

The Shepherd

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FROM THE FATHERS

"ANYTHING to do with the Church is like an inner, kindling flame, and looking after it is the best work of all. The humblest task in the church, be it only cleaning the floor, is a nobler work than anything else. Do everything with love and reverence in the house of God. Where else is there more gladness than where the Lord dwells, surrounded by the Cherubim and Seraphim and all the hosts of Heaven!"

"THE SOUL must be provided with the word of God, for the word of God, as Gregory the Theologian tells us, is the bread of angels of which souls partake that hunger after God. Most importantly, one must practice reading the New Testament and the Psalter. By so doing the mind is enlightened and undergoes a divine change."

"TOO GREAT SOLICITUDE for worldly things is natural to an unbelieving and faint-hearted man. And woe to us if we, in taking care of ourselves, do not confirm ourselves in our hope in God, Who takes care for us. If we do not ascribe to Him the visible goods which we use in this present age, how can we expect from Him those goods which are promised in the future? Let us not be such faint-believers, but rather let us *seek first the Kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added* unto us, according to the word of the Saviour."

"WHEN IT PLEASES GOD, says St Isaac the Syrian, to plunge a man into greater afflictions, He permits him to fall into the hands of faintheartedness. The latter produces in him a strong force of despondency, in which he experiences a straightness of soul, and this is a foretaste of hell. As a consequence of this the spirit of delirium comes upon him, and from it thousands of temptations spring forth: anxiety, rage, blasphemy, complaining about one's lot, depraved thoughts, moving from place to place, and the like. If you ask: what is the cause of this? then I will tell you: your negligence. Because you did not take the trouble to seek a cure for them. For there is one treatment for all this, and with the aid of it a man soon finds comfort in his soul. And what kind of treatment is this? Meekness of heart."

"ACQUIRE the Spirit of peace, and thousands around you will be saved."

*Sayings from our Venerable Father Seraphim of Sarov,
the Wonderworker, 1759-1833 A.D.*

SAINT SERAPHIM OF SAROV, one of the most beloved of the Russian Saints, was synodically glorified by the Russian Orthodox Church on 19th July/1st August, 1903. As the centenary of this celebration approaches, the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad has issued the following Epistle:-

**Epistle of the Synod of Bishops on the 100th Anniversary
of the Glorification of St. Seraphim of Sarov**

To the Clergy & Flock of our Russian Church Abroad,
Beloved in the Lord,

CHRIST IS RISEN!

MANY OF US, when discussing the darkness of mankind's contemporary vicissitudes, the evil, hatred, enmity, divisions and temptations which hold sway in today's world, consider that in all of this the "mighty of this world" are to blame, those who do not understand us, do not share our views. Observing events in the world, which everywhere suffers and is the object of malice, we love to point out the sins, errors and failings of those who surround us, our enemies, forgetting that folk wisdom tells us "to look to our own garden." Let us remember the Apostle Paul, who warned the early Christians that, because of us believers, many will not turn to God, will not come to the Church, because they will not see in us true followers of the risen Christ who shine with His holiness, love, humility, loving-kindness; who in their behaviour, words and deeds would establish the kingdom of God in the midst of this sinful world. In our families and communities people do not see that they are supposed to be an example, a living and persuasive preaching of Orthodox Christianity, to enkindle the hearts of men, inspiring them to serve God. And in actual fact, if we look at our life, the life of the Orthodox man is far from resplendent with the virtues of the Gospel. Even though we may call ourselves Orthodox Christians, yet do we not strive to acquire within ourselves the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, patience, peace, a good disposition, mutual help.

Yet let us not despair, brothers and sisters, but let us, to the extent we are able, strive towards God, looking to the example of Saint Seraphim, the wonder-worker of Sarov, and let us try to lead a virtuous life, that men "may by [our] good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (1 Pet. 2:12). It is obvious from the life of Saint Seraphim that he was an example of true Christianity. He lived as a witness to the resurrection of Christ, as one who knew the Resurrected One, and proclaimed this truth by his holy life, embodying in his way of life the words of the Apostle Paul: "Remember the Lord Jesus Who rose from the dead!" By his paschal joy in the resurrected Christ, his holiness of life, ascetic struggles and instructions, he led many who were "alienated from the life of God" (Eph.4:18) to His grace, mercy and love. The saint always taught: "Acquire the spirit of peace (or, save yourself), and a thousand will be saved around you;" and he fulfilled these words in deed. One of the pastors of our Church has related how a certain engineer, a parishioner of his, was working for some firm where enmity and turmoil was rife among the staff, and he did not know what to do, how to withstand this temptation. Later he decided to pray, and results were immediately forthcoming: he not only grew calm himself, but all those with whom he came into contact grew calmer and sensed the sweet savour of his life, for there was within him a peaceful spirit and peaceful prayer. This is our plea: where

