



## FROM THE FATHERS

“THE ONE who hates you invites you to the heavenly banquet, and your enemy to a wedding feast. The wrath and envy that have vexed you are for you the cause of blessings; oppression offers you an inheritance amid the Prophets and Apostles; calumny can bring you to meet the first and the last. Yet it is necessary that you suffer under the oppressor and grieve under calumny; for while they are digging a ditch for you, God is preparing a place for you in Heaven.”

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

“THIS IS FOUND to be a peculiar way with the wicked, namely, to urge their own bad points slanderously against the good, before they themselves are accused of them; and while they dread to be reproached for the things which they do, they testify that the righteous who withstand their wickednesses commit the same. Now holy men hear with forbearance, even what they never remember to have done, although those wrong things which they see to be urged against themselves, they know to be committed by their very accusers; and when they cannot correct them by preaching, they suffer them by submitting to the evil, that if they cannot attain the fruit of their conversion, they may at least win by those very persons the reward of long endurance. Hence Holy Church says in the words of the Prophet David, *Sinners wrought upon*

*my back* (Ps. 128:3), in that while she puts up with heretics, or lost persons of any kind whom she is not able to correct, she bears upon her back the deeds of those who commit iniquity.”

SAINT GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE OF ROME, + A.D. 603.



*IN OCTOBER we celebrate the feast of the **Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian and the Virgin Martyr Justina**, the dedication festival of the principal monastery in the Synod in Resistance, at Fili in Greece. Saint Cyprian is also the Name Saint of our recently reposed **Metropolitan Cyprian**, and so we begin this month with one of his homilies on the Saints to whom he dedicated his monastery. How beautifully the saintly Metropolitan’s concept of Orthodoxy differs from that of many of our contemporary co-religionists, who either believe it is simply one of the denominations (even if the right one) or, more degradingly, something they were born into as some kind of bonus for having forebears of a certain ethnicity.*

### ***On the Commemoration of Sts. Cyprian and Justina***

(2nd October)

## ***Do We Bear the Name of God?\****

Saints Cyprian and Justina had already received our Lord Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour, had been Baptized in His Name, and, the one as Bishop, the other as Deaconess, were working as missionaries, proclaiming the mighty acts of the living God.

Just like the God-inspired Paul, they were set forth by Divine Grace as “chosen vessels” “to bear the Name” of our Lord “before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9:15), which eventually led them to their glorious martyrdom.

It is a great honour and blessing for a person to “bear the Name of God” before men, to confess the good confession of His Holy Faith, to disseminate the evangelical preaching of the Name of the Triune God, to strive in the good struggle of the Truth and Life in Christ.

It is a great honour, but also a great responsibility. To bear something means that one carries it as a weight and burden, perhaps suffering difficulties, taking pains, concentrating one’s attention, dedicating oneself to one’s work, being in continual watchfulness.

To bear the Name of the Lord is therefore a work of the highest responsibility and a difficult mission. And this is so, since to bear the Name of Christ means bearing the Cross for his Name, being tried in patience and thanksgiving for the sake of Him Who was crucified for us, being crucified with Him, in order to dwell with Him eternally.

Our Lord and God Jesus Christ was and is a King, but a crucified King. His glory is His Cross, His Passion. All of these things indicate that the nature of our journey on earth is one of crucifixion and resurrection, until we enter into the unending glory and blessedness of the Heavenly Kingdom.

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But the question arises: Do we, today, bear the Name of God consciously and consistently? Do we firmly uphold in word and deed the confession of our Holy Orthodox Faith, so that the Divine good pleasure is expressed to us, as it was to the “Angel of the Church in Pergamon”?

These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is; and thou holdest fast My Name, and hast not denied

My Faith (*Revelation 2:12-13*).

The Name of God is the most precious thing that God, in His love for mankind, has entrusted to us: it is our wealth beyond measure; it is our life; it is the great dignity which we received through Holy Baptism. Are we conscious of our Divine calling? “Ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (I Corinthians 1:9).

Those who bear the Trinitarian Name of the True God first and foremost fully live this fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. By means of the holy life of Grace within the Orthodox Church, we slake the thirst of our souls, are made to drink the Spirit of God, and become deified:

As the Father is the spring (*Jeremiah 2:13*), and the Son is called a river (*Psalms 64:10, Septuaginta*), we are said to drink the Spirit; for it is written: “we are all made to drink one Spirit” (*I Cor. 12:13*). Being made to drink the Spirit, we drink Christ: “For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” (*I Cor. 10:4*)

*(St. Athanasios the Great, Bibliothekē ton Ellenon Pateron kai Ekklesiastikon Syngrapheon, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 107-108).*

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The glorious Martyrs Cyprian and Justina remind us once again, on their Feast Day, of this great honour and responsibility. Let us continually examine our conscience to see if we bear the Name of God. And let us take care, calling on their holy intercessions, in a spirit of humility and struggle, worthily to bear the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, so that we might gain eternal life. Amen.

