

# FROM THE FATHERS

“HE HAS COME upon earth, He Who in the beginning created us from earth and breathed His Divine breadth into us. He has come, *Who giveth to all life, and breath, and all things* (Acts 17:25). He has come, He Who by a single word called all things visible and invisible from non-existence into existence, Who by a word called into being birds, fishes, quadrupeds, insects, and all creatures existing under His almighty providence and care. He has come, He Whom the innumerable hosts of Angels continually serve with fear and joy. And in what humility has He come! He is born of a poor Virgin, in a cave, wrapped in poor swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. Riches, honours, glory of this world! fall down, fall down in humility, tearful devotion, and deep gratitude before the Saviour of men, and share your riches with the poor and needy. Do not pride yourselves on your illusory, fleeting distinctions, for true distinction can only be found in virtue. Glory of this world, learn here, before the manger, of your vanity. Thus, let us all humble ourselves; let us fall down in the dust before the boundless humility and kenosis of the Sovereign of all, of God, Who has come to heal our infirmities, to save us from pride, vanity, corruption and every sinful impurity.”

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



# THE KINGDOM OF PEACE UPON EARTH

*From the Works of Archbishop Jerome  
of Kholm-Varshava*

THICK DARKNESS covered the earth. Town and countryside were seemingly wrapped in sleep; quiet reigned everywhere; only in Judea, in the fields of Bethlehem, the shepherds kept vigil guarding their flocks. Suddenly the heavens opened, a boundless light illumined the earth, choirs of the Angels of God were revealed, and they were singing a new song, hitherto unheard from the depths of eternity: *Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace*. The Old Testament prophets had foretold that with the coming of Christ an *abundance of peace* would dawn forth upon the earth (Ps. 71:7), that *they that murmur shall speak peace* (Es. 29:24). Jesus Christ Himself, completing His Divine ministry on earth, unremittingly proclaimed peace (John 14:27). He called His followers to peace and rest (Matt. 11:28), instilling peace, and He commanded His Apostles to proclaim peace to all (Luke 10:5). Christ's Apostles went out into all the world, and their first desire, their proclamation, was to announce and desire peace for all (2 Ptr 1:2, 2 John 3:1, Phil. 4:7, Col. 3:15). And they clearly taught of the reconciliation of man with God through Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:19, Col. 1:19-20, 22).

But what is this peace? Where is it on earth, when, to the contrary, we see almost continuous wars between one people and another, internal wrangling and instability in governments, disagreements, enmities, and quarrels between individuals? Where is this peace, when not long ago there was a serious war between us and the enemies of Christendom, and when it is necessary to conduct battles with our internal domestic enemies?

Is there no peace on earth? There is.

The peace proclaimed by the apostles of God, announced aforetime by the Old Testament prophets, and proclaimed by the Saviour Himself and His Apostles is, primarily, the peace of God with the race of mankind, the peace of earth with heaven, God's preaching of the forgiveness of sins for man through Jesus Christ, Who suffered for us. *Since we are justified by faith*, says the Apostle Paul, *we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Rom. 5:1). Secondly, that kingdom of peace, which the Angels announced is comprised in Christ's Church and in the soul of the true Christian.

A few words are sufficient to describe the condition of the Jewish people and of the pagan world at the time of the coming of Christ on earth, to show that the life of the race of man was at enmity with God, and was such that it must needs be curtailed through the kindheartedness of God, either by arousing His just judgment unto condemnation, as happened before the universal flood, or by calling upon a Reconciler. Israel had evidently outlived its time. Prophecy had long since atrophied, and princes from Judah had disappeared with the demise of the family of the Maccabees, and now at the head of the Jewish kingdom there was someone foreign, - a sedulous servant of Caesar, and a cruel tyrant who lorded it over the people. It is through the Gospel that it comes about that we can wrestle with not only the religious, but also the communal order, to which this gave rise. Under the influence of sensuousness and cruel officialdom, morality fell to such an extent that immoral actions were considered religious. Art, literature and luxury had never before been so prominent as at the inception of Christianity. Yet, at the same time, the spirit of society had never before been so decadent. The rich lorded it over the little people, having over them, as over animals, the right of life and death. While they were unfair and cruel to the poor, they cringed before the Emperor, proclaiming him a god. Mankind, while reduced to a slavery in which it had no recourse to any basic rights, made a god of a man, who more often than not had all the qualities of a beast. In family life, shamelessness had reached an extreme. For her husband the wife might be used like a slave for the time being to serve his vile passions - and she would even boast of this. Children, who were thought an inconvenience, were thrown out onto the street as unwanted; all of human life was tied up in depravity. By his own abilities man could not rise up from

this fallen state; he could not apprehend the righteousness of God, nor could an Angel or a mediator. It required that God Himself appear, and indeed the Redeemer of the world did appear, Who reconciled the race of man with eternal righteousness. The Lord Jesus Christ brought peace to people. He reconciled the sinful race of man to God through His death upon the Cross; He induced sinful man to abandon his enmity with God and to submit his unruly will to the will of God, which gives the soul such peace, as passes all understanding. He taught people to forgive offences, to desire good for their neighbours, which more than anything else makes firm an inviolable peace. He inspired man to expel from his heart that which destroys peace between peoples - envy, pride, self-interest. He disseminated among all peoples the principle of peace.