there is darkness, where there is sorrow, where it is difficult for men to bear the cross of their life, we must be the light of Christ, His presence. This can be a modest candle, or it can be the light of the sun, like Saint Seraphim, of which his conversation with Motovilov bears witness "concerning the purpose of the Christian life;" but, in any event, we must exert ourselves, actively striving towards God, to be a light for the fallen world which surrounds us, illumining it and making it less evil and dark. We must never forget that, despite our sinfulness and unworthiness, we are still emissaries of God, and He is sending us into this world "which lieth in evil, "that we may sanctify it, may bear unto men the spiritual joy of the victory of Life over death, and to give them heart.

Fathers, brothers, sisters and children, dear in the Lord! With a sense of paschal celebration we greet ail of you, the children of our Church Abroad, all of our compatriots, both those with whom we are in communion and all those with whom we still hope for unity in the Truth, on the remarkable jubilee of the centennial anniversary of the glorification of Saint Seraphim, which will be solemnly marked not only by the whole Church of Russia, but by the whole Orthodox world as well. The Apostle Paul writes: "Remember those who have the rule over you..."(Heb. 13:7). Obeying this order, let us also comport ourselves during the festive divine services in our churches so as to honour with prayers and hymns the memory of our great Russian saint. Let us all try to study his life and meditate on his personality. It is clear that our praises are too inadequate to comprehend the full height of the glory he has with God and his full significance for us. Yet let us praise him, for this is essential and important for ourselves. It is important because, in honouring the saint, we, whether we intend to or not, compare our own life with his life; and clearly perceiving the acute difference between our life and his, we are moved, if only a little, to imitate him. And this brings great benefit to us, which the Apostle Paul also points out when he gives us the direct order, that when we remember our instructors, we imitate their faith and their life. And it should also be said that only such honour shown Saint Seraphim as is, according to the Apostle's command, joined with the imitation of his faith and piety, his active striving towards God, is fully consistent with our glorification of his memory.

Celebrating during this time, so difficult for Russia and the whole world, the glorious centennial anniversary of the ecclesiastical glorification of Saint Seraphim, let us cry out from the depths of our hearts: "Save us by thy supplications, O Seraphim our venerable father!" (from the troparion). To him let us pray that Christ arise in the heart of each of us, so that it may become a Life-bearing Tomb in which the risen God-man will shine forth with divine light, the light of eternity. Let God arise also in the hearts of all the people of Russia! Let the enemies of God and our suffering homeland be scattered! Let Rus' rejoice and be glad in its risen Saviour and in His saint, who calls the Russian nation to repentance, rebirth, return to its historical roots. May the Lord help us to take up his call: "Acquire the spirit of peace..." Let us listen, absorb this, and go forward.

MUNICH: 26 May 2003

IT IS CLEAR from the content of this Epistle that it is addressed in the first instance to people of Russian blood, but the call to follow St Seraphim's teaching to acquire the Spirit of peace is one which all Orthodox Christians can take to heart - ed.

'A FOUNTAIN OF MIRACLES'

UNDER THIS TITLE, in its May-June 1996 issue, "Orthodox America" printed an article introducing a catalogue of the miracles worked through the Wonderworking Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God. The article struck our attention, because it begins with the words, "As a ten-year-old boy, the great Russian luminary, Saint Seraphim of Sarov, was miraculously cured of a near fatal illness after venerating the wonderworking "Root" icon of the Mother of God "of the Sign" as it was being carried in procession through the streets of his native city of Kursk."

Such is the close link between one of Russia's most venerated icons and one of her most beloved Saints, and this year in England, we shall be blessed not only to celebrate the centenary of the glorification of Saint Seraphim with all our co-religionists on 19th July/1st August, but a few days later to have the Miraculous Kursk Icon visit us.