† ***Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili***

\* Source: “Άγιος Κυπριανός, No. 232 (September-October 1989), pp. 89-90.



*THIS MONTH, we also celebrate one of the most beautiful festivals of the Mother of God, her Protection (1st / 14th), and so include this explanation from **Saint Philaret the New Confessor**, who blessed the foundation of our Brotherhood at Brookwood. It answers the question why, on her feast, we read of an event in the Gospels, at which apparently the Mother of God was not even present.*

## A WORD ON THE GOSPEL FOR FEASTS OF THE THEOTOKOS

TODAY, on the day of a feast in honour of the Mother of God, you and I heard the Gospel which is almost always read at the Liturgy on all the feasts of the Theotokos (with the exception of the feast of the Annunciation of the Mother of God). It is a Gospel which we know well, telling how our Lord Jesus Christ visited the pious family of Martha and Mary, how He spoke there, and how after this those responded who heard His Divine word.

We know that this Gospel ends with the words: *As He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which Thou hast sucked* (Luke 11:27), which is to say, blessed is she that was deemed worthy to be Thy mother. And you know the Saviour's response: *Yea, rather* (that is: even more), *blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it* (Luke 11:28). From this it might appear, for those who, if not in a quandary, are in any case wondering, what then will be granted? When they bless the All-immaculate Mother of the Lord, then He Himself affirms that he who hears the word of God and keeps it, is even more blessed!

Here let us recall one other incident, which the Gospel relates. When the Lord was surrounded by the people, and they told him that His Mother and His brethren wanted to see Him, the Lord replied: *Who is My mother? and who are My brethren?* And

stretching out his hand to those who surrounded Him, He said: *Whosoever shall do the will of My Father, Which is in heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother* (Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21), that is, He verified that a spiritual relationship is higher than a blood relationship. In both instances, it might seem that this means that actually those who understand and fulfil His word are closer to Him than His Mother and brethren according to the flesh.

But undoubtedly this is only what seems to be. It is sufficient only to reply to this: and who more than all others received His Divine word and kept it? Of the All-immaculate Virgin Mary it is specifically recorded in the Gospels, that she *kept all these sayings in her heart* (Luke 2:19, & 51). Not one person has so received His Divine word, has so kept it and fulfilled it as did His All-immaculate Mother.

Thus here we must not see a rejection of the blessing of His Mother, but only the raising of the thoughts of His hearers to a more perfect understanding. If His Mother is already blessed because she was deemed worthy to be His Mother, then she is even more blessed than all, because no one has heard, no one has kept as a treasure His most holy word as has the Most Pure Virgin Mary. And for this reason this saying of Christ can in no way be seen as diminishing the spiritual authority and exaltedness of His Mother. The Lord, as always, only raises the thoughts of His hearers from the material to a higher spiritual understanding, and demonstrates that even in this higher, spiritual plane, His Mother is more blessed than all other.

Furthermore, with regard to this Gospel, people often say: “Why did the Lord, when Martha requested that He tell her sister to help her, as would appear to be reasonable, - why did He not assent to her request?” In view of the fact that Martha was *cumbered* and fussing, as it says in the Russian [and English! - *transl.*] text *about many things*, the explanation of this is understandable. What host would not understand it? Who would not receive such

an esteemed and most holy Guest in the very best way? And actually, the good, well-intended and attentive hostess does everything so that her hospitality is such as it should be, but not overdone. And here, the Lord shows her also that *one thing is needful*.

And this signifies, in a fundamental, spiritual way, that a person should be concerned before all else and more than all else not for what cumbered Martha, but for that which concerned Mary. And with regard to secondary, material things, that we need not be concerned for and make efforts in this regard, but only for that *one thing needful*, the one thing which is sufficient.

Often people say: “Look, Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and heard His word. Well, all right, but what would happen if everyone followed Mary’s example, and not Martha’s, all the time and without exception?”

From the Gospel we know that the Lord said that it was not Martha, but was indeed Mary, who had chosen the good part. For this reason, to Martha’s request He responded softly and sensitively, that Mary had chosen the good part which would not be taken away from her - that is, that Martha’s request would not be met.