*My Kingdom, the Saviour said, is not of this world* (John 18:36). From these words it is clear that it is not in the earthly, human kingdoms, in which, according to the Saviour's prophecy, we shall hear of *wars and rumours of wars* (Matt. 24:6), but in the particular Kingdom of the Grace of Christ, in the Holy Church, that we must needs seek peace. One of the Old Testament prophets directly calls the New Testament Church the place which grants peace. In comforting the Jews, who were mourning over the glory of the first temple, and manifesting unto to them the glory of the second, he says: *Great will be the glory of this house, the latter more than the former, saith the Lord Pantocrator, and in this place I will grant peace, and peace to the soul in providing to its founder, who hath raised up this temple.* The Kingdom established by Jesus Christ on earth, which is called the Church, is not by its communications, nor by its inner character, not yet by its purposes, like earthly kingdoms. The communications of this Kingdom are spiritual - the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. And through these communications it conquered the obstinate Jews, and the faithless pagans, and the wise and the powerful of this world, so as to establish *one flock in Christ Jesus* (see Rom. 12:5), and all, according to the Apostles expression, *in the one Spirit were baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves of free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit* (1 Cor. 12:13). The unity of those who believe in Christ, who constitute the One, Catholic Church on earth, is expressed in all its strength in the gatherings of the Christians in prayer, where Christ Himself quickens them by His invisible presence. The life of the Church

in these sacred, mystical moments presents an image of the life of Heaven. Finally, if we turn our attention to the purpose of the Church on earth, it is impossible not to see her as the most peaceful kingdom. The Church follows one aim - the salvation of her members and life eternal for them. This aim is not earthly, it is foreign to every earthly consideration, and removes all causes and incitements to feuds and conflicts.

The history of the Church of Christ positively confirms the truth that the True Church is a kingdom of peace. What an exalted spirit of love and unity we see amongst the members of the original Christian community! *And the multitude of them that believed, says the Apostle who was an eye-witness, were of one heart and one soul; neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own; but they had all things in common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need* (Acts 4:32, 34-35). Such was the peace in primitive times, such was the original love and unity, which we also see in the spreading of the Church of Christ to all the ends of the universe. All her true members call each other brothers according to the spirit, they pray for each other, they help each other in their physical needs and even more so in the spiritual, they desire for them salvation and eternal blessedness. The barrier of the race of man did not leave the earthly Kingdom of Christ in peace. Aiming to shake it, he engendered conflicts in kingdoms of men, which lead to various kinds of disturbance and instability, and he even openly fired up the pagan world against the believers in Christ, whereupon a whole range of fierce persecutions against them was initiated. Yet the peaceable kingdom of Christ continued unshaken and unmoved throughout all those times. Whole kingdoms and peoples have disappeared from the face of the earth, but the Church of Christ continues and will do us unto the ages.

The Church of Christ, being the true kingdom of peace, grants peace in particular to each and every one who believes in Christ. If a Christian maintains obedience to the holy faith, fulfils the law, which was brought from Heaven by the Son of God, participates in the sav-

ing Mysteries of the Church, then, without a doubt, he has within the Kingdom of God, as the Lord Himself said concerning His followers: *The Kingdom of God is within you*, that is, whoever keeps all that was laid down in Christ's law, and employs all the means that the Church has granted for the salvation of her children, such an one comes to conform with his calling, to harmony and reconciliation with himself, he achieves the required relationship with God. And could there be any higher or more blessed state for the soul on earth, than to experience peace, to abide in peace with one's neighbours and to be found in union with God? No impoverishment or suffering could even besmirch such a state. On the contrary, we know from the history of the Church that holy people even rejoiced in their sufferings, and offered praise in their afflictions, in bonds and in prisons, in the deserts and in caves, in every visible depredation they were well humoured and at peace, such as those people who live with every comfort and good fortune perhaps never experience. Death itself does not terrify the people of God, with equability they await their demise, and with peace they depart unto God, their Saviour.

This is where the peace on earth is, which the Angels of God proclaimed as they announced the advent of our Saviour. The Kingdom of peace is in the Church of Christ and in the soul of the true Christian. Let not your heart be troubled by any disturbance deriving from this world. We have a quieting - this is the protection of the God's Church; we have the possibility of acquiring lasting peace in the soul - this is obedience to the Church of Christ. The Kingdom of Christ is not of this world. In the world wars between peoples and kingdoms never pass and never cease, and it is just the same between individuals, and among those not established in God's Kingdom they flourish and will increase. In the world conflicts will never cease, because the people therein are guided by worldly and temporal inducements and interests, from which enmities and conflicts derive. But if people are wholly convinced of the spirit of faith and of the Church, then they are concerned with spiritual good things, and worldly good things fail to have such a significance as is usually ascribed to them. If society were founded on such concepts, then, doubtless, there would be fewer disagreements and conflicts on earth. One can confidently say that the Christian peoples are more condescending and peaceful than the pagans and the Muslims, and among Christian

peoples the more they are devoted to the Faith and the Church the more they are distinguished by a greater spiritual tranquility, by compliance and by a peace-loving character. In particular that Christian who is devoted to the Church, and follows all her ordinances and precepts, will have greater meekness, condescension and love.