It is anticipated that the Icon will be brought to the London Russian Orthodox Church on Harvard Road at the end of the first week of August. It will stay in London for the greater part of the week so that the faithful there may venerate it and so that it might be taken to the homes of the sick and infirm. For the weekend of 16th and 17th August, it will be present at the Divine services at St Edward's Church here at Brookwood. For the Vigil and feastday Liturgy of the Transfiguration (18th and 19th), it will be at the Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden. Later in that same week it will be taken to Ireland, to Dublin and to Belfast, and will be returned to London for the celebration of the Dormition on 27th and 28th August. For this festival, the dedication feast of the London Church, His Grace Archbishop Mark will also be visiting London to lead the celebrations.

In earlier issues, when the icon has been brought to Britain, we have given short histories of the Icon, which dates back to at least the thirteenth century. Here, as a preparation for the Icon's coming, we will include some of the miracles, recorded in the "Orthodox America" article.

In Yugoslavia: Before the German occupation of Yugoslavia, on the sixth week of Great Lent, 1941, Serbian soldiers came to our Hopovo Convent and installed a radio station. Nearly all of them were Orthodox and remembered what Imperial Russia had done for Serbia [*At that time, a community of Russian nuns was occupying the Convent, as refugees enjoying the hospitality of the Serbian Church - ed.*]. One of these soldiers related to me the following miracle. In our part of Old Serbia, people have great veneration for your Kursk Icon of the Mother of God. When that icon visited our part of the country, many people came to venerate it. Among them was a wealthy man. He came, however, not to venerate the icon but to see it out of curiosity. When he saw the crowd which had come to venerate the icon, he laughed. "What a stupid, uneducated bunch of people," he thought to himself. "They think that a board and paint can work miracles." Laughing, he got into his car and drove away. The winding road went through mountains, skirting cliffs. There were many dangerous turns. By God's allowance, the man's car skidded in making one of these turns; it slid and was about to plummet down an abyss. Suddenly the Kursk Icon of the Mother of God appeared before the unbeliever. "Queen of Heaven!" shouted the man, "save me, save

me!" The car stopped at the very edge of the abyss, as if held by some invisible hand. The man carefully backed up to the road. He turned the car around and went back to the village where the icon was. Prostrating himself before the wonder-working image, the man cried and repented his unbelief. He bought a big candle and put it before the icon and told everyone about the great miracle through which he had been brought to faith. *Nun Barbara, Lesna Convent.*

In Austria: On leaving Yugoslavia in September 1944, the Kursk icon was taken first to Vienna, where it stayed for several months. The city was the target of frequent bombings, but those homes visited by the Kursk icon were miraculously spared. One eyewitness describes attending a Divine Liturgy during one of these bombing raids. "They were bombing Florisdorf, the industrial district of this city of a million inhabitants. It was an overcast day, and everything was dark, as if it were already twilight, but in our souls there was a light, joyous feeling, for with us was the Wonderworking Icon and our beloved First Hierarch [Metropolitan Anastassy]. From the beginning of the Liturgy, the church was filled with people. The distant rumble did not interrupt the service. The First Hierarch and the priests calmly chanted their respective exclamations. The choir sang solemnly. As the explosions from the bombs drew nearer, the church shook and the glass rattled. Nevertheless, everyone remained calm, eyes fixed on the icon and on the meek face of Vladika. God was with us. Almost everyone received Holy Communion. As soon as the Divine Service had finished, the all-clear signal sounded. Holding little copies of the wonderworking icon of our Mediatress and prosporas, we went out into the snow and were met by a horrifying picture. A dark cloud of smoke spread across the sky. Fire bombs had been dropped, and all around everything was burning. The streets were littered with shattered glass. In front of the church and diagonally across from it, houses were on fire. Several bombs had dropped behind the cathedral and next to it. Miraculously, not one bit of glass had fallen out of the windows in the church."

