

The Shepherd

An Orthodox Christian Pastoral Magazine

VOLUME XXII NUMBER 10 JUNE 2002

FROM THE FATHERS

"APART FROM THE SPIRIT, we are strange and distant from God. Thus, our being in the Father is not of ourselves, but it is in the Spirit Who is in us and Who abides in us, and Whose presence in us we preserve by our confession of the Faith."

Saint Athanasius the Great of Alexandria, + 273 A.D.

"WE MUST ASK OURSELVES why He [the Holy Spirit] appeared above our Redeemer, the Mediator of God and man, in the form of a dove [at the Baptism], and above the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire [at Pentecost]. The Only-begotten Son of God is in truth the Judge of all mankind. But who could bear His justice if, before drawing us to Himself in mildness. He had willed to search with harsh exactness into our offences? So for man He became man, revealing Himself to man as gentle. He willed not to crush sinners, but to gather them to Himself. He desired to correct with mildness at first, that there might then be those whom afterward He would save when He came to judge. And so it was fitting that the Spirit should appear as a dove above Him Who came, not now to punish sinners in His zeal, but that He might bear with them yet a while in mildness. But above the Disciples it was fitting that He should be shown in the form of fire, that spiritual fervour might inflame them against themselves, so that these who were but men, and therefore sinners, would themselves punish, through repentance, the sins God had spared through patience. For not even they who followed so closely after the heavenly Master could be without sin; as John bears witness when he says: "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*" (1 Jn 1:8). He came therefore in fire above men, in the form of a dove above the Lord, because we should through zeal for righteousness search out our own sins, which the Lord had mildly borne in patience, and consume them in the fire of repentance. The Spirit is therefore shown as a dove over the Redeemer, as a fire over men, because the more the severity of our Judge is tempered with mildness, the more should our own feebleness be enkindled against itself."

Saint Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome, + 604 A.D.

"JUST AS it is impossible for the eye to perceive sensible objects without the light of the sun, so the human intellect cannot engage in spiritual contemplation without the light of the Spirit."

Venerable Maximus the Confessor, + 662 A.D.

"IN DESCENDING upon the Disciples of Christ, according to the promise, the Holy Spirit confirmed them in the faith of Christ and through His grace poured out upon them the gifts of God. He strengthened them for the preaching and fulfilling in life of Christ's teachings, for the building up of the Church, established by Christ and put into action by the Holy Spirit."

Saint John of Shanghai the Wonderworker, + 1966

THE UNFATHOMABLE MYSTERY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

A Sermon by the Blessed and Ever-Memorable
Metropolitan Philaret of New York & Eastern America,
+ 1985

OF ALL the fundamentals of our holy and saving Faith, the most important and central point is our belief in One God, glorified in Trinity, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is the paramount dogma, the most important point in Christian doctrine, and yet it is the most unfathomable, the least apprehensible for our feeble and limited reasoning. Call to mind, beloved ones, the deeds of the One God in Trinity. It is a great and dread mystery, which is not granted to man to know and which he can never comprehend. "None can embrace that which cannot be encompassed," for it is impossible for our limited small minds to comprehend this limitlessly great mystery. The Blessed Augustine, one of the greatest minds in Christendom, wanted to explain what God is to the people. He retired into solitude on the sea coast, and often wandered along the shore, reflecting on this problem, and he became more and more convinced that it was beyond his powers. And then, one day, when this knowledge was particularly dispiriting him, he suddenly saw that a child on the beach had dug out a hole and was dipping the sea water into it. He asked him: "What do you want to do?" The child replied: "I want to put the sea into the hole!" "You are gullible, my child," Augustine said to him, "if you think you are going to want to transfer the whole enormous sea into that hole!" "And you are gullible, man," he replied, "if with your pitiable little mind you expect to comprehend the mystery of the Godhead!" And he ran away. Augustine gave up his labour, and returned to his own place, and to all who questioned him he would say: "The best answer that I can give you, is what happened to me on the sea shore."

Of course, the Holy Fathers, humbly bowing before the great and absolutely unfathomable mystery, nonetheless loved to use various examples, which, although not explaining the mystery, as it were brought it closer to our understanding. They loved to say, for instance: "Behold the sun before us: the old radiant sun is one thing; the light, which radiates from it is another thing; and yet another is the heat which emanates from it. Yet the sun is one, and just as the light and heat would not be without it, so also without the light and heat there would be no sun." Again, as the Holy Fathers say, man was created in the image of God; how is this likeness of man manifested in our soul? In this way: in that our soul, being one, at the same time is threefold in its mode of living and in the manifestation of that life. For instance, when I read a book, then primarily it is the mind of man which is working. But it may be that my emotions are affected by the reading, and in this instance the power of the feelings of man's heart are manifested. And when a man does anything, then his will declares an interest, for the power of the soul and the will are then acting together. Nonetheless whatever is being considered, whatever is being experienced, whatever is being done, there is one Me, and not three of Me. Thus man has one soul, but its action in the ways its existence is manifested is threefold. With such examples the Holy Fathers showed that by such means they could not explain the deep and incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity, but they did attempt to clarify it a little.