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## ON MONASTICISM

**By the Ever-Memorable Archbishop Averky  
of Jordanville**

*Continuation*

THEN, one after another, the Abbot reads three prayers in which he beseeches God to establish the new monk in His truth, to surround him by the power of the Holy Spirit, and grant him patience, so that he might freely follow the path of the monastic life and be included in the choir of the elect of God.

Scissors are taken and placed on the Gospel Book, which lies there on a lectern before the altar. The Abbot indicates the Gospel Book with his hand and says:

**“Lo, Christ is here invisibly present. See that no one is compelling thee to come to the schema; see that thou are desirous of set purpose of the betrothal of the great angelic schema.”**

The one being tonsured confirms that in actual fact and of his own free will he desires to become a monk:

**“Yea, honourable father, of mine own set purpose.”**

Then the Abbot, wishing to test his firmness and the unshakability of his vow of obedience and that which goes with it, as it were to emphasize that the one to be tonsured assuredly desires the tonsure and requests it of his own will, says to him **three times**:

**“Take the scissors, and give them to me.”**

Each time the one preparing to be a monk hands the Abbot the scissors, kissing his right hand, and the Abbot places them again on the Gospel. *[In some usages, the Abbot throws them on the floor so that the candidate has to bend down and retrieve them].*

Having accepted the scissors back the third time, the Abbot yet again reminds him of the import of the moment of the tonsure, and says:

**“Lo, from the hand of Christ thou receivest them. See to Whom thou approachest, to Whom thou dost promise, and whom thou dost renounce.”**

Then, taking the scissors from the Gospel Book, as if from the hand of Christ Himself, he tonsures the monk in the form of a Cross, saying:

**“Our brother, ...name..., is tonsured in the hair of his head, (as a sign of his renunciation of the world and all that is in the world, unto the cutting off of his own will and all the fleshly passions) in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *[The portion in brackets is not always included - tr.]*** At this time, the Abbot gives him a new name, and continues, **“Let us say for him: Lord, have mercy.”**

The brethren then chant three times to a compunctionate melody, **“Lord, have mercy.”** The new name given the monk is a sign that he has completely broken with his past life, and is beginning a completely new life, wholly dedicating himself to the service of God.

Just as someone entering military service is clothed in a military uniform and all the armour of a soldier, so the monk, as a true warrior of Christ, is now clothed in special clothing, as if in **the whole armour of God**, in accordance with the saying of the Apostle Paul (Eph. 6:11).

Clothing the newly-tonsured with one garment after another, in the hearing of all the Abbot explains the symbolic significance of each article of clothing, and each time he calls upon the brethren to pray for the newly-tonsured, at which the brethren chant three times: **“Lord, have mercy.”** So the abbot explains the meaning of the tunic (hair-shirt), as the tunic of the voluntary poverty, which distinguishes the monastic life. Then he puts on him the **paramandias** (paramand), a square cloth with a depiction of the Lord’s Cross and the instruments of His Passion, with the inscription, **“I bear the wounds of my Lord Jesus Christ upon my body.”** This is a sign that he takes up the good yoke of Christ. The paramand is attached to a cross in remembrance of the suffering on the Cross of the Lord, and as a sign that following the Lord means bearing one’s cross, which is being patient with every affliction and suffering. Then he is clothed in the inner rason, the cassock, as the clothing of rejoicing and spiritual joy. This garment is black in colour, reminding the monk of death and of weeping, nonetheless it is called the “garment of rejoicing,” because the one clothed in it gives a vow of obedience, which leads to life incorruptible, and delivers from corruption and sorrows. Then a leather belt is put on him, as a sign of the “mortification of the body and the renewal of the soul.” Then he is clothed in the **pallium** or **mandias** (mantia), which is called the “robe of salvation,” “the clothing of incorruption and purity.” On the one hand, the mandias (a cloak) represents the protecting and safeguarding power of God; and on the other the strict, unrelenting fulfilment by the monk of the precepts of the monastic life. The mandias has no sleeves, and this shows the monk that he does not have the will, that he does not have hands, to do the works of the old man, the works which are unprofitable and evil. The mandias, with its free fluid movement, depicts the wings of the Angels, and for this reason it is called the angelic clothing, and it signifies that the monk, like an Angel, must always be ready willing to struggle in every Godly endeavour. Then he is given the **kamilavka** (hat), as the helmet of salvation, and over that is laid the veil, - in common parlance both are referred to as the klobuk, - which is a covering, so that **“his eyes should be turned away lest the see vanity.”** He is shod with sandals “in preparation for the gospel of peace, and that he might hasten to every obedience.” Finally, the newly tonsured one is given a **prayer-rope, komboskini** [in Greek] **or**

**chotki** [in Russian], as a spiritual sword, for the customary repetition of the Prayer of Jesus. By counting the knots the monk can fulfil his monastic rule, counting each knot against the number of prayers or prostrations. And last of all, the Abbot places in one hand of the newly tonsured one a cross and in the other a lighted candle, and solemnly brings the tonsure to a close with the following words:

**“Our brother, ... name ..., (or our sister, .... name...) hath received the betrothal of the great and angelic habit, and is clothed in the whole armour of God that he might strongly withstand against the strength and warfare of the principalities and powers, and the ruler of the darkness of this age, against the spirits of wickedness in the places beneath the heavens, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let us say for him, Lord, have mercy.”**

And the brethren chant, **Lord, have mercy**, three times.

