man who has sinned and done wickedly and repented, and who knows how to acknowledge his sins, to a man who has not sinned and has not shown repentance; for the former possesses a humble mind, but the latter esteems himself in his thoughts as a just man.”

ABBA PCÆMEN OF EGYPT, + 450 A.D.

“MOST of us call ourselves sinners, and perhaps really think it; but it is indignity that tests the heart.”

VEN. JOHN OF THE LADDER, +603 A.D.

# NEWS from the communities in England of the Church of the Genuine Orthodox Christians of Greece

## ***BISHOP AMBROSE'S VISITATION***

BECAUSE, when he comes for Saint Edward's Day (16th September, n.s.), his visit to England will be necessarily very short and he will be unable to fit in a visit to the Convent, **His Grace Bishop Ambrose** also came for the Great Feast of the Dormition this year, and celebrated the Vigil and the Divine Liturgy with **Mother Vikentia** and her sisters at the Convent.

## ***TWO PILGRIMAGES***

IN JULY, **His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** led a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Several people from our communities in England joined him, as did a family close to us from Moscow and the daughter of one of our parishioners from the States. Although, because of the political situation, they were disappointed in their hope of visiting Mount Sinai, they were able to visit and pray at many of the holy places in the Holy Land.

IN AUGUST, through the generosity of **Bishop Sofronie** and of the Romanian faithful who attend our churches, Fr Alexis made an eight-day pilgrimage to Romania. The highlight of the visit was the celebration of the Great Feast of the Transfiguration at the Monastery dedicated to that feast at **Slatioara**. The Romanian Bishops and clergy, and literally thousands of the faithful, were also joined by **Bishop Photios of Marathon** and our **Bishop Ambrose**, representing our Synod in Greece. During his

stay there, travelling sometimes with Bishop Sofronie and helpers from the Romanian Church, and sometimes with “the Greeks,” Fr Alexis was granted to visit several monasteries (staying for several days at the **Monastery of St Glicherie**, founded where the saint had hidden in the forests during the Communist persecution) and parish churches, to venerate the sacred relics of many of the Saints there (including St Dimitri of Basarbova, St Filoftea, and St Paisius Velichkovsky), to visit a wood-carving workshop run by a parish, and to see much of the country. Perhaps being a lone foreigner among the Orthodox faithful of Romania is an image of being in God’s hands. You can hardly ever fathom the Why? When? What? of things, but you are certain of their loving care.

### ***FAREWELL FOR THE LORD LIEUTENANT***

ON Tuesday, 28th July, a farewell for the **Lord Lieutenant of Surrey, Dame Sarah Goad, DCVO JP**, was held at “**The Tithe Barn, Loseley Park, Guildford**.” This was to mark her retirement in August, and was hosted by the **Vice Lord Lieutenant, Mr Andrew Wates, and the Chairman of Surrey County Council, Mrs Sally Marks**, who during the evening were among those who made speeches of appreciation of Dame Sarah’s outstanding eighteen-year term in office. The **Lord Lieutenant elect, Mr Michael Moore-Molyneaux** also made a speech, paying tribute to Dame Sarah, and spoke of his family’s history. From our Brotherhood, Fathers Alexis and Niphon were invited to attend, and were particularly moved meeting the other participants, mostly representatives of charities and societies supported by Dame Sarah, to learn something of their work for the good of others. One hears so much today of the works of evil and destruction that it was heartening to hear of a brighter, if less publicized, endeavour. Dame Sarah spoke of her Christian commitment, and we can be sure that this in itself was an inspiration and encouragement to many of those engaged in these good works.

## ***TWO BAPTISMS***

ON the feast of Saint Macrina and St Seraphim of Sarov, Saturday, 19th July / 1st August, **Fr Sebastian Mogirzan** from **Fălticeni, Romania**, celebrated the Baptisms of two babies at Saint Edward's Church: **Ecaterina**, the daughter of **Constantin and Elena Ungurianu**, and **Petruta**, the daughter of **Petru and Felicia Haleta**. **Florin Ungurianu** is godfather to Ecaterina, who is named after the Great Martyr (feast day: 25th November / 8th December), and **Andreas and Dumitru Haleta** were godparents of Petruta, who is named for the Holy Apostle Peter (29th June / 12th July). After the Mysterion, the participants enjoyed a celebratory meal in the Old Mortuary. On the next day, the Sunday, the feast of the Holy Prophet Elias, Fr Sebastian celebrated with our clergy at the Divine Liturgy at Brookwood.

## ***APPEAL FOR BULGARIA***

FR BORISLAV tells us that there is a church in Bulgaria, dedicated to **St Xenia of Petersburg** in the city of Varna, that is in need of being plastered and having the roof re-painted. The priest, **Fr Peter Dimitrov** and his presbytera, **Ioanna**, were formerly in the State Church, but seeing the spiritual dangers there they and the parish are now with **His Eminence Bishop Photii of Triaditza**. Sadly at the present time, Fr Peter has certain health problems, which add to his burden. If any of our readers wish to send alms to help this parish, please send them to the Brotherhood and through Fr Borislav we will ensure they reach Fr Peter.