And here is an example from the life of the Great Martyr Barbara. Having given orders that two windows should be made in a building, her father went on a journey; but she gave instructions that three should be made. She ordered the foreman to make three. Her father returned and asked, "Why have they made three, when I said two?" Then his daughter replied: "I said that they should make three, because there are three windows through which the one light of the One Godhead pours forth into the world, illuminating it." This aroused her father's wrath and led to her being persecuted and to her martyric end.

Then let us bear in mind the unfathomable mystery of God, but at the very same time let us also bear in mind that even though it has only been revealed to the smallest degree, we can speak with the words of the Hierarch Gregory the Theologian, who says that while his soul was oppressed by this unfathomable mystery, yet there were the briefest of moments when, like a flash of lightening, it lit up his mind, when "to my delight there came this endless beauty." Remember what the Hierarch said: "If we have an understanding of the good, or of the beautiful, then all this is in the endless and praeter-perfect compass of the Lord our God." Our Lord is limitless good, and complete wondrous beauty, and the truth which withstands the falsehood which stands against it. Let us remember this and thank the Lord that we all belong to the Orthodox Church, which calls us to believe in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Trinity, One in essence and undivided. Amen.

ON SPEAKING IN TONGUES

From "The Truth of Our Faith"

By Elder Cleopa of Romania 1912-1998

LISTEN, brother, and guard well within your mind: true *glossolalia* (speaking in tongues) as a gift of the Holy Spirit can be recognised only when it is combined with the following presuppositions.

1) If someone, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit speaks a language, it should be understood by all those who stand nearby, as happened in the case that we cited from the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:-13).

2) When someone speaks a language among the residents [of Jerusalem, Corinth, etc] that they do not understand, then another gift, the gift of translation of this language into the language of the people is necessary. Without this translation, the foreign language is babbling and lunacy (1 Cor. 14:23).

3) *Glossolalia* was not given to the Church forever, but only in the beginning of Christianity in order to awaken the idol-worshippers and Jews to belief in Christ. This is why the Apostle Paul said that the gift of *glossolalia* would at some point cease to exist in the Church (1 Cor. 13:8).

4) Since we believe that Christ is our true God we no longer have need of *glossolalia*, given the fact that the knowledge of foreign languages by inspiration of the Holy Spirit is a sign (miracle) necessary only for the unbelieving and not for the faithful (1 Cor. 14:22).

5) From the beginning of Christianity *glossolalia* was among the lesser gifts in the Church of Christ, while the others, such as that of prophecy, interpretation of Scripture, of love and the rest, were much greater.

6) It is totally out of the question for speaking in tongues, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, to mean a delirium in a non-existent and incomprehensible language, for then it wouldn't be speaking in languages, but our own [exclusive] language (Matt. 16:17). Moreover, it comes into clear contradiction with chapter two of the Acts of the Apostles.

7) The inarticulate voices, lunacies and incoherent utterances which we often hear from self-proclaimed speakers of tongues very much resemble the scenes the idol-worshippers would make before their idols of Dionysius, as well as with quite a few of the Montanists, Gnostics, Quakers, and later Pentecostals, all of whom the true Church of Christ anathematizes.

Thus, brother, foreign to the Spirit of God is the speaking in tongues of those who think they are grace-bearers and make bold to misrepresent the true *glossolalia*, a gift of the Holy Spirit which existed at the outset of Christianity.

*Taken from "The Truth of Our Faith" by Elder Cleopa,
published by Uncut Mountain Press, Thessalonica,
Greece, and London, Ontario, ISBN 906-86778-0-7.*

Adapted from
**"THE HOUSE OF GOD
AND THE CHURCH SERVICES"**

By the Priest N. R. Antonov
Continuation

§ 41. The Depiction and Veneration of the Holy Cross. Besides the holy icons, our churches are adorned with the Holy Cross and depictions of the crucified Jesus Christ thereon. Of itself the Cross has a symbolical significance, and it was because of this that it was originally depicted and revered. Because of the sacred significance of the Cross for the Christians (Gal.3:1; Phil. 2:8; 1 Cor. 1:17-19, etc), it began to be revered at the very dawn of Christianity. In the second and third centuries, the veneration of the Cross was already so widespread that the pagans called the Christians the "Cross-worshippers." To safeguard their holy thing from being defaced by the pagans, the ancient Christians refrained from depicting the Cross directly on public monuments or even in the catacombs, but they represented it on individual possessions (on household vessels, lamps, books, rings and the like) and they also resorted to combining the name of Jesus Christ with the Cross. The most ancient monogram for Christ was the letter X, which was simultaneously the initial letter of the word Christ in Greek and His Cross. In the third century, the letter I, for Iesus/Jesus, was joined to this monogram, and thereafter other developments of the idea grew. It was only from the fourth century on that by degrees they began to use the Cross freed of its position within the monogram. It then lost its symbolic colouring and began to approach the way it is depicted nowadays. The form of the Cross recalled the letter T, or it was one with arms of equal length +, or X-shaped (the St Andrew's Cross).