After the clothing, the Abbot prays for the newly-tonsured, that the Lord will lead him into His courts, and grant him “unceasingly to dwell upon the good things, laid up for them that love God, and crucify themselves to this life for the sake of the Kingdom of God.”

Then follows the Great Litany with special petitions for the newly-tonsured, and after the priest’s exclamation, just as at a Baptism, they chant, **“All ye that have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.”** The prokeimenon is intoned: **“The Lord is my light and my saviour, whom then should I fear.”** They read the Apostle reading from Ephesians, chapter six (10-17), where it speaks of the reality of the spiritual warfare, and that for it is necessary to be clothed in “the whole armour of God.” Then we read the Gospel from Matthew, chapter ten (37-38, and 11:38-30), which tells how the love of the Lord must exceed that we have for father or mother, and also about the good yoke of Christ.

Then comes the augmented or threefold litany, followed by the chanting of some particularly compunctionate verses, during which the symbolic significance of the tonsure is revealed as the return of the prodigal son to the Father’s house, and during which the brethren kiss the newly tonsured monk and greet him, and then the dismissal.

The newly tonsured monk, without changing his clothes, then stays several days and nights in the church [*the length depends on the practice of each monastery*], occupied in mental prayer, reading and spiritual reflection.

*... to be continued in the next issue.*



## THE COMING MONTH

IN December we spend the first twenty-four days keeping the fast in preparation for the festival of the **Saviour's Nativity in Bethlehem of Judea**, and the last seven days keeping that Great Feast. This year, the feast day itself falls on a Friday, and so the order of the services follows the normal typicon. If the feast falls on the weekend, the schedule of services immediately before and after is somewhat altered to allow for the keeping of the Sabbath and the Lord's Day. But this year we shall have the Royal Hours and Vespers with the Liturgy of St Basil the Great on the day before Christmas Day, with the Vigil for the feast beginning that same evening with Great Compline. This is a service used only on the eve of Christmas and Theophany, almost daily during the period of the Great Lent. It may seem odd to the casual observer that a service so closely linked to the penitential period of Lent should also be chanted at two of the most glorious festivals in the Church Year, but this fact alone indicates how we should approach these celebrations - with repentance, contrition, and compunction.

The Saturday this year (26th December / 8th January) will coincide with the **Synaxis of the All-holy Mother of God**, and on the third day of the feast (28th December / 9th January) the commemoration of the **First Martyr and Archdeacon Stephen** will be kept alongside that of the **Sunday of the Kinsmen of the Lord**. This too is beautiful, for by laying down his life for the Beloved, St Stephen surely himself became a kinsman of the Beloved Saviour - something which we are all called to do.

The Great Feast of the Nativity (Christmas) is kept for seven days, and is followed by the one-day feast of the Circumcision, and then by four days of the Pre-festival of the Theophany. On none of these days do we fast, except the very last, the Eve of the Theophany (5th / 18th January) which we keep as a strict fast in preparation for the Theophany itself. This whole period is often referred to as that of the Holy Days.

The two preeminent saints' days in December are undoubtedly those of **Saint Nicolas the Wonderworker of Myra in Lycia** (6th / 19th), and **Saint Spiridon of Tremython the Wonderworker** (12th / 25th) whose sacred relics are now enshrined on the island of Corfu. Both saints were fourth century Bishops, the one in Asia Minor and the other on the island of Cyprus, and both are renowned for the many miracles which they have worked for the faithful and for others through the centuries. Both were zealots who the Faith who attended the First Œcumenical Council, and both are greatly beloved by the Orthodox. The feast of Saint Spiridon has in the last generation been joined with that of **Saint Herman of Alaska**, whose newly inaugurated commemoration also falls on 12th/25th of the month. The two saints celebrate on the same day. Nearly every detail in their earthly witness differs. St Spiridon lived at a time when the Christian Church was flourishing and was becoming established in the Roman Empire: St Herman lived near the end of the last great Christian Empire, that of Russia. The one was at first married; the other took up the monastic life in his youth. The one was a hierarch of the Church, who attended the First Council, and lived near the hub of the then civilised world: the other was an unordained monk who settled in one of the remotest parts of the world, Alaska. And yet this providential coincidence of their feasts only bears witness to the fact that, despite these outer differences, they shared one spirit, manifested in their humility and meekness, and in the gifts of grace which the Lord granted them.

Another important celebration in December is the **Conception by Saint Anna of the Most Holy Theotokos** (9th / 22nd). This day coincides with the commemoration of the **Venerable Æthelgifu**, the daughter of King Alfred the Great. Seeing her vocation to the monastic state, the godly King founded the monastery of Shaftesbury for her, and she was the first Abbess of that community. It was a century or so later that

the sacred relics of **Saint Edward the Martyr** were taken there, and later enshrined there. Because of this link with Shaftesbury, as at about this time of year in 1988 we had managed to install the security measures in our church which were prescribed by the High Court, we arranged to bring the sacred relics back to our church on this day. On the orders of the court, from the day of the Enshrinement in 1984 they had been deposited on our account in the Midland Bank in Woking. Although the security measures imposed by the Court meant that we were unable to deposit them in the shrine itself and are only able to reverence them there on the two feast days of the Saint, they have ever since been kept secure in our church, and so we celebrate their return to us on this day every year with a **Thanksgiving Te Deum**. In the casket at the shrine itself, we placed a tiny fragment of the relics and the wrappings in which they had been kept when they were first donated to us by the late John Wilson Claridge, who is himself now buried near the entrance to the Brotherhood property, alongside Saint Cyprian's Avenue.