In the United States: Living in New York, I fell ill, seemingly nothing serious. A tumour was removed, but after the operation my blood became infected, possibly through the fault of the doctor. Penicillin and other antibiotics did not help. I felt that the end was coming. My neighbour in the hospital room advised me to pray to the Mother of God and invite the wonderworking Kursk icon to be brought to me. The icon was brought by Protopresbyter George Grabbe [*later Bishop Gregory, who blessed the church at Brookwood and received the sacred relics of St Edward the Martyr there in September, 1984 - ed.*] and Archimandrite Gelassy. With tears I prayed fervently during the moleben, and after the icon left I lost consciousness. When I came to myself, all the sheets under me were covered with pus, which had been running for three days. Prior to this the doctor had said that he had done all he could, and nothing else could be done, yet here the abscess had broken through, all the pus had run out, and I began to recover quickly. *Nadezhda Ritikova.*

From another source, we have this record: - In August of 1974, I, James Parsells, received healing from the Kursk Root Theotokos Icon. In that month I was vacationing [*having a holiday - ed.*] in California. Several weeks before I left for the West coast, I had noticed a small swelling on my right chest. I gave no thought to it and thought it would disappear. However, during the time of my vacation, the swelling had become very painful and had reached almost the size of a golf ball. Rather than return

from vacation, I made arrangements to see a physician in San Francisco. On a Thursday afternoon the doctor examined me and said it appeared to be either a rare infection of a gland or possibly a tumour. He advised that a specimen be taken and the material examined. It was arranged that first thing Monday this be done. On Friday evening, I went to the Cathedral of the Joy of All That Sorrow in San Francisco. To my surprise and delight, the Kursk Icon which is usually in New York was in San Francisco for veneration. In New York I had always gone to the Cathedral for the feast day of the Icon and now here was the Icon. I felt that this was no coincidence - the tropar to the Icon was part of my daily prayer life. Now the Icon was here in my time of need. A general moleben was served before the Icon and I prayerfully venerated it, asking for healing. The next morning when I awoke, the growth in my chest, which had slowly made its appearance for some three weeks had all but disappeared. Monday, when I went to see the doctor, it had completely disappeared. The doctor did not know what to make of it. There has been no reoccurrence, by the healing powers of the Mother of God.

A Troparion to the Icon, tone 4

As an invincible wall and source of miracles,
thy servants have thee, O Most Pure Theotokos,
as thou overcomest our enemies.
We beseech thee to grant peace to our land,
and to our souls great mercy.

Adapted from

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

By the Priest N. R. Antonov

Continuation

§ 75. The Second Part of the Liturgy - The Liturgy of the Catechumens. Immediately after the Proskomidi, the Holy Church prepares the faithful worthily to participate in the celebration of the Mystery of Communion. To prepare the faithful, to remind them of the life and sufferings of Jesus Christ, to explain how and why the life and sufferings of the Saviour were and are saving - these things comprise the main purpose and content of the second part of the Liturgy, the Liturgy of the Catechumens. The second part of the Liturgy is called that of the Catechumens because from ancient times even the catechumens (that is those under instruction preparing to receive Holy Baptism) and the penitents were permitted to attend.

How is the purpose (as outlined above) of the Liturgy achieved? Before we can answer that, we must firmly bear in mind that three means are employed in the Liturgy to achieve its purpose, and these compliment each other. The first is through listening to the prayers which are read and chanted; the second is through observing the rites and sacred processions; and the third is through the secret or mystical prayers of the priests which are inaudible to those attending. For both the prayers that are offered audibly and those which are offered secretly remind the faithful of the character of Christian prayer, of the various benefactions which God grants to man, and, most

importantly of all, the manifestation of the Saviour. Furthermore these prayers bring to mind those qualities which should distinguish those who believe in Jesus Christ, and they call down upon the church and those praying there the grace of mercy. Thus it is here, in the Liturgy of the Catechumens, that the faithful are called to pray especially fervently for the clergy, for the sovereign, for their loved ones who have departed this life, for those in various needs, and for all those people who have not yet turned to Christianity. Bearing in mind the existence in the order of the Liturgy of the priest's "secret" or "mystical" prayers, and taking notice of the fact that these have to be studied if one is to become acquainted with the way the Liturgy is composed, let us press ahead to see how the order of the Liturgy is set up.

§ 77. The General Arrangement of the Liturgy of the Catechumens.

When he has finished the proskomidi, the priest, standing before the Holy Table, raises his hands in prayer to the Lord, and asks that He send down the Holy Spirit upon the sacred ministers, that the Holy Spirit might come and abide in them, and that the Lord also might open their lips to proclaim His praise.

1) The exclamations of the priest and deacon. When he has received the priest's blessing, the deacon comes out of the sanctuary, and stands on the ambon. Then he loudly exclaims: "Bless, Master!" This means: "Bless, Master, the start of the service and the gathering in church of the people who are to take part in glorifying God in prayer." In response, the priest, making the sign of the Cross over the Holy Table with the Gospel Book, exclaims "Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages." This is the first time that the praise of the Lord issues forth from the lips of the priest.