The strongest impulse towards the open veneration of depictions of the Cross (without the monogram) came with the finding of the honourable and Life-creating Cross by the mother of the holy Emperor Constantine, the Peer of the Apostles Helena. As depictions of the Cross itself became more widespread, so by degrees did depictions of the Crucifixion. The depictions of the Crucifixion were closely bound up with the symbolical depiction of Jesus Christ as the Lamb. Even in the catacombs, one sometimes finds a Cross under which the Lamb is drawn, and the dove above the Cross. Later the Lamb was shown lying on an altar under the Cross, or standing on a throne also under the Cross. Sometimes streams of blood were shown issuing forth from the pierced breast of the Lamb and flowing into a vessel nearby. In about the fourth century, crosses appear on which a Lamb is shown in the place where the Crucified Saviour should be depicted. And later still (c. 586 A.D.) one finds Jesus Christ Himself depicted, and so we have the Crucifix. The most ancient depictions of Jesus Christ and the two thieves occur no earlier than the fifth or sixth centuries, as appears from an ancient painting which has now become known (in one of the old churches in Rome).

§ 42. The Persons Who Celebrate the Divine Services. Orthodox Divine services are served by special people, ordained for this purpose by the Lord, and they constitute the hierarchy or the clergy. According to the will of God, Moses chose and consecrated special people, High Priests, priests and levites. The first High Priest was Moses' brother, Aaron, and the first priests were the sons of Aaron. They were assisted in the offering of the sacrifices by the levites. People who wanted to celebrate the services without the blessing of God were punished (for example: Kore, Dathan and Abiron). So it was that the Old Testament hierarchy was set up with three orders. In the New Testament, from the multitude of His followers, Jesus Christ chose the Twelve Apostles and gave them the right to teach, to serve the Divine services and to guide the faithful (Matt. 28:19). In time the Apostles handed on their power to other chosen people, establishing them, as in the Old Testament, in three orders, with the diaconal order as the first among them. Having prayed, the Apostles laid their hands on the selected people and consecrated them to the service of the Church. The ministry of the original deacons was to care for the poor, and to assist the Apostles in their celebration of the Mysteries (sacraments). When the number of the believers increased, the Apostles chose other assistants to preach, celebrate the Divine services and to direct the Church. Those who were consecrated to this ministry, by the imposition of the hands of the Apostles and through prayer, began to be called "presbyters," which means elders. Finally, because the number of Christians increased and spread throughout the various regions of the Roman Empire, the Apostles were no longer able themselves to place deacons and presbyters, and so they inaugurated a new and higher order within the Church, that of "Bishops," to whom they imparted not only the authority to teach and to celebrate the sacraments, but also to ordain presbyters and deacons and to oversee their conduct. The word Bishop (episkopos) means overseer or observer. The Bishop is deemed to be the immediate successor and representative of the Apostles on earth. Thus from the time of the Apostles themselves, the three orders of the hierarchy were established: the highest degree is that of Bishop; the middle one is that of presbyter; and the lowest one that of deacon. All these persons are generally called the clergy (sacred ministers), but they also have particular titles which refer to the importance of their position, their seniority and the importance of the churches in

which they exercise their ministry. Thus the sacred persons in the first order are not only simply Bishops, but sometimes Archbishops, Metropolitans, Exarchs, or Patriarchs. Those in the second degree might be priests, archpriests, presbyters, protopresbyters, archimandrites, abbots, hieromonks, deans, or ecclesiarchs. Persons in the third degree are; deacons, protodeacons, archdeacons, and subdeacons [*actually Fr Antonov writes this, but subdeacons, as their name implies, are not yet deacons, although they are subject to various disciplines under which the clergy place themselves - ed.*]. To understand the significance of all these ranks, one must familiarise oneself with the various duties of the Hierarchy of the Church.

§ 43. The duties of the Hierarchy. Just as Jesus Christ was the Teacher, the Guide in life, and the Initiator of Christian Divine service, so on the basis of His words to the Apostles (Matt. 28:19-20) we see that the duties of the Bishop are these: he is the foremost teacher, director of the Christians, and celebrant of the Divine services within his diocese. As the teacher, he preaches, has responsibilities for the enlightenment of his flock, he oversees the preaching of the word of God and the teaching of catechism in the schools. As guide of the Christian life, he leads the clergy of his diocese and has authority over the lay people in those matters which touch upon the Faith and piety. As celebrant, he celebrates all the Mysteries and in general all the services, and he alone has the right to ordain men in the priestly orders, to consecrate the Holy Chrism and the Antimensia. In the course of time various types of Bishops arose: Vicar (suffragan) Bishops, Archbishops, Exarchs, Metropolitans, and Patriarchs. A Vicar Bishop is the assistant of the main Bishop, equal to him in rank but subject to his authority. A Metropolitan is the Bishop of the capital city or an important (metropolitan) city and the area dependent on it. [*In the Greek usage, every diocesan Bishop is known as a Metropolitan, and the Bishop of a capital city is called an Archbishop. In the Russian usage, an Archbishop ranks above a Bishop and below a Metropolitan, and in the Greek usage above a Metropolitan.*] The Patriarch is the Bishop who has or had spiritual authority over a whole nation or state. There is no distinction at all with regard to grace between a Patriarch, a Metropolitan, an Archbishop or a Bishop, because they all can and do serve the same sacred ministry. With regard to the order of the cathedrals, the authorities, subordinates and the distribution of concerns among his subordinates, the Patriarch was and is the father and head of all, and together with the sacred Assembly [Sobor -the Council of Bishops] he ordains and adjudicates with regard to the Metropolitans, Archbishops and other persons in the hierarchy. In like manner, in his turn and in his province, the Metropolitan is the father and head of the Bishops and the rest of the clergy and he likewise ordains and adjudicates with regard to them; and the Bishop is the father and head of the clergy and laity who are under his direction.