“But,” they say, “what would happen if everyone followed Mary’s example and refused every task, whether it be of hospitality, just run-of-the mill, or day-to-day? What would we get out of life then?” But this second question seems to be only hypothetical. It is like when they say: “But, what would happen, if everyone went off to become a monastic? What would happen? How would the human race continue without marriage? What would be achieved if everyone was a monastic?” The answer is simple: “Don’t disquiet yourself, they will not all go. The facts speak for themselves. It is sufficient only to check how many monks there are in the whole world and how many are those who have not gone to become monks.” This will never be, and among the human race married life will never cease.

But the lot, which a man himself chooses, to consecrate himself wholly unto God frees him from every earthly attachment and unnecessary cares. This lot is blessed, for it is that which Mary chose. This is the *good part*, which would never be taken away from her by the Lord. Amen.



## Teaching on the Divine Services of the Orthodox Church

BY ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER RUDAKOV

PUBLISHED IN 1890 IN SAINT PETERSBURG

### **The Sacred and Church Ministers**

§ 7. **The Church Hierarchy Established by God.** Jesus Christ came to earth, as he Himself explains, to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). Before His Ascension into Heaven, He entrusted the work of the salvation of the race of man to His Apostles and to all their successors, saying: *As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you* (John 20:21). To effect this He commanded them to preach His Divine teaching (Go ye therefore, and teach all nations... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you [Matt. 28:19]), sanctifying the faithful with the Holy Mysteries and guiding them to life eternal.

§ 8. **The Sacred Ministers.** With the authority given them by the Lord, the Apostles taught people the true faith of Christ; celebrated the Holy Mysteries, and instructed the faithful in their conduct, and in this way they were the original chief pastors of the



Church of Christ. In time they granted that authority to other chosen persons, and established three actual degrees in the hierarchy: the diaconal, the priestly and the episcopal.

**The Bishops** constitute the highest sacred order in the Church. They have received from the Apostles full authority not only to teach and celebrate the Divine services, but also to ordain the priests and deacons and to guide their conduct. As the Apostles enjoined, the Bishops are the foremost teachers, celebrators of the Divine services, and directors, each within his own church [diocese]. To them exclusively there has been granted the right to ordain to the priestly orders, to hallow the chrism, churches and the antimensia. The district which falls under the authority of a Bishop is known as his eparchy or diocese. The Bishops of the more renowned territories and cities are honoured with the title of Archbishop; Bishops of metropolitan or capital cities are called Metropolitans; and the Bishops of the ancient capitals of the Roman Empire, Rome Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem were by the decrees of the Fourth Œcumenical Council given the title Patriarch. In the sixteenth century, the Œcumenical Patriarch made the Metropolitan of the Russian Church a Patriarch, but in the eighteenth, in accordance with the decree of Peter I the patriarchal authority was transferred to the Most Sacred Synod, an assembly of the Bishops. Bishops of populous dioceses often have assistant Bishops appointed to smaller towns; these suffragan Bishops are called Vicar Bishops, because they act on behalf of the diocesan Bishop.

The **Priests or Presbyters** form the second sacred rank after the Bishops. They receive from the Bishop the authority to instruct the people in the faith of Christ, to celebrate the Mysteries (excepting ordination), and all the church services, except the blessing of the antimensia, and they are responsible for the guiding of their flock in life. The Christian community under the oversight of a priest is known as a parish. Those priests who, for their services, have been granted the honorary title *Protoierei*, or Archpriest,

preside when they serve with other priests. Protopresbyters rank above these. Those monks who are also priests are called hieromonks or priestmonks, [and they too may have honorary titles or ones expressing their particular positions, namely Abbot and Archimandrite].

**The Deacons** form the third or lowest of the priestly orders. The word derives from the Greek for a server or minister. The deacons serve the Bishop or the priest during the celebration of the Divine Mysteries, but they cannot celebrate them themselves. During the community services, with the blessing of the priest, they intone the litanies, and read the Gospel and Apostle. In addition to this, they have a duty to care for the sacred vessels, books and vestments. The senior deacons in a cathedral church are called Protodeacons (First Deacons), and the chief deacon with the Bishop is called the Archdeacon. Monks who are also in the order of the diaconate are called hierodeacons.

§ 9. **The Church Ministers** [In Western terminology, those in minor orders]. Besides the three priestly orders, there are a further three lower ministries: subdeacons, readers, and sextons. The subdeacons assist at hierarchal services. The readers have as their main duty to read and chant during the Divine services. The sextons call the faithful to church by ringing the bells, and help the others by lighting the candles in the church.