2) The Great Litany. Then the deacon recites the Great Litany, in which he enumerates in detail the various persons and needs, for which we pray and make our petitions (see § 56). The priest stands before the Holy Table in the sanctuary, but he is not taking no part in the general prayer. He prays "secretly," that is silently, that the Lord will look upon this church and the people praying therein, and that in His compassions and great mercy He will accept their prayers. When he finishes his prayer, he exclaims: "For unto Thee is due all glory..." (see § 61).

3-5) The Typical Psalms and Festal Antiphons. So that those who have joined in the prayers of the Great Litany might have a reverent trust in the Lord instilled into them, the Holy Church next employs the Prophet David's psalms (102 and 145), in which the various benefactions of the Lord towards the Jewish people are artistically and poetically depicted. Through the lips and words of the holy Prophet David, the Church calls upon the heart of the Christian to bless the Lord ("Bless the Lord, O my soul..."), Who cleanses and heals our spiritual and physical infirmities, Who fulfils our petitions well and profitably, Who delivers our life from corruption, just as He directed the way for the children of the Jews from the moment of their exodus from Egypt. In these psalms, the Lord is referred to as "compassionate, merciful, long-suffering and plenteous in mercy;" as the One "Who keepeth truth unto eternity, Who executeth judgment for the wronged, Who giveth food to the hungry ... loveth the righteous,... shall adopt for His own the orphan and widow" "and the way of sinners shall He destroy." Thus these two psalms paint a picture of God's benefactions for the race of man, and in part it is for this reason that they are called the Typical Psalms, because

they speak of the things which "typify" the Lord; and because properly they are chanted verse by verse alternately by two choirs, they are also referred to as the Antiphons.

On the Twelve Great Feasts, the Typical Psalms are not chanted, but are replaced by shorter psalmic verses which are alternated with "New Testament refrains" in which the benefactions to the race of man are not gleaned from the Old but from the New Testament. Each of these refrains relate to the specific festival being celebrated. Thus, for instance, at Christ's Nativity, we have: "O Son of God, born of the Virgin, save us who chant to Thee, Alleluia." And on feasts of the Mother of God, "By the intercessions of the Theotokos, O Saviour, save us, who chant unto Thee, Alleluia." Alleluia means "Praise ye God."

6) The Hymn "Only-Begotten Son," - the Hymn of Orthodoxy.

Whether we chant the Typical Psalms or the festive Antiphons at the Liturgy, we always add this triumphant hymn to the second antiphon. In it we commemorate the most important of the Lord's benefactions towards us: the sending of the Only-Begotten Son of God to earth (see John 3:16), His incarnation of the All-holy Theotokos, and His conquering death by His death. It goes thus:-

Only-Begotten Son and Word of God, Thou Who art immortal, and didst deign for our salvation to become incarnate of the holy Theotokos and ever-Virgin Mary, without change becoming man, and Who was crucified, O Christ God, trampling down death by death: Thou Who art one of the Holy Trinity, glorified together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, save us.

[In his book, Fr Antonov gives this hymn in a Russian language version, for those of his readers who would not understand Church Slavonic. Indicating the phrase "without change" in the hymn, he also adds this footnote: "Without change" means that in the Person of Jesus Christ neither was Divinity changed into manhood, nor was His humanity changed into Divinity]

7) The Little Litany. The Typical Psalms or Antiphons are separated from each other by a little Litany, and another is inserted after the Hymn of Orthodoxy. During these petitions, the priest reads prayers asking that the Lord might fulfil the petitions of those present in church unto their profit. During the chanting of the Typical Psalms and especially during that of the triumphantly majestic hymn, "Only-Begotten Son," the religious aspirations of those praying are lifted to a fuller contemplation of God's wisdom and almightiness.