In the Church of Russia from the time of St Vladimir until 1589, the director of the Church was a Metropolitan. From that time until Peter I the head of the church was a Patriarch, and from the time of Peter I (actually from 1721) the governance of the Church was under the direction of the Sacred Synod, that is a council of Bishops. [*In 1917, the Patriarchate was restored with the election of the Patriarch and New Confessor, St Tikhon of Moscow. After his death in 1925, Metropolitan Sergei de facto assumed the headship of the Russian Church. His identification (1927) of the "joys and successes" of the avowedly atheistic Soviet state with those of the Church, led to a*

schism within the Church which has yet to be healed. After an interregnum of nearly twenty years, Stalin permitted the restoration of the Patriarchate again in 1943, at which time the rapprochement between the official Church and the Soviets had reached, in the words of Bishop Kallistos (Ware) "a more or less definite form." Sergei was appointed Patriarch. He died the following year and has been succeeded by Aleksii I, Pimen and Aleksii II, whose elections have not, of course, been accepted as canonical by those who reject the Sergianist compromise - ed.]

One finds that the Bishops are also commonly referred to variously as highpriests, hierarchs, prelates, archpastors and Masters. *[Fr Antonov here includes a few sentences which were applicable in the post Petrine period of pre-revolutionary Russian Church history, which we have omitted - ed.]*

The persons in the second degree are the presbyters, a word which derives from the Greek word for an elder. They are also called priests, and they also have a right to teach, guide and celebrate the Divine services, but within a smaller compass than the Bishops. As a teacher, the priest teaches the Christian faith and piety in schools, in homes and in church, and indeed on every occasion which presents itself. As a guide of the Christians, he is responsible for the conduct of his parishioners, he judges spiritually and in particular he bears witness to their confessions before the Lord in the mystery of repentance; in doubtful instances he may even refer matters to the Bishop for his judgment. As a celebrant, he performs all the services and mysteries, with the exception of those which are reserved to the Bishop. With regard to the grace of the priesthood, all priests are equal to each other, but they do exercise differing responsibilities and duties, and those which have these often have special designations, for instance, protopresbyter (the first among the priests) the chief priest. In the old Russian practice there were only two such: one who headed the clergy at the Imperial court, who was usually called the "Court" Protopresbyter, and one for the military chaplains. *[Now the title is given more liberally - ed.]* The Protopriest or Archpriest is the senior among the priests. The Dean has authority over several other clergy. The Ecclesiarch is a priest or archpriest at the cathedral church, responsible for the church services, the processions when the city clergy are participating, and he makes provision for those things necessary for the church services. Monastics who are members of the second degree of the priesthood have three designations: hieromonks (sacred/ordained monks) are monks who are also priests; Abbots are the heads of monasteries *[in the East, the more usual word is hegoumenos or igumen which derives from the word, to lead]*, and Archimandrites, a word which means the head of the [monastic] enclosure *[- originally these were heads of larger monasteries or even several monastic houses, although as with most of these titles now they are more likely to be honorary rather than defining the exact function of the clergymen bearing them.]*

The deacon is dependent on the priest; he may preach the word of God in church under the direction of the priest, under the Bishop's supervision he may teach catechism in homes and schools; he fulfils the priest's will; as an ordained minister he does not celebrate the sacraments but only ministers during their celebration, reciting the litanies, reading the Gospel, and preparing those things necessary for the Divine service. In addition to plain deacons, there are also protodeacons (among the married clergy) and archdeacons (among the monastic clergy). A monastic deacon who has not been honoured with this special status is referred to as a hierodeacon.

One must distinguish the sacred ministers (those in major orders in Western terms) from the church ministers (those in minor orders) who also assist during the Divine services. These latter fall into three ranks: readers, attendants and sub-deacons.

1) The reader or psaltis reads or chants on the kliros during the services - *[actually there is a distinction between such a reader and one who has been tonsured and is appointed to read the Scriptural lections, other than the Gospels - ed.]*; 2) an attendant is a kind of verger and assists the clergy. He prepares the censer, lights the lamps, carries the candles, rings the bells, and in the case of those who are a little more learned joins in the reading and chanting on the kliros; 3) the subdeacon is the deacon's assistant particularly during hierarchal services. He serves at the vesting of the hierarch, at the washing of his hands, in presenting the dikirion and trikirion (two and three branched candle-sticks used by the Bishop to bless with), and generally assists during a Bishop's service. Desiring to demonstrate the significance of these orders and their duties, the Church has appointed a special rite for the setting aside of readers and chanters. *At that for readers, their hair is tonsured indicating that they are on the first step of the priesthood.*

To be continued with "The Sacred Vestments"

POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

"I NOTICED in your March Shepherd, pp 13/14, that we lost track of St Luke's icon of the Theotokos. On 30 Nov 13 Dec, 1986, I visited an ancient monastery at Kikkos in Cyprus and personally revered that actual icon, a priceless treasure." - P.I., Glastonbury, Somerset.