These three orders are together called the church ministers, and they are appointed to their ministry by the laying-on of hands of the Bishop. This laying-on of hands is not an imparting of the Holy Spirit in the way that it is in the ordination of the priestly orders, but is only a blessing. All the church ministers with the choir members are deemed to be ministers in the church, because of the service that they give for the rest of the people there.

*... to be continued with "The Sacred Things"*



# THE COMING MONTH

IN OCTOBER there are no Great Feasts and no fasting periods, but the month opens with a celebration which popularly ranks almost as a Great Feast, that of the **Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos** (1st/14th). The exact historical circumstances of the origin of this festival are lost in the mists of time. We know that the Imperial City of Constantinople was being besieged by pagan forces, and the faithful had gathered in the Church of Blachernae to beseech the Mother of God to deliver them. During the night, the Fool-for-Christ, Saint Andrew, beheld a vision of the Mother of God standing above the congregation, praying for them and protecting them by holding her veil or shawl over them. She was flanked by Sts John the Baptist and John the Theologian, and a multitude of the heavenly host. St Andrew pointed this vision out to a young boy who stood near him, who later grew to manhood and is known to us as St Epiphanius. The city was delivered from danger and the festival was inaugurated as a thanksgiving. Because of the way in which the Mother of God appeared, the feast is sometimes known as the Protecting Veil or the Intercession of the Virgin. In the twelfth century a church dedicated to this festival was built by the Russian Prince, St Andrew Bogoliubsky, and from that time the festival became extremely popular among all the peoples of what became the Russian Empire, and especially so among the Cossacks. It came to take on a wider significance, being a day on which we rejoice not only in the deliverance of the Imperial City but also our deliverance from all dangers and harm through the intercessions of the All-Pure One. Remarkably among the Greek peoples the feast, until relatively modern times, did not enjoy such great devotion. I remember hearing a sermon by a Russian priest in the States pointing out that this fact itself gives us an occasion for spiritual correction and instruction. He noted that it is believed that the pagans who were besieging the Impe-

rial City when the original vision of the Theotokos occurred were Slavs, from lands which eventually became part of Russia, led by their warlords Askole and Dir. Those being protected were Greek-speaking peoples who considered themselves Romans. The pagan fleet besieging the city was put to flight and destroyed, and thus it was a defeat for the Slavic predecessors of the Russians, and yet has become a beloved feast among them. This, he felt, was instructive, when an over-emphasis on ethnicity or nationalism is such a bane within the Orthodox world, and it indicates to us a better perspective, one where spiritual truths take precedence over the naturally limited and temporal concerns of this world and its order.

The second day of the month is an important feast for us, the day of the **Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian and the Virgin Martyr Justina**. It is the name day of the recently-reposed **Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili**, who received us under his spiritual protection, when for conscience sake we left the Russian Synod Abroad, and to whom therefore we owe an immense debt of gratitude for adopting us as his own when we were spiritually orphaned. It is also the name day of the present Acting President of the Synod in Resistance, **Bishop Cyprian of Oreoi**, and the dedication festival of the principal Monastery of the Synod in Resistance at Fili, in Attica, Greece, which is now headed by **Archimandrite Theodosios**, who was enthroned as abbot on 15th/28th July this year.

Among the other Saints in October, we have:-

The **Venerable Methodia of Kimolos** (5th / 18th) was born to pious parents in 1861, the third child of a family of eight. She was baptized Eirene and from a very young age she stood out by her piety, modesty and love towards the Church. She longed to devote herself completely to God and the Church. However, as was the custom, her parents decided to give her in marriage and she submitted to their will and married a sailor from Chios. Some time after the marriage her husband was shipwrecked and

drowned on the shores of Asia Minor, and then Eirene felt that this was the time to take up the monastic life. Her spiritual father blessed her good intention. After proper preparation she was tonsured a nun by the then Archbishop of Siros, Methodios, who gave her the name he bore in its feminine form, Methodia. She passed her life following faithfully and with great dedication the precepts of monasticism, staying in a solitary cell at Stiadi, next to the sacred Church of the Saviour's Nativity. Her faith and prayers, fasting, vigil, study and her charity transformed her small cell into a holy place which was literally and metaphorically sweet-scented. She seldom left her cell, and then only to attend the Divine Liturgy and receive the Holy Mysteries, or to assist someone in great need. Her confinement was absolute during the period of Lent; at other times she accepted to counsel women, with whom she communicated through a small window, the only one in her cell, without opening her door. To avoid any temptation, she refused to receive men. St Methodia became known as a healer, receiving the grace to perform miracles. After a life of extreme austerity and after a brief illness, at an age of 47, she reposed on 5th /18th October, 1908. In 1962, on the site of her ruined cell, a small church was built, dedicated to the Merciful Virgin and the Venerable Methodia. Her sacred relics were taken to the church of Saint Spiridon and placed in a crypt therein. In 1991, the day of her glorification, her relics were translated again, to the Sacred Church of the Mother of God the Directress, where they are a source of healing and help to all who have prayerful recourse to them.