8) The Gospel Beatitudes and the Verses on Them. A truly Christian life does not, however, consist solely in feelings and uncertain emotions; it must carry over into good deeds and acts (see Matt. 8:21). *[Unwittingly, Fr Antonov here succinctly overturns one of the most commonly held and spiritually destructive fallacies of our own generation: that what "I" want/feel is necessarily right/true; leaving aside any need for spiritual endeavour or struggle - translator].* For this reason the Church now brings our attention to bear on the Gospel Beatitudes. Here the portrait of the true Christian is painted in practical reality. They show that the Christian, who beseeches God's mercy, must himself be humble of spirit, must be contrite and weep over his sins, that he must be meek, must seek after righteousness, be pure of heart, kind-

hearted to his neighbour and patient in every trial and even prepared to lie for Christ. Interspersed with the Gospel beatitudes specially appointed verses, called the "troparia on the Beatitudes," are chanted. The number of these depends upon the rank of the feast being celebrated, and these verses, together with the Beatitudes themselves, constitute the third antiphon of the Liturgy. On Great Feasts, as in the case of the first two antiphons, the Beatitudes and their verses are replaced by a special antiphon relating to the specific festival. In many churches nowadays the troparia on the Beatitudes, which are usually taken from the canon, are omitted, which is all the sadder because relatively few people attend the mattins service to hear them there.

To be continued with "The Little Entrance"....

THE COMING MONTH

JULY is a month with no Great Feasts and no special fast periods, but during it, among many others, we celebrate the following saints:-

St Oudaceus of Llandaff (2nd/15th) lived in the sixth century. His father, Budic, had been a prince in Brittany but was exiled to Britain. Here he married the sister of St Theliau, and his wife bore him two sons. Then the prince was recalled to his patrimony in Brittany, and on his return a third son, Oudaceus, was born, whom in thanksgiving for the prince's return to his homeland, they dedicated to the Lord. Oudaceus was sent to Britain to be educated at his uncle's monastery. Even in his youth, he was renowned for his piety and virtue, as well as for his learning and eloquence. As the Elder Theliau approached his end, he appointed Oudaceus as his successor, and knowing that this choice was not made because of their close kinship but because Oudaceus was indeed the most worthy candidate for the episcopate, the people accepted the Saint's decision. Thus, Oudaceus became the third Bishop of Llandaff, and he distinguished his episcopate by love towards the poor and needy, his encouragement of the penitent and his firm stance against all wickedness. He once excommunicated King Meuric, and by this strictness called him away from his cruel and tyrannical ways, bringing him to tears of repentance. When his archpastoral duties permitted, Saint Oudaceus would retire to live in solitude and stillness for periods. He ended his earthly course in the year 564.

St Eugene of Carthage (13th/26th): When in 477 A.D. Huneric became King of the Vandals in Africa, the Church of Carthage had been without an Orthodox Bishop for twenty-four years, because the Vandal rulers favoured the Arian heretics. The Emperor Zeno managed to bring some pressure to bear on Huneric and he permitted the election of Eugene to lead the Orthodox Christians there. However, a few years later, on Ascension day, 483 A.D., Huneric ordered St Eugene to summon the Orthodox to a Council to be held with the Arians the following February. On the feast of Epiphany, the saintly bishop healed a blind man by applying the baptismal chrism to him, as had been revealed to the sufferer in a dream. Despite this manifest miracle, when the assembly gathered a few weeks later the Orthodox delegates were intimidated and treated with ignominy. One, Laetus, was burned at the stake, to terrorise the others. The council ended in confusion, but persuaded by the Arian party Huneric drove the Orthodox hierarchs from the city, threatening anyone who offered them sanctuary

that their houses would be burned. Eking out a miserable existence in their deprivation, a group of these bishops once appealed to Huneric as he set out from the city with his entourage. In reply, Huneric ordered his horsemen to gallop into the group of churchmen and trample them down. Those bishops who remained were later recalled and it was demanded of them that they sign a document presented to them, but whose contents were not shown them, and that then their churches would be resorted to them. Those, who refused, St Eugene among them, were exiled to Corsica, where they were put to hard labour, felling trees and ship-building. The Saint, unable to address his flock before going into banishment, wrote them a letter urging them to remain steadfast in the true Faith and the one Baptism. After some years, Eugene was recalled but was banished a second time for his confession of the Faith in the reign of Gundamund. This time he was sent to Gaul and he died at Albi in Provence, 505 A.D.