Among the other saints in December we have:-

Our **Venerable Father Patapius of Thebes** (8th/21st) was born in the Egyptian city of Thebes to Christian parents, who raised him in piety. As a young man he took up the monastic life, going out, like so many at that time, into the desert. However, in time he became renowned for his spiritual excellence and people began to resort to him, seeking his advice and his prayers. This disturbed his solitude and quiet, and so he did an extraordinary thing - he moved to the Imperial City of Constantinople, where he could be lost in the hubbub of the city and unknown. He settled close to the renowned church of Blachernae, living in a little hut. There again, paradoxically, he was able to resume his life of silence. However, as the Saviour tells us, a city set on a hill cannot be hid, and the virtue of the saint was once again revealed. One day a youth who had been blind from birth stumbled into the father's hut. Saint Patapius felt such pity for his plight that he prayed for him, and immediately the youth received his sight. This meant, of course, that the saint's anonymity was destroyed, and from then on again people began to come to him seeking cures and prayers. He accepted this as the will of God and, after a life of prayer and healing, ended his course in deep old age. His sacred rel-

ics were venerated in the Imperial City for centuries. After the fall of the city to the Turks, they were taken to a small monastic skete at Loutraki on the Gulf of Corinth and placed there in a cave, in which according to some traditions, the saint himself had lived for a period on his way from Egypt to Constantinople. With the vicissitudes of time the sacred relics were hidden and lost, but they were uncovered in 1904, and are now enshrined in a monastery founded there. At Brookwood, we have a portion of the rason in which his relics are clothed. Through his decision to move to Constantinople, St Patapius has given the Orthodox Christians a great benefaction, because, uniquely among the great fathers of the Egyptian Desert, his sacred relics are in the custody of the Orthodox Christians.



## POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

*A letter to a Protestant lady, R.A., who was trying to proselytize one of the Orthodox Romanian people who attend our church:-*

... When I was a boy and a teenager, I lived next door to a family that were Ebenezer Baptists. They had their own chapel which they and one other family attended. I was an Anglican then, but I sometimes attended their crusades and special occasions that their bigger congregation in the city, some six miles away, held. Now they have dispersed. Of the two remaining daughters of that family, one lapsed completely and the other has become an Anglican - in fact I met her last week, which may be why they came to mind. However, I was also reminded of them by your letters and particularly by the tone of them. Let me explain. I hope it will not be hurtful to you. It is not in the least intended to be.

Your confession, like that of those Ebenezer Baptists, seems to rest on the *sola scriptura* principle, which was first clearly enunciated by the Reformation preacher, Martin Luther, only in the sixteenth century, in his famous assertion: “Unless therefore I am convinced by the testi-

mony of Scripture, or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the Word of God, I cannot and will not retract, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me!” This principle was unknown to the Early Church, and indeed to Christians of any denomination for fifteen centuries. It is indeed contrary to Scripture: see John 14:26; 2 Peter 1:20; and also Matthew 2:23 - because where in previous Scripture was it said “He shall be called a Nazarene”?

But there is another, and more important, reason why your letters reminded me of those meetings I went to in my youth. I was indeed impressed by their knowledge of Scripture and their earnestness (something which seemed sadly lacking in the Anglican Church I then knew), but I was rather repelled by a certain arrogance, and, forgive me for saying so, but I detected a similar strain in your letters. I hope in saying this I do not hurt you, but I think it is pertinent.

In your first letter you write “the early church fathers taught clearly...,” but have you read the early Church Fathers? deeply, thoroughly? I have been Orthodox since the mid-sixties, a monk for the greater part of that time and an ordained clergyman since 1975, but I would hesitate to give the impression that I knew what all the early Church Fathers taught. In this present letter, you write in a similar vein, “I haven’t found any proof in the Scriptures that sustain the belief...”, but again, have you read all the Scriptures, thoroughly, deeply? or are we just to rely on what you have or have not found in them? or your “private interpretation”? And indeed if you have read them, in which language, in which translation? And, with regard to the Old Testament, were you reading the Septuagint version or a translation of it, or the Massoretic (Hebrew) text or a translation of that? The latter is, of course, the result of religious upheaval within ninth century A.D. Judaism with regard to texts. It is not the Old Testament known and used at the time of our Saviour’s earthly sojourn. The Biblical scholar Oesterley says that it is “hopelessly corrupt.” Then, it must be asked, in the light of whose teaching are you interpreting the Holy Scriptures? Protestants classically confessed the *sola scriptura* principle, but in practice they have their own traditions - this is mani-

fest if you enter any Protestant bookstore, where you will find dozens of books and pamphlets of sermons and interpretations of the Scriptures. It is also manifest by the number of sects which sprang up after the Reformation - until recently they would have all claimed to rely on Scripture alone, and yet they came up with dozens of doctrinal dissensions.