**Saint Paulinus of York and Rochester** (10th / 23rd) was one of the second company of monks which Saint Gregory the Great sent to help Saint Augustine in his mission to the English. In A.D. 625, after many years of working for the mission in Kent, he was consecrated as a Bishop and sent to the North to accompany Ethelburga of Kent, who was to marry the Northumbrian King, Edwin. Ethelburga was a Christian but her intended husband was still a pagan, though he permitted Paulinus to undertake mission-

ary work in his realm. When a year later, a daughter, Eanflaed, was born to Edwin and Ethelburga, the King also permitted that she be baptized because he had begun to see the providence of God working in his life. At that time Cwichelm of Wessex sent an assassin north to murder Edwin. He was, however, saved by the timely intervention of one of his thanes. By coincidence, Edwin's daughter, Enflaed, was born that same night and it is said that the King promised to be baptized himself if he was victorious over the assassin's paymaster. Discovering Cwichelm's treachery, Edwin marched on Wessex. Cwichelm and his father, King Cynegils of Wessex, marched north to meet the Northumbrians, probably aided by King Penda. In the ensuing battle, Edwin gained the victory and then honoured his vow to St. Paulinus and was baptized. Thereafter he encouraged the mission within Northumbria, and great numbers were baptized in the Rivers Glen and Swale. At York a wooden church had been hastily constructed for the Baptism of the king, and this was replaced by a finer stone cathedral. Paulinus received the pallium from the Pope confirming the metropolitan status of his see, although this in fact was granted after he had been forced to flee from that see, a fact apparently unknown to the Pope at the time. He consecrated St Honorius as Archbishop of Canterbury in the year 627. However, this promising beginning was suddenly cut short when in A.D. 633, King Edwin was slain in battle. Under the new regime, the Christian mission was stopped, and the widowed Queen returned to her native Kent with St Paulinus again accompanying her. In the north he left the Deacon James, who is also revered as a saint, to care as best he could for the scattered flock. The diocese of Rochester was widowed at that time, and King Eadbald of Kent and St Honorius the Archbishop prevailed upon St Paulinus to administer it, an obedience which he fulfilled until his repose on 10th October, A.D. 644. The princess Eanflaed, whose birth and whose Baptism by St Paulinus had played such a pivotal rôle in the decision of King Edwin to convert, in time succeeded the renowned Saint Hilda as the second Abbess of Whitby, and St Hilda herself had been baptized

by St Paulinus at the same time as the King. St Paulinus was succeeded as Bishop of Rochester by St Ithamar, the first Englishman to be consecrated Bishop, all the previous leaders of the mission to the Anglo-Saxons having been missionaries from Italy.



## POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*“IN LOOKING towards Orthodoxy, I have seen several explanations of the way that people make the sign of the Cross, which is different from our way [R.C.], but it seems that the way the priest blesses the people is also different. Can you explain how and why, please?” - P.M., Kirkby, Merseyside.*

I AM NO EXPERT in the minutiae of liturgical practice, but there seem to be three major differences between the Orthodox practice and that of the western denominations.

\* First of all, in the Orthodox practice the priest holds his fingers in a special way, whereas I believe the Roman Catholics and Anglicans simply hold the palm and fingers straight. (From the media, it appears that the Pope merely waving at people is now considered a blessing, with no attempt on his part to make any semblance of a Cross, but this is perhaps a different matter). An Orthodox priest holds his index finger straight, the second and little fingers slightly curved in, and the third finger inclined even more to the palm and crossed by the thumb. Looking at this from the index finger end of the hand the fingers then spell out ICXC, the first and last letters (in Greek) of the words Jesus Christ (Iesus Christos - the “Ch” being one letter in Greek which is the same as our X, and the “s” like our “c”). This is to signify that the blessing is from our Saviour, and not from the priest.

\* Secondly, the blessing is made with two movements, a vertical downstroke and a horizontal cross-stroke from left to right (right to left of the recipient). This differs from the Latin practice of making a third movement back from right to left.