YOU WERE QUITE RIGHT to spot the oddity of the piece by Fr Antonov regarding the icons of the Mother of God painted by St Luke. I am no expert on these things, but having been in Orthodoxy for more than thirty years and been on both Russian and Greek sides of the fence, I have observed that the Greeks attribute three icons to the hand of St Luke: the Kykkos one which you mention, the Mount Mela one, and one of the Mother of God the Directress, which is probably the Smolensk one in Russia. There are slight variations on this theme.

The Russians seem to believe that there are many more icons which can be attributed to St Luke, and popularly they appear to think that almost all the miraculous icons in Russia were painted by him. I suspect, no more than that, that this may be because in the services to these icons very often it is mentioned that the prototypical icons of the Mother of God were painted by the Apostle. I suspect that this is mistaken, and people assume that the icons to whom these services are written were painted by St Luke.

If I may err by being a rationalist for just a moment, it seems very unlikely that more than a handful of icons from the first century would have survived and even less likely that dozens of them would have turned up in Russia - but odd things do crop up in services. In one, I remember, it is stated that when the lots were drawn for the Apostles to evangelise in various countries, the Mother of God's lot fell to Russia, which is described as her homeland - now surely this is historically impossible! Russia did not exist in any shape or form until at least nine hundred years after she had

departed this earthly life! Poetically Russia might be called her homeland, because of the warm devotion to her there, in the same way that England was called her dowry for similar reasons.

There seems among Russians and Greeks to be an interweaving of the Church tradition with folklore, but this is not to be wondered at. Look at what we have in England with Arthur, Glastonbury, St Joseph of Arimathea and the like.

I admit that the article by Fr Antonov was particularly confusing on this point, and I was surprised that he did not mention the Smolenskaya, but his comment in this regard was in a footnote, and I have the impression that his book is based on a series of lectures that he gave, because at times he goes to some lengths to explain things and at others seems almost to skate over them. In presenting it, although we have taken the liberty of omitting parts and slightly amending other parts so that those who have not grown up in an Orthodox culture might understand them, by and large we have to present what he says. In this instance, like you, I had the impression that he was either mistaken or had not expressed his thought clearly.

THE COMING MONTH

ASCENSION DAY, this year, falls on the last day of May according to the Church Calendar, and the festival is observed for nine days and so the greater part of it falls in June.

That Great Feast is followed by a single day, a Saturday (9th/22nd June), before we enter a second Great Feast, that of Pentecost-Trinity. That single day is kept as a Soul Sabbath, a day on which we commemorate the faithful departed. Thus on this day we pray that the generations of Orthodox Christians who have gone before us to their rest may be blessed through the grace of the Holy Spirit imparted at this season. In the Creed at every Liturgy and in our morning prayers, we affirm our belief in One Church. That One Church embraces both those still struggling in this life and those that have died in all ages past. Our commemorating them and praying for them is an expression of our love for them as our brothers in the Faith. Although, of course, we will not have known the vast majority of them, who died in generations past, yet we assert that, through their Orthodox Faith, they are our kinsmen and beloved of us. At this time also we remember all those who for various reasons, through no fault of their own, were denied the ministrations of the Church at their end: those that died on journeys, in penury, unknown and uncared for. We may hope too that our love will be reciprocated and that they will pray for us, that we make a good and Christian end of our life. In Mattins on this day and during the Liturgy there are special litanies for the dead, and koliva is blessed in their memory. Often the faithful bring bowls of koliva to be blessed, presenting with them lists of the names of those whom they want commemorated.

Many of us who are converts to Holy Orthodoxy perhaps do not have Orthodox relatives who have died, and to that extent might feel that this commemoration does not immediately concern us, because the Church does not include in her public prayers those who have died outside her fold. This is a mistaken view. We need to bear in mind two truths: first and foremost, that our closest relatives are those who are related to us in Christ, our fellow Orthodox Christians, whether we are related to them by blood

or not; and secondly that doubtless our Saviour, seeing our ministry of our love towards those of that Family which is the Church, will doubtless grant a blessing even to those of our loved ones who were not of the Faith.