The Great Martyr Marina (17th/30th) who is also called Margaret, was born in Antioch of Pisidia. Her parents were pagans, and she only came to know of the Lord Jesus Christ when she was twelve. However, her heart responded to the Gospel message and she made a vow to live in virginity, and such was her love of her Saviour that she thirsted to die as a martyr. This desire was granted her, for the Imperial governor, Olymbrius, decided that the young Marina would make him a suitable wife. However, he was disturbed by the fact that she was now a Christian, and required that before he bestow this honour upon her, she should first offer sacrifice to the idols. This she refused to do, and the enraged Olymbrius order her to be put to torture. Then, covered with wounds, she was thrown into a prison cell. While she was praying there, the evil one appeared to her in the form of a serpent which wound itself around her, but the young maiden courageously made the sign of the Cross, and the serpent split asunder and disappeared. She was then bathed in a heavenly light, and it seemed that the walls and roof of the cell fell away, and she beheld a lofty and brilliant Cross. On the Cross, perched a dove, which spoke to her, calling her "Christ's dove," and assuring her that the day of her joy was near. The next day she was found completely healed, but, blinded by the evil in their hearts, the tormentors subjected her to fresh tortures before dispatching her by beheading her. At the moment of her death, the Lord Himself, surrounded by Angels, appeared to her and received her soul into His Heavenly Kingdom. She bore witness under the persecution raised by the Emperor Diocletian. Because of her contest with the devil, she is sometimes depicted on the holy icons trampling a demon under foot.

POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

"Recently my father was in hospital seriously ill, and we asked Fr. X to bring Holy Communion for him. He lit a candle and laid everything out, and read a short service. Everything was done reverently, but I was rather worried about two things. One was that he brought the Bread (Body of Christ) in a small silver container, which he carried around his neck, but the Wine (Blood of Christ) seemed to be in an ordinary bottle in his bag and not treated reverently. Also the portion which he gave father seemed to be very small. I didn't like to question him, but is this normal practice? - A.M., Hamilton, Ontario.

It seems from what you say that the priest you called did things in the proper way. The wine which he brought would not be consecrated, the Blood of Christ, but

ordinary wine. This does not mean that the sick communicant does not receive both the Body and Blood of Christ, but that you have misinterpreted what he was doing. When the Holy Gifts are prepared to be reserved in church so that they might be taken to the sick when necessary, the consecrated Bread is divided into tiny portions, and then each portion is wetted with the consecrated Wine. Thus each tiny portion has both the Body and Blood of Christ within it. These portions are then dried, so that they may be kept. When the priest takes a portion to a sick person, he carries it in a special pyx, usually in a special pouch around his neck. When he arrives at the bedside of the patient, he pours ordinary wine and hot water into a small chalice and deposits the portion of the Body and Blood of Christ in it. This warm wine softens the particle so that the sick person may easily swallow it. The particles given to the sick are purposely small, perhaps smaller than the ones you might receive in church, because they are being taken to people who are infirm and may have difficulty in swallowing. From what you say, I don't think you have any cause to worry that the priest did anything other than what was right and reverent, but if it still worries you, perhaps you could take the matter up with him.

NEWS SECTION

AN ECCLESIASTICAL EU

AS THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION chaired by the former President of France, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, was completing its work in Athens, a meeting of Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican churchmen was also held there, organised by the Church of Greece. The meeting urged that the European Union should begin a regular dialogue with the churches. The participants were led by the (E)cumenical Patriarch, His All-Holiness Bartholomeos I of Constantinople, Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, and the Anglican Bishop of London, Richard Chartes. Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens, the primate of the Church of Greece, is quoted as requesting that Christianity should be mentioned in the EU Constitution "not only as the creative power of our civilisation, but also as that power which reassures us precisely that the Union will be European." He continued: "The formulation should be such as not to infringe upon religious tolerance, not to be binding upon the state, not to come into conflict with the rights of man, not to constitute a threat or hindrance to the advancement of the non-Christians who are citizens of Europe." An attempt, it would seem, at apophatic politics!

HOLY LAND NEWS

AN INCIDENT was narrowly avoided at Pascha, after disagreements between the Orthodox and the Armenian Non-Chalcedonians. Tensions arose over demands by the latter to have a representative enter the Tomb for the ceremony of the Holy Fire. Israeli police threatened to bar entrance to the church to all but a few hundred worshippers if the two sides did not reach an accord. Their efforts were rewarded when the Armenians agreed at the last moment not to press their demands. Archbishop Aristarchos of the Orthodox Patriarchate said that leaders of his Church would make every effort to reach a long-standing agreement with the Armenians to avoid similar confrontations in future. Apparently, in 2002, members of the rival congregations came to blows at the ceremony.