\* Thirdly, and I am not sure if this is received practice or simply common usage, but it appears that among the Latins (I use the term to include the Anglicans in this instance), the priest will strike a pose and make a big Cross over whatever or whomever he is blessing, as if to emphasise: *I am blessing you!* The Orthodox priest, when blessing with the hand, usually makes only a small one, not drawing attention to himself. Again this is to indicate that the celebrant is not himself bestowing the blessing. He is not the source of the blessing, but is simply a minister imparting Christ's blessing, recognizing his unworthiness to do so. And in truth the blessing does not depend on the expanses of air the hand might travel through.

One is reminded of a custom which grew up in the harshest days of persecution of the Orthodox in Soviet Russia. It is a pious custom of the Orthodox to make the sign of the Cross when passing a church or a cemetery. On public transport in Soviet Russia, this would have been noticed and might have had very serious and dangerous repercussions, and so some would make the sign of the Cross secretly, simply by touching the back of their teeth with the tip of the tongue at the four points of the Cross. This might sound rather silly, but I am sure that their good intention was mercifully received by the Merciful God, and it is to such people that we owe the safeguarding of piety under the harshest period of persecution the Church has ever experienced. Theirs too was a little Cross, but it brought a blessing.

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“TO BEAR a grudge and pray means to sow seed on the sea and expect a harvest.”

VEN. ISAAC THE SYRIAN, SIXTH CENTURY



# NEWS SECTION

## *NUNS AND ORPHANS TRAPPED*

THE GREEK ORTHODOX PATRIARCHATE of Antioch has recently announced that about forty nuns and orphans are trapped inside the **Monastery of Saint Thekla at Maloula** due to the ongoing clashes between the Syrian army and opposition fighters. The Patriarchate stated that “the Monastery of Saint Takla [Thekla] in the town of Maloula, which is a civilized milestone for all Syrian citizens and which is at the same time, a civilized heritage of the human society as a whole, lives difficult and painful days for being located at the crossroad of fire exchange, which makes providing support a difficult and risky process” [*English translation as in their internet report*]. The Syrian Red Crescent, the International Red Cross and all the governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with humanitarian affairs, have been urged to work for “providing the necessary supply for the monastery residents, nuns and orphans.” Maloula, the internet report says, is known for ancient Christian monuments and caves hewn into the rock, and is located about 55 kilometres north of Damascus. It is one of the oldest Christian areas in the world and the only place where the inhabitants still speak Aramaic, the language believed to have been spoken by our Saviour.

## *VISIT TO OUR SISTER CHURCH IN ROMANIA*

A REPRESENTATION from the Church of the **Genuine Orthodox Church of Greece**, under the presidency of **His Eminence, Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens**, whose Synod is presently engaged in talks with our own Synod in Resistance, visited Romania between Monday, 3rd/16th September and Wednesday, 5th/ 18th September. The delegation was headed by His Emi-

nence, Metropolitan Gerontios of Piraeus and Salamis, and made up of His Eminence Metropolitan Chrysostomos of Attica and Boeotia, and His Grace, Bishop Photios of Marathon, Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod. They met **His Eminence, Metropolitan Vlasie, the First-Hierarch of the Church of the Traditional Orthodox in Romania**, and his fellow bishops with whom they discussed issues of common interest. During their short stay, the hierarchs from Greece had the opportunity to visit several of the beautiful churches and monasteries in Romania.

### ***CHAIRMAN OF MP DECR VISITS LONDON***

TOWARDS THE END of September, the chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations (DECR), **His Eminence, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokamsk** paid a brief visit to London, where he had meetings with **Alexander V. Yakovenko**, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Russia in the UK; with the Roman Catholic **Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster**; **Archbishop Antonio Mennini, the Apostolic Nuncio to Great Britain**; and with the **Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby**. While in the United Kingdom, he also attended the consecration as an Anglican Bishop of **Canon Jonathan Goodall** in Westminster Abbey. In March this year, the DECR of the Moscow Patriarchate, headed by Metropolitan Hilarion himself, issued this statement: "The introduction of the institution of female bishops will lead to the elimination of even a theoretical possibility of the Moscow Patriarchate recognizing the church hierarchy of the Anglican church, the communications service of the Department of External Church Relations reported on Saturday." Yet oddly enough, within a week of the Anglican Church in Ireland electing its first female Bishop, the Metropolitan attended the consecration of an Anglican Bishop. It appears that he is giving contrary signals.