The Great Feast of Pentecost falls on the fiftieth day after Pascha, just as the Old Testament festival of the same name fell fifty days after the Jewish Passover. Indeed, the name Pentecost means fifty. The Jewish Passover celebrated the deliverance of their people from slavery in Egypt, when they were led out therefrom by Moses and were miraculously led dry-shod across the Red Sea, and the waters were turned back for them. The Christian Pascha, Easter, celebrates the deliverance of the people of the New Israel from slavery to sin and to death, when they were led out therefrom by Christ, Who by His resurrection conquered sin and death once and for all. We become participants in His victory by traversing the sea of Holy Baptism. In the Old Testament dispensation, Pentecost was known as the Feast of Weeks, because it fell a "week of weeks" (seven weeks) after Pascha. It was originally a festival of offering the first fruits of the harvest to God. Later, and it seems that this happened in the early years of the Christian era, it acquired another meaning as a celebration of the reception by Moses of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

Quite whether the Christians followed the Jews in this instance or whether the Jews adjusted their celebration to the Christian observation, there are exact parallels between the two themes that the Jews celebrate in their feast, and the two principal ones in the Christian festival. The Jewish feast celebrates the reception of the Law on Mount Sinai, and the Christian one the reception of the Holy Spirit by the Apostles. The Jewish festival was an offering of the firstfruits of the harvest, and the Christian one inaugurates that harvest which shall continue until the end of the world: the life of the New Testament Church.

In the Jewish calendar Pentecost was one of the three greatest feasts of the year, and it remains so in the Christian one: Pascha is the foremost feast, and Pentecost and the Christmas-Theophany celebration complete this trinity. Because of the importance of this feast, its celebration is marked with several distinctive observances. The churches are decorated for the feast with fresh greenery, and during the services on the day of the feast the faithful hold posies of flowers - these things remind us of the springtime of our spiritual life, spring bedewed by the grace of the Holy Spirit. During the Vigil of the feast, we hear for the first time since Holy and Great Saturday, the prayer "Heavenly King, "which for the rest of the year blesses the beginning of every service in church and our prayers at home. The second day of the festival is kept as Holy Spirit Day, and during the Vespers for this day (chanted on Sunday evening or oftentimes immediately after the Sunday Liturgy) we have three long prayers, read only on this day, which call down the blessings of the Holy Spirit upon us and upon the whole Church. These prayers are called the Kneeling Prayers because while they are being read the faithful kneel with their foreheads pressed to the floor indicating the earnestness of their prayer.

The first-fruits theme is continued in contemporary Orthodox practice with the celebration on the Sunday immediately after Pentecost of the festival of All Saints. The saints are the first-fruits of the sowing made by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Properly this Sunday brings to a close the services in the Pentecostarion, and from this day onward our services are taken from the Octoechos and the Menaion.

We have completed the round of commemorations which began with the Sunday of the Publican and the Pharisee ten Sundays before Easter. Then we were presented with a choice: the way of the Publican, the way of humility, or the proud way of the Pharisee. That choice led to various struggles and contests, but just like the forty year journey of the Israelites in the wilderness, it was also lightened by many blessings. The choice leads, in those who have contested well, to sanctity, to sharing in the holiness of God, to celebrating not for one day only a festival of All Saints, but to celebrating with the saints for all eternity.

That is the course which has been set before us in the Triodion-Pentecostarion period. Then, as if to emphasise that we must apply ourselves to the work in hand, on the very next day after the Sunday of All Saints, we begin the Apostles' Fast.

Because this fast begins on a day determined by the movable (Paschal) calendar and ends on one determined by the fixed calendar, from year to year its length varies. It can be as short as eight days and it can sometimes last six weeks. This year, Easter was very late, and so the fast is very short, lasting only eleven days, although as the feast of Sts Peter and Paul falls on a Friday, that day is also kept as a fast day (fish, wine and oil allowed).

THE FATHER is Light; the Word is Light; and the Holy Spirit is Light, Who was sent to the Apostles in the form of fiery tongues; and thus through Him all creation is illumined and guided to worship the Holy Trinity.

Exapostilarion; third tone Monday of Pentecost

NEWS SECTION

HOLY LAND SITUATION

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT is still refusing to recognise that the election in August last year of Patriarch Eirenaios I, claiming that he is sympathetic to the Palestinian Authority. However, according to a report in the "New York Times," Israeli officials have said that the real reason for this refusal was because of the vast land holdings that the Patriarchate has in Israel including the land on which their Parliament itself stands. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, uncharacteristically liberal in this instance, has stated that he is prepared to accept the election and he has already formally received the Patriarch, but the cabinet has nonetheless refused formal recognition.

Despite the tense situation, the faithful managed to gather in the Church of the Resurrection (the Holy Sepulchre) on Holy Saturday to receive the miraculous Holy Fire from the Saviour's Tomb. A lantern lighted from this flame was presented to the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Ramallah later in the day by Father Theodosios Hanna, one of the Patriarchate clergy. When the siege of the Church of the Nativity was lifted, Arafat was also among those who visited the Holy Place.

The Easter celebrations at Bethlehem were necessarily curtailed this year because of the political situation. Turnout for the traditional processions was cut because of the curfews, and the Paschal Service was held later in the day because of the danger of people moving about in the city after dark. The deputy mayor of the city, Ziad Bandak, has stated that since the uprising about 250 families have left the town. He said: "The problem is that they are the younger families who are looking to the future. And they are the ones who would have produced more children for Christians to remain here."