## ***INTERMENT***

ON 6th August n.s., the burial of **Natalie Arseni**, who had died three days before, took place in our cemetery. It was served by **Archpriest Joseph Skinner**, who had earlier chanted her funeral service at the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral in London, Ennismore Gardens, Knightsbridge**. Fr Joseph's matushka led a small choir who came with the mourners for the interment, and afterwards a mercy meal was provided by Artem, the husband of the deceased, and by the family in the Old Mortuary.

## VISITORS

**BISHOP ARSENI**, a retired hierarch of the **Patriarchate of Jerusalem**, visited our cemetery on Saturday, 12th / 25th July, accompanied by a parishioner from the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral at Ennismore Gardens, London**.

**FATHER GABRIEL LAWANI** from the Mission of the Joy of All Sorrow Icon of the Mother of God, Droylsden, Manchester, drove down to Brookwood, a six-hour journey, on Saturday, 8th August, and served Vespers for our community upon his arrival. The next day, Fr Alexis being appointed to the Convent, he celebrated Mattins and the Divine Liturgy for the Brookwood parish at Saint Edward's Church. On the Great Feast of the Transfiguration, even though he and his presbytera are not in the best of health, he helped us again in a similar way, serving the Vigil and the Divine Liturgy at **Mother Vikentia's** request at the **Convent of the Annunciation**, so that, during Fr Alexis' trip to Romania, Fathers Stephen and Borislav could serve here, allowing both congregations to have a Liturgy. We owe Fr Gabriel and his presbytera, **Helena**, much thanks.

**FATHER PAUL ELLIOTT** and three parishioners from his church of the New Martyr Elizabeth of Russia in Wallasey visited us on the eve of the Dormition *en route* to the Vigil at the **ROCA-MP Church on Harvard Road, West London**. They stayed for about two and a half hours, kindly brought us gifts, visited the church, the cemetery and the exhibition room, and were offered refreshments here. On the next day, the day of the feast, we hear Fr Paul was elevated to the rank of Archpriest by **His Eminence, Archbishop Mark**.

A GROUP from "**The Victorian Society**," led by **Mrs Maya Donelan**, made a tour of the cemetery and visited Saint Edward's, staying for nearly half-an-hour. There were about forty members in the group, and they showed a lively interest in the church and in our worship. The walk had been arranged previously by **Margaret Hobbs** of the **Brookwood Cemetery Society**. And it turned out that Mrs Donelan had links with the old Russian community in London.

## ***TWO NEW ICONS DONATED***

BISHOP SOFRONIE gave Fr Alexis a painted icon of **Saint Glycerie the New Confessor**, during the time he was staying at the monastery dedicated to the Saint in Moldavia. At the moment we are having the icon framed for the church.

TWO parishioners in Bulgaria, **Tchavdar and Tsveta Vulovi** have generously given our Brotherhood a beautiful and large icon of **St Edward the Martyr**, which **Fr Borislav Popov** brought back with him when he recently visited his homeland. We hope, in due time, to have prints made.

## ***“SOUP KITCHEN” DONATION***

LARGELY through the generous donation of one parishioner, but with many others contributing, while he was in Romania, Fr Alexis was able to hand **Bishop Ambrose £1,700** (in Euros) for the **St Philaret the Merciful Orthodox Women’s Guild** in Greece, which with the blessing of **His Eminence, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili** runs soup kitchens for those in Greece in desperate need of food and support, many of them refugees from war zones and regions overrun by terrorists in Asia.

## ***MEDIA INTEREST***

PETER STEWART of **BBC Radio Surrey** visited the Brotherhood on Thursday, 30th July, and briefly interviewed Fr Alexis, asking questions about our heavenly intercessor, Saint Edward the Martyr. He was doing a report about the “famous dead” in the county.

SHARON GALLIFORD of **Radio Woking** visited on Wednesday, 12th August, and conducted a more extensive interview about our work and way of life, our Church and our Faith.

# Saint Edward's Day

THIS YEAR, St Edward's day falls on a Wednesday, (16th September, n.s.). We are to be blessed by having two Bishops celebrate the feast with us, **Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** and **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** (and there may indeed be two Archimandrites as well, adding splendour to the occasion).

If any of you have received any help or benefit from the fact that we have been granted to have a church here dedicated to Saint Edward, we hope you will make every effort to attend the services in his honour. We realize that the feast falls on a week-day, but arrange to have the day off. Put your love of the Saint before worldly concerns. In this respect the Bishops are setting us an excellent example, in that, despite their heavy commitments, they are travelling across Europe to attend. Respond to their love towards us and towards our Saint, by a reciprocal love and commitment.

***Vigil for St Edward - Tuesday, 15th September, at 7 p.m.***

***Hierarchal Divine Liturgy - Wednesday, 16th September, at 9.30 a.m., followed by a Parish Breakfast together for all participants.***

*(Dates new style)*

## PRACTICAL TIP

AT THE END of the Divine Liturgy, it is proper only for those who have NOT received the Divine Mysteries of the Body and Blood of our Saviour to approach and take the *antidoron*, the blessed bread distributed by the priest when the people come up to kiss the Cross. The very name, *antidoron*, means "in place of the Gifts." It is distributed to those who, through lack of preparation, some defilement or discipline, have not been able to receive, so that they too may receive a blessing. At this time those who have been blessed to receive Holy Communion, should stand quietly in their places and attend to the reading of the Thanksgiving Prayers.