# SIR-UK NEWS

## ***SAINT EDWARD'S AUTUMN FEAST***

SAINT EDWARD'S MARTYRDOM falls during Great Lent - he was slain at that time lest he should marry and beget an heir - and so we keep as his principal festival the anniversary of the deposition of his sacred relics here at Brookwood on 3rd / 16th September, 1984. On that occasion, **the Ever-Memorable Bishop Gregory (Grabbe)** presided at the ceremonies. This year we were blessed to have **His Grace, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni** with us for the celebration. He had been leading a pilgrimage to Constantinople, and arrived on a flight from Istanbul at Heathrow on the afternoon of Friday, 13th September. He was met by members of the Brotherhood, and stayed with us overnight. Though he had had a 26-hour day the day before, just after six on the Saturday morning we set out for the **Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden**, where His Grace celebrated the Divine Liturgy assisted by the Brotherhood clergy, and **Father Stephen Fretwell** and **Father Deacon Borislav Popov**. In his sermon Bishop Ambrose spoke of the significance of the Church New Year, which fell on that day, and of the witness of Saint Simeon the Stylite, whose feast day it was, showing how it instructed us not to judge others by outward appearance. In doing this, he told us of an edifying example of a God-fearing lady whom he personally knew in contemporary Greece. After the service, **Mother Vikentia and her sisters** invited everyone who attended to breakfast in their *trapeza*.

Naturally the services for Saint Edward's day, the Saturday evening Vigil and the Sunday morning Divine Liturgy, were celebrated at Brookwood, and the sacred relics of the Martyr were

brought out for the veneration of the faithful. At both services we were joined by friends from other Orthodox parishes, some from the North of England and even from abroad: from France, Bulgaria, and the Russian Federation. At the Vigil, His Grace led the prayers at the *liti* and at the *polyeleos*. On Sunday morning, the church was filled to overflowing. Four languages were used: English, Slavonic, Romanian and Greek, with the Bishop adding in a little French and Georgian. At the end of the Divine Liturgy, the Bishop preached on Saint Edward's support of the monastics and the importance of monasticism for the Church, expressing the wish that other monastic communities would be founded in this country. After the dismissal, we served the Lesser Blessing of Waters and then made a procession around the outside of the church with the sacred relics, while the choir chanted the canon of the Saint. This canon was composed by a pious Greek layman, **Panagiotes Somalis**, a few years ago, approved by the Bishops, and translated into English for us by **Archimandrite Patapios** of the **St Gregory Palamas Monastery in California**. The original service to St Edward, which we chant at the March feast, was composed by the late **Valerie Hoecke** in Church Slavonic, and translated into English by **Reader Isaac Lambertsen** of New York City. So Orthodox of several traditions have worked together to honour the Saint. After the procession, when the faithful had re-entered the church, they venerated the sacred relics, kissed the Cross, and were sprinkled with the newly blessed holy water. Thereafter, we had our usual buffet breakfast, and we owe a debt of gratitude to all who brought foods for that and helped us to feed so many people. Despite having had a long day, His Grace circulated among the people and spoke to them and heard their concerns. At about tea-time, he took his leave of us to stay in London over the Monday and prepare for his flight to Russia very early on the Tuesday morning. We are indebted to His Grace for the archpastoral love he thus showed our community and the blessing which his celebrating with us brought to our feast.

## ***GIFT FROM ROMANIA***

HIS GRACE, **Bishop Sofronie of Suceava** sent us a new semantron, made in the **Sacred Monastery of the Transfiguration at Slatioara in Moldavia**. The new semantron, which is tremendously long, replaces one which was not correctly balanced, and is a very welcome gift. It arrived at Brookwood about half-an-hour before the start of the Divine Liturgy on the feast of Saint Edward itself. We are grateful to His Grace for this generous gift, and to **Paul Chiriac** for bringing it to us.

## ***REPOSE OF THE MONK EPHRAIM***

FATHER EPHRAIM, whom older members of our congregation may remember, reposed at the **Coxhill Manor Nursing Home** in Chobham on the morning of Monday 10th / 23rd September. A native of Torquay, he had been born into a large Plymouth Brethren family, but subsequently became an Anglican, and then Orthodox. He was tonsured a monk by the late **Metropolitan Antony of Sourozh**, but was not attached to a monastery and therefore, sadly, lacked a proper formation. For some time he helped **Fr Benedict Ramsden** in his ministry in helping severely vulnerable people. Later he transferred to the late **Archimandrite David** at the **Brotherhood of St Seraphim of Sarov in Walsingham**, but that also did not work out and he returned to the West Country. After some time, he was pointed in our direction by **Fr Peter Scorer**, and lived within our community for about six years. However, his lack of monastic training within a community made this burdensome for him and for us, and almost 21 years ago to the day he died he left us, and for a number of years we did not hear from him. Subsequently, he contacted us again, and asked to be received back. By this time he was quite infirm and living in sheltered accommodation, and we had no proper means to care for him. On the advice of **Archbishop**