POPE AND PATRIARCH OF ALEXANDRIA VISITS SERBIA

HIS BEATITUDE, Petros VII, Pope and Patriarch of the ancient Christian see of Alexandria arrived in Belgrade on 9th May for an official visit to the Serbian Orthodox Church. He and his retinue were greeted at the airport by Patriarch Pavle, hierarchy clergy and government officials. Besides the usual receptions and meetings, while in Serbia Patriarch Petros met Konstantinos Simitis, the Prime Minister of Greece, who was also in Serbia at that time. He visited and attended services at Karlovici, Novi Sad, Kovilj and Zrejanin. On the Sunday (12th May) the two Patriarchs concelebrated in the Cathedral of St Sava in Belgrade with a congregation of many thousands. The Patriarch also attended a dinner hosted by H.R.H. Crown Prince Alexander and his wife, Princess Catherine. After the weekend. His Beatitude continued his tour of the dioceses of the Serbian Church, visiting Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina. After bidding farewell to Patriarch Pavle, His Beatitude took flight for Alexandria on 16th May, having spent a full week among the Orthodox faithful in lands which in recent years have seen such great suffering.

BULGARIAN CHURCHMEN HONOURED IN ISRAEL

METROPOLITAN (later Patriarch) Cyril and Metropolitan Stefan, two hierarchs of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church were declared "righteous men" for their courageous stand against Nazism and their protection, during the War years, of the 50,000 strong Jewish population in Bulgaria, who were saved from extermination through the good offices of the hierarchs. The hierarchs' names have been inscribed on the "wall of the righteous" at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial. A delegation of five Bishops from the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church attended the special ceremony at the Memorial on 12th March. While in the Holy Land, on 10th March the Bulgarian hierarchs visited His Beatitude Patriarch Eirenaios I.

SERBIAN HIERARCH DIES

BISHOP DANILO of Budim reposed in the Lord on 20th April this year. He was one of the leading hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church, renowned for his erudition and his traditionalist stance. The Bishop was born in Novi Sad in 1927 and first studied Law in Belgrade. Later he studied literature at the Sorbonne, and in the mid-fifties theology at the Saint Serge Academy in Paris. He completed his formal education, gaining a doctorate at Harvard in 1968. Having been tonsured a monk in 1960, he was consecrated as an auxiliary bishop to the Patriarch of Serbia in 1969. In 1984 he was made administrator of the diocese of Budim and four years later became Bishop there. His learning and his zeal for Holy Orthodoxy attracted great interest

particularly among the young, and his writings have been published both by the Serbian Church and by sister Churches. May his memory be eternal and his rest with the Saints.

BLOOD-STREAMING ICON

PRAVOSLAVNAYA RUS' (1/14 April, 2002) carries a report from Russia on a blood-streaming icon of the Saviour. The icon belonged to 68 year-old Antonina I. Efimova and her 33 year-old daughter Olga Vladimirovna. They lived in the village of Derzhavino in the Orenburg district. On 5th May, 1999, the icon began to put forth a strong fragrance and to stream myron. Fame of this miracle spread and the icon was taken to various parishes in their region and beyond. On Holy and Great Wednesday, 5th April 2000, small droplets of blood appeared on the face and on the right hand of the Saviour, which was held up in blessing. At the same time, the fragrance changed to one of blood. Experts have since established that the fluid flowing from the icon is indeed human blood. Following this fearful sign, the icon has been taken to more than half the dioceses in Russia and numerous miracles of healing have been reported, some of which are recorded in the "Pravoslavnaya Rus'" article.

MORE RELICS OF THE IMPERIAL MARTYRS FOUND?

WHEN in July 1918, relics reputed to be those of the Russian imperial martyrs and their servants were interred at the Sts Peter and Paul Fortress in St Petersburg, those of the New Martyrs Tsarevich Alexis and the Grand Duchess Maria were missing. Now workmen engaged in building a church on the site of their martyrdom have uncovered bones which, it is believed, might be those of these two young martyrs. Despite the fact that DNA samples from the bones interred in St Petersburg matched with living relatives of the Imperial family, many have doubts about the authenticity of these relics and Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow declined to participate in the interment ceremonies. The bones now uncovered are likely to raise further questions especially as they were found at the site of the martyrdom and not, as might be expected, at the place where attempts were made by their murderers to destroy the remains of the holy martyrs.

PAPAL VISIT TO BULGARIA

IT APPEARS that the Pope's recent visit to Bulgaria called forth mixed and confused responses from the Orthodox Church leadership there. On the day before the visit, the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church issued a clear statement that "we wish that all who have separated themselves from the Orthodox Faith to return again to it. This is the message we are sending the Pope." The hierarchs, led by Patriarch Maxim, who had earlier opposed the idea of a papal visit, nonetheless courteously received the Pontiff. Their welcome was reported to be warmer than expected, and an eye-witness reports that the majority of the twelve Bulgarian Metropolitan even kissed the Pope's hand. Metropolitan Simeon, who heads the Bulgarian parishes in Western Europe, even greeted the Pope "as an Apostle"! The Pope replied more soberly saying that he saw his visit as "a sign of a gradual growth in ecclesial communion." While in Sofia, the Pope venerated the relics of the cathedral's patron saint, the Russian Prince Alexander Nevsky (+1263 A.D.), who when he was

invited by Pope Innocent IV to adopt the Roman Catholic Faith for his peoples, replied uncompromisingly: "We know one historic true faith; we hold fast to that teaching, which has been handed down from the Apostles, and we do not wish to accept your teachings."