For a number of reasons the Orthodox Church does not accept the relatively modern and innovative *sola scriptura* principle. Nor does she see the Holy Scriptures as an authority over the Church - indeed the Church lived for three hundred years with no clearly defined canon of Scripture. Nor do we believe that the action of the Holy Spirit fizzled out at the end of the first century A.D. Rather, we believe that it is still active and living within the Church, in accordance with the unlying promise of our Saviour.

Thus we believe that, although most of the references in Scripture warn against ungodly and man-made traditions, there is also a Holy Tradition - see 2 Thess. 3:6. This augments and interprets Scripture for us. In arguing with X, you have obviously been doing so from the Protestant position, which is natural to you, but you must not expect her to accept that position, which we believe is unfounded and false.

I would also add a warning against arguing about religious matters. It can be extremely dangerous. It can destroy faith, rather than deepen or inform it.

Now may I address the specific points you raise? You say that you cannot understand why the Orthodox Church needs the help of Mary, etc - This is to pose a loaded question. It is not a question of neediness. It is a question of spiritual experience. The experience of the believers throughout the centuries bears witness to the help that the Mother of God bestows. If this experience were contrary to sound doctrine we would reject it, as we do the false claims of shrines such as Lourdes or Medjugorje. But it is not contrary to the Orthodox understanding of glorification - we believe that His Mother is glorified in Christ with the glory which He has - John 17:24.

1 John 2:1 - actually the word in Greek is Paraclete, this to emphasize the oneness of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and thus also the Father,

but the thought continues in the next verse - no word of Scripture can be lifted out of context! - "He Himself is the expiation for our sins." But even assuming that one can translate the word as advocate, that word in itself can be used in different ways, and is indeed by the Orthodox when referred to Christ, His Mother, the other saints, or our spiritual fathers here on earth. Think for a moment. You can say: "I love God," "I love my husband," "I love my cat," "I love dancing," "I love ice cream," - all these statements can be true, but the word "love" is not used in exactly the same way in each sentence!

John 14:6 - It is simply your interpretation that this contradicts the intercession of the Saints. The Son here is speaking of his unique rôle, but others may help us to appreciate that rôle, as you must needs believe that Luther and other Protestant divines have, and they may help us to apprehend that rôle, especially is this true of the Saints, who share in the glory of Christ, who have travelled that way.

1 Tim 2:5 - here I think you are suffering from another translation. You are interpreting the word "mediator" as one who mediates, pleads or intercedes for someone else. St John Chrysostom makes it clear in his interpretation of this verse (which if you really knew the early Church Fathers, you would be aware of!) that the word here refers to his unique rôle in being both God and man by nature. We may become god by Grace, but no one except the Lord Jesus Christ is God by nature and Man by nature. In that, He is the bridge, the link between Divinity and humanity, between the Uncreated and the created, the sole Mediator.

The Saints can't hear us, you claim. On what evidence? Is this a tradition of your denomination? In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), we know that Abraham, who was in heaven, heard the rich man, who was in hell. If the saints can hear those in hell, why not those on earth? If the saints are glorified in Christ (and what other glory could they have?) surely that glory, which is the Grace of God, does not leave them somehow deficient? The Holy Apostle Paul speaking of his future glory says: "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known" (1 Cor. 13:12). Your tradition rather than accepting such a perfecting of the saints, implies that they will somehow be disabled.

This has been a dreadfully long and perhaps for you tiring epistle, but lastly again I would just mention the Tradition of the Church, the evidence of the witness of the Saints throughout twenty centuries now - this bears witness to the efficacy of prayers of the Saints. Nor is it contrary, as Luther would have said, to the “clearest reasoning.” Our God is love, and those that dwell in Him, dwell in love - that love like its Infinite Originator is infinite - it is not confined to one world or the other, to this life or the next, it embraces the whole Church. In our Symbol of Faith (the Creed) we begin by confessing belief in God the Father - “Maker... of all things visible and invisible.” Near the end we confess One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church - that One Church embraces both the visible and the invisible worlds. It is not confined to one or the other, nor is the love of God constrained, that love which His Saints share.

I apologize if any of my words seem harsh or judgmental to you. I am not judging you as an individual. I do not know you, and that is not mine to do, but I have simply, but perhaps clumsily, been trying to point out where what you have been arguing is contrary to “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”