**Mark**, then our Bishop, we accepted him again as a member of the Brotherhood but he did not return to live with us. Instead, as often as he could he would attend services at Saint Edward's. In his last years, even this became difficult and would have been completely impossible were it not for the help afforded by **Vasileos and Ephi Calcanteras**. Father Ephraim's declining health meant that he moved first into a care home and then into a nursing home. He was helped by various friends, and special mention should be made of **Sheila Reynolds** who ran innumerable errands for him and kept a close eye on him and his needs. Deteriorating health also meant many periods in hospital. In the last days of his life, he called asking for confession and Holy Communion, and members of the Brotherhood also visited him early on the Sunday evening before he died and read the prayers for him. Apparently one of the staff at the home, who is Orthodox, seeing his end was approaching read the psalms for him as he died. One also kindly came over to the Brotherhood and left a message in the church telling us of his death; at the time we were chanting Mattins. Hearing of this, at the end of the service we chanted a *liti* for his repose, and when arrangements could be made with the home we went to his bedside and chanted the *pannikhida* for him. At the time of going to press, we are hoping to have the funeral on 9th October n.s., the regrettable delay being due to the funeral directors and not something we would have wished. We ask the prayers of the faithful for the repose of the monk Ephraim and for his rest with the Saints. His monastic path was somewhat irregular, as is often the case in the conditions which we live in in the Orthodox diaspora and particularly in convert circles, but his desire to be a monastic was never dimmed. *Memory Eternal!*

### ***REPOSE OF A PARISHIONER***

ON WEDNESDAY, 5th/18th September, **Andrew Davis** reposed at his home in Fleet, Hampshire. Andrew, whose Orthodox name was **Constantine**, was of Polish extraction and had earlier

lived in Shropshire, where he attended the **Parish of the Holy Fathers of Nicaea in Shrewsbury**. It was here that he rekindled his Orthodox observance. Moving south, he started attending our church, but about two years ago was diagnosed as having cancer. For the last six months he had been unable to attend church, but was ministered to, both at home and at the **Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice in Farnham**, by the Brotherhood clergy. He greatly impressed us in his last days by his total lack of complaint or self-obsession, by his peaceful preparation for his impending death, and his joy and gratitude for any kindness afforded him. May God grant his rest with the Saints and **Memory Eternal**. The funeral service will be held at Saint Edward's on Friday, 4th October, n.s.

### ***MEMORIAL FOR MOTHER PELAGIA***

MOTHER PELAGIA of the **Lesna Icon Convent in France** reposed in the Lord two years ago on the Great Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14th / 27th September, which is also the feast of the Lesna Icon itself. After **Bishop Gregory**, who worked tirelessly for the enshrinement of St Edward's sacred relics, she was undoubtedly the foundress of our community at Brookwood, and for many years a generous benefactress. On the day of the feast, before Vespers, we chanted a *pannikhida* for her repose. May her rest be with the Saints.

### ***VISITORS***

**Thursday, 12th September, n.s.** - A walk around the cemetery was led by **Margaret Hobbs**, and she brought about nine people to visit the church. They stayed in the church for three-quarters of an hour, asking questions about our faith and worship. The group was made up of former staff of the **St Luke's Cancer Centre in Guildford**.

**Sunday, 22nd September, n.s.** - Unexpectedly, five pilgrims from the **Roman Catholic Church in Lewisham** came to visit us and to pray at the Shrine of Saint Edward. Some were Polish and some Irish, and one of the Poles was named Edward after our heavenly intercessor. After visiting the church, they were shown the Exhibition Room and offered hospitality there.

**Saturday, 28th September, n.s.** - **Fr Evfimy and Mother Evfrosinia from the Lesna Icon Convent in France** visited us on the way to their parish in Guildford, bringing with them an enormous hamper of goods, thoughtfully including a selection of cheeses for **Fr Nippon**.

### ***SECURITY CAMERAS***

Security cameras have been installed at the entrances of Brookwood Cemetery by **Brookwood Parks**. Since proper gates were fitted instances of vandalism have declined appreciably, but the cameras will undoubtedly contribute to the security of the whole cemetery and are something to be welcomed.



## **PRACTICAL TIP**

IT IS CONSIDERED irreverent, when standing in church, to hold your hands clasped together below the waistline or to hold them behind your back. It is best to let them hang free at your sides - this also allows you more easily to make the sign of the Cross. Also one should not sit with one's legs crossed, and certainly not cross them above the knee. Such attitudes are deemed casual and therefore irreverent.