The Christian Foundation for the Holy Land was formed at Easter this year on the initiative of an American convert to the Armenian Church, Brian Bush. (This bears no relation to the sad incident reported in the paragraph above). The Foundation is concerned about the shrinking of the Christian population in the Holy Land, and points out that 50 years ago, the population of the Holy Land was 25% Christian, whereas now the figure is about 2%.

Palestinian Christians have also expressed concern over a proposal by the Palestinian Authority to make Islam the official religion of any future Palestinian state. Article six of a draft constitution states: "Islam shall be the official religion of the state. The monotheistic religions shall be respected." The fear is that the new state would then be one ruled by Islamic laws. There is some discrepancy between the Arabic and English texts of the proposed constitution, and the Arabic version makes it clearer that Islam would be dominant in the proposed new state.

ROMANIA LISTS MARTYRS

FOURTEEN YEARS after the collapse of the communist regime in Romania, the Romanian Patriarchate is working with other church leaders to compile a list of those who suffered "because of hatred of faith and church" under the regime. They began compiling the list in 1990, and they aim to finish their work next year. It appears that this is not a preliminary to the ecclesial glorification of the Martyrs, as the list contains not only Orthodox, but Roman Catholics and Protestants. In fact, without explaining his reasoning, a spokesman for the Patriarchate, Archbishop Ioan Robu, rejoiced that the list could be done "in an ecumenical way." According to the March 2002 census, 87% of the population said they were Orthodox, 6% Roman Catholics (of both rites), and 1% Protestant. However, the "Martyrs' List" so far numbers 120 Orthodox, 200 Roman Catholics and 20 Protestants.

PATRIARCH'S NORTH SEA CRUISE

THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH is leading a four-day cruise (from 21st to 25th June) off the Norwegian coast to draw attention to the environmental dangers facing the North Sea. En route, the participants, who include representatives of other churches as well as governmental officials and environmentalists, will call at the Ulstein Monastery for a seminar on policy and at Bergen for a meeting on pollution. In recent months the Patriarch, who has been nicknamed the Green Patriarch by the press because of his environmental interests, and who is customarily and erroneously billed as the "Head of the Orthodox Church" or "Orthodoxy's spiritual leader," has undertaken similar cruises in the Adriatic and in the Baltic.

GERMAN ECUMENICAL ASSEMBLY

FIVE CARDINALS, 40 Catholic bishops and dozens of Protestant church leaders led more than 200,000 people in Germany's first ecumenical assembly in front of the Reichstag on 1st June. Numbers of Orthodox participants were also present at this ecumenical prayer service. A report in "The Universe" (8th June) includes a picture in which the Protestant Bishop of Berlin and Brandenburg Wolfgang Huber, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Berlin Cardinal Georg Sterksinsky and Archbishop Feofan Galinskij are shown opening the service. Although Archbishop Feofan, a hierarch of the Moscow

Patriarchate, is not vested, he, like the others, has his arms upraised in prayer with them.

BELFAST MISSION

IN HIS OBEDIENCE as dean of the English language parishes, Fr Alexis visited the Holy Trinity Mission in Belfast on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th June, and there enjoyed the hospitality of Fr Geoffrey-Cassian and Presbyteria Jolan Ready. It was encouraging to see the progress that the Mission had made in the past year. The chapel is now nearly completed and beautifully cared for, the congregation has grown and perhaps even more encouragingly more people are actively taking part: reading, chanting and serving. God grant that such good progress will be sustained in the years ahead.

BROOKWOOD NEWS

New Convert Received: On the Leavetaking of Pascha, Wednesday 4th June, Patrick, the husband of one of our most long-standing parishioners, Justina Trollope, was received into Holy Orthodoxy by the Mysterion of Chrismation at his home in nearby Worplesdon Hill. He was named for St Patrick the Enlightener of Ireland, and early on the Friday morning received Holy Communion for the first time. Rasophor Monk Thomas stood as his sponsor. A former Anglican, Patrick is suffering from a form of motor neurone disease. We ask the prayers of the faithful for our new brother in Christ.

New Icons Donated: Andreas Stratis has kindly given St Edward's Church a hand-painted icon of the Holy Martyrs Sergius and Bacchus (fd: 7th/20th October). We have tiny portions of the sacred relics of