## **NEWS SECTION**

### ***METROPOLITAN HILARION SPEAKS OUT***

ACCORDING to a recent report in “*The Times*,” by **Canon Michael Bordeaux**, the founder of the Keston Institute, **His Eminence Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk**, the Head of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Relations, caused embarrassment to his Anglican host, **Dr. Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury**, at a reception which was given in his honour at Lambeth Palace. The Metropolitan spoke out sharply on what he perceived as the “downward path on which the Anglican Church has slid” since the publication of Bishop John Robinson’s *Honest to God*, in 1963. **Winston Churchill**

once remarked: “I cannot forecast to you the action of Russia. It is a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest.” It seems also to be the key to the present administration of the Russian Church, and Canon Bordeaux, one of the most experienced observers of the Russian Church in this country, continues, “There are, in fact, at least three texts of his [*Metropolitan Hilarion’s*] speech in existence.” It is unclear quite which of these the Metropolitan actually gave. However, in this article and elsewhere, he is reported as saying: “Today the notion of heresy, while present in church vocabulary, is manifestly absent from the vocabulary of contemporary politically-correct theology – a theology that prefers to refer to “pluralism” and to speak of admissible and legitimate differences.” “Indeed, St Paul himself wrote that ‘there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God’s approval’ (1 Cor. 11:19). But what kind of differences was he referring to? Certainly not those which concerned the essence of faith, church order or Christian morals. For, in these matters, there is only one truth and any deviation from it is none other than heresy.” He went on to speak against the ordination of women, same-sex unions, liberalism and relativism. He told his Anglican hosts: “Today the Orthodox-Anglican Dialogue itself has come under threat. It is especially lamentable because this dialogue has had a long and rich history, beginning with the numerous talks at various levels held between Orthodox and Anglicans from the 17th century.” It appears in fact that the Metropolitan spoke forthrightly and truly, and is to be commended for his candour, although one can see that his message, whatever the exact version of what he said, would cause embarrassment.

## ***RELICS OF ST JOHN OF SHANGHAI COME TO ENGLAND***

FIVE CHURCHES in England now have portions of the sacred relics of the holy wonderworker, **Saint John of Shanghai**. Formerly our own church had a portion, as did the ROCA-MP church in Colchester which is dedicated to him. When **St Nicholas Church in Oxford (MP)** was recently consecrated, a portion of the relics was presented to them

by **His Eminence Archbishop Kyrill of San Francisco and Western America** (ROCA-MP). Recently, the Archbishop's vicar Bishop, **His Grace Theodosii of Seattle**, visited London, and on Sunday 1st/14th November he concelebrated the Divine Liturgy at the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral at Ennismore Gardens** (MP) with **His Eminence Archbishop Elisey of Sourozh**, **His Eminence Archbishop Anatoly of Kerch** and the Cathedral clergy. During this visit he gave a portion of the sacred relics to the Cathedral, which the many faithful present there venerated after the celebration of the festive Liturgy. On the Tuesday, accompanied by **Archpriest Maxim Nikolsky** from the Ennismore Gardens parish, His Grace visited the **Russian Church on Harvard Road** (ROCA-MP) where they were greeted by the Churchwarden, **Vera McClenaghan**, and a small group of parishioners, and they gave that parish a portion of the sacred relics, before which those gathered there chanted a *moleben*, led by their choir-mistress **Anna Kobrina**.

## ***BISHOP ARTEMIJE DEPOSED***

HIS GRACE BISHOP ARTEMIJE, one of the foremost theologians of the Serbian Orthodox Church and one of its most outspoken critics of Ecumenism, was replaced as the Bishop of Raska-Prizren by **Bishop Teodosije** by a decision of the Holy Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church at its Autumn Session, 17th -20th November. A statement issued by the Assembly says: "On the agenda at this Assembly were two major issues and a few smaller ones. The two major issues were regarding the restructuring and filling of vacancies in some of the dioceses of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and solving the situation in the Diocese of Ras and Prizren which is burdened with many troubles. Added to these are the uncanonical actions of the former Bishop of Ras and Prizren Artemije and of his sect made up of his followers and supporters, which culminated during the meeting of the Assembly when he arbitrarily left Monastery Sisatovac in Srem, resolutely refusing obedience to the Assembly, explicitly not accepting the decisions of the Assembly and attempting to forcefully take over monasteries and other property of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Kosovo and Metohija, as well as the usur-

pation of hierarchical authority in the Diocese of Ras and Prizren. The vacant diocese of Ras and Prizren was filled with the election of the current Vicar Bishop Teodosije of Lipljana as the new Bishop of Ras and Prizren.” Bishop Artemije has refused to accept this decision and still considers himself the canonical incumbent of the see. His stand has been hailed by some as perhaps the beginning of a resistance to the increasing involvement of the Patriarchate, particularly under its new leadership, in Ecumenism. Some extremist “traditionalists,” however, have accused the Bishop only of self-interest in taking this stand. In response to one such extremist who has taken occasion from these sad events to attack both Bishop Artemije and the episcopate of the Serbian Church, **Bishop Auxentios of Photiki**, one of the hierarchs of our own Synod has written: “Bishop Artemije should be given time and needs our prayers. We have no business calling the Serbian Bishops or him workers of evil and demanding that things change immediately. We should stand in the truth but with brotherly forgiveness and love. Your words confirm what I believe. It will take time for some to awaken to what is happening in Serbia. Fanatics and condemners and people who act without love will not do anything but widen division and discredit the resistance.”