SEXUAL ABUSE CASES MONITORED

THREE ORTHODOX WOMEN in San Francisco, Cappy Larson, her daughter Greta, and Melanie Sakoda, have founded a service, "Protection of the Theotokos" to monitor cases of sexual abuse by clergy in the Orthodox Church. They were moved to do this when two of Sakoda's children claimed to have been molested by a clergyman at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in the city. They sued the cathedral's administrative body and although the Orthodox Church in America denied any wrongdoing, they are reported to have paid over \$200,000 to settle the case. In a report on the new monitoring service by Mark Athitakis in "Today's News," the women claim that one of the problems is that offending clergymen may be disciplined by their Church hierarchies and rightly deprived of their ministry, but they then join or start "splinter groups" and continue an irregular ministry. The Athitakis report particularly cites the case of Pangratos Vrionis, who was rightly defrocked in 1970 by the Greek Archdiocese when he was found guilty of the sexual abuse of a minor. He went on to establish himself as the "traditionalist"!!) Metropolitan of Vasiloupolis, and as it were started his own Church. Athitakis reports that in April this year he surrendered to the authorities in Queens, N.Y., being charged with molesting a 14 year-old boy.

"ROSSIA"

ROSSIA is the Russian word for Russia; it is now also the acronym for "Russian Orthodox Sacred Sites in Alaska," a new group which aims to care for and restore the Orthodox churches in the state. There are 79 Russian Orthodox churches and chapels in use in Alaska, and of these 38 are recognized as important historic structures by the state and federal governments. Six of the churches were restored between 1992 and 2001 with funds allocated by Congress, but at least twenty more are in need of serious restoration. ROSSIA has been set up to address the needs of these churches and to raise funds for their restoration.

BROOKWOOD NEWS

BAPTISM: On Sunday 6th/19th May, the Sunday of the Ointment-bearing Women, the young daughter of Patrick and Rima Lewis, Patricia, was baptised at Saint Edward's Church. Fr Peter Bauk was the celebrant and the godparents were Athanasios and Eleni Varvainis and Alexander and Valentina Kozunchenko. We ask the faithful to commemorate our new sister in the Faith in their prayers and at the Divine Liturgy.

GIFTS: Mrs Ekaterina Harwood spent Pascha in Kiev this year and returned with an abundance of gifts for our church. She brought a large copy of the wonder-working icon of the Mother of God "Regard my lowliness" which she had placed against the original in Kiev, and a smaller icon, the original of which was painted on the orders of St John of Cronstadt, and which is known as "I am with you and no one shall be against you." She also brought fragments of the cloths which cover the faces of the incorrupt relics of the Kievan Caves saints and portions of their coffins (apparently because of

the damp conditions in the Caves, although the sacred relics have remained incorrupt for centuries, the coffins do rot and have to be replaced), and an altar covering embroidered with the miraculous footprint of the Mother of God of Pochaev and also touched to the original.

GUESTS: Among the guests and visitors that have recently come to Brookwood were Hieromonk Theologos of the Skete of Kerasia on the Holy Mountain Athos, and Fr Gregory Palamas Carpenter, of the Greek Orthodox Church of Sts Demetrios and Nicetas in Plymouth, who joined us for the Divine Liturgy on the Sunday of the Paralytic.

LOCAL EVENTS: On 15th May, Fr Alexis gave a talk at Assembly at the Royal Grammar School in Guildford, and was afterwards asked to take one of the religious Studies classes at the school.

On 23rd May, the Brotherhood was represented at a talk and buffet luncheon given for local clergy at the Woking Hospice.

On Sunday 26th May, we were invited by the American Legion, London Post 1, to attend the wreath laying ceremony in the American portion of the military cemetery at the Pirbright end of the cemetery. Wreaths were laid by the Mayor of Woking, by a representative of the Pirbright Parish Council, as well as by various representatives of the British and American Military and Naval Forces, of the Airfleet and of Veterans' organisations.

PRACTICAL TIP

WHEN DURING the Divine Services we line up to kiss the Gospel Book or the icon of the day, remember that this is a communal act and so be as brisk as you can, make the reverences before you approach, kiss the icon/s or Gospel Book once, ask the blessing of the priest and move away to make the final reverence. Do not wait to position yourself directly in front of the holy thing and hold everyone else up. Do not spend time gazing at the icon; touching it, lingering over it and making a display of piety. Do not take the opportunity to go off and kiss other icons or relics. If you want to do that, come before the service, do it when you first enter the church (if it is at an appropriate moment) or wait till after the service. The occasions when the whole congregation line up to kiss some holy thing are not times for private devotions and prayers but ones of communal worship. So do not at such times stand out from the rest by calling attention to your own particular devotions or demanding that you be given more time and space than others to perform them. In so doing you are separating yourself from the company of those being saved, rather than being one with them.