## ***SiR-UK NEWS***

### ***BAPTISM AT BROOKWOOD***

IOANA UNGURIANU, the infant daughter of **Constantin and Elena Lorena Ungurianu** of Harrow, was baptized at Saint Edward’s Church on 13th / 26th November. The celebrant of the Mystery was **Archimandrite Chiprian**. Ioana’s godparents were **Cristian Anghel and Nina Toma**. Ioana was named for Saint John the Baptist and will celebrate her name day on the Synaxis of the Saint, the day after Theophany. May the Lord maintain the shield of her faith unassailed by the enemy, and grant her ***Many Years!***

## ***MARRIAGE AT BROOKWOOD***

ON Sunday, 25th October / 7th November, the newly baptized **Ioan Biosa** and his bride, **Simona Ursache**, were married at our church, immediately after the Divine Liturgy; again the celebrant was Fr Chiprian, who cares for the Traditionalist Romanian Orthodox faithful in this country. May God enable the newly weds to attain to a ripe old age, walking in the commandments of God with pure hearts.

## ***FUNERAL OF A FRIEND OF OUR COMMUNITY***

AN OLD FRIEND of our community, **Milanka Novakovic**, reposed in the Lord on 9th November. Her funeral was served by five priests at **St Sava's Serbian Orthodox Church in London** on Wednesday 17th. Milanka had taught **Princess Linda**, second wife of Prince Tomislav, the brother of the last reigning King of Yugoslavia, the Serbian language, and **H.R.H. Crown Prince Alexander of Serbia** sent a letter of condolence, describing Milanka as "a dear friend of many decades." This message, which spoke of her death as an irreparable loss, was read out to the congregation by **Protopresbyter-Stavrophore Milun Kostic** at the funeral. Despite being confined to a wheel-chair, which she lightheartedly referred to as her pram, **Her Royal Highness Princess Margarita of Baden**, the first wife of Prince Tomislav, and a niece of **H.R.H. Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh**, and her daughter, **Princess Katarina**, attended the funeral, and also later accompanied the mourners to Brookwood for the interment in the Serbian Orthodox Cemetery, adjoining our own. Members of our Brotherhood attended the burial, to bid farewell to an old friend. **Djordje and Milanka Novakovic** used to live at Wokingham and so came to know our Brotherhood, and even when they latterly moved to Hove, they faithfully kept in touch with us. May God grant His handmaiden, Milanka, rest with the Saints, and comfort her husband, Djordje, and all her family in their bereavement. ***Eternal Memory*** to the newly departed handmaiden of God, Milanka!

## ***BLESSING OF A MEMORIAL CROSS***

THE CROSS on the memorial stone of **Mother Serafima** was blessed on Saturday, 24th October / 6th November. This blessing was requested by her cousin, **John Worth** of Sturminster Newton, who arranged for a group of friends to come, including some from **St Seraphim's Chapel in Walsingham**, where for many years Mother Serafima lived, and some from the **Russian Orthodox Cathedral parish in London at Ennismore Gardens**. After the blessing itself, we served a *pan-nikhida* for the repose of Mother's soul, and then enjoyed a modest mercy meal, provided by the Brotherhood, in the Old Mortuary Hall.

## ***VISITORS***

THE 5th FARNBOROUGH BEAVERS visited Saint Edward's on 8th November after our Vesper service. There were about thirty "Beavers," plus the adults accompanying them. Also a group of about twenty visitors, led by **Margaret Hobbs**, of the **Brookwood Cemetery Society**, visited Saint Edward's Shrine Church, on Saturday 27th November.

## ***THE GATES! THE GATES!***

AS VISITORS will have seen, the owner-managers of the Cemetery, **Erkin and Melanie Guney**, have installed new and attractive gates at the entrance to Saint Cyprian's Avenue, replacing the old white bar. This will make the cemetery more secure, and they provide a more fitting approach to the cemetery.

Also on our own property, we have removed the high gates which were included near the new monastic house in the landscaping scheme, and which proved both unnecessary and dangerous, replacing them with a small gate at the beginning of the monastic enclosure. We are extremely grateful to **Daniel Tugulea** and **Dimitri Mihai** for spending a day, undertaking this work for us, and also for affixing a gate to the foot of the steps to the side door of the sanctuary.

## ***THE DRIVEWAY***

WORK on the driveway took rather longer than we expected, but the wait was well worth it. Work was completed on Thursday, 18th November. We were extremely pleased with the excellent job that **Centurian Services of West Drayton** made of it, and for their always taking the trouble to consult with us at every stage of the project. While dealing with the drive and the land drainage, they also renewed the path about the West and North sides of the church itself, and made good some of the things which had proved a problem with the landscaping between the new monastic house and the Old Mortuary. We can thoroughly recommend Centurian. We are also grateful to **Irina Aldersley** for advising about the project, and to **Nicholas Kalnakov** for introducing us to Centurian Services and keeping an eye on how things were going. God bless you all. A job well done!



## **PRACTICAL TIP**

TEACH your children to be almsgiving. Naturally with beggars on the street, one has to exercise a certain reticence in allowing children to approach them, because many are now seriously disordered through drug-taking. However, in safe environments, use every opportunity you can to instruct children that they must give alms. Encourage them to take an interest in the work of charities whose aims are not contrary to our Orthodox Christian beliefs; guide them in this. Even with small children, give them money to put in the alms box in church, so that they learn this practice. All too often one notices that parents tend to do everything for their children, and they then grow up with little notion of being responsible themselves in these areas, just assuming that mother will deal with that - and such an attitude often continues into their mature years!

*“A monk is one who is separated from all and united with all.”*

ABBA EVAGRIUS THE SOLITARY, + 399 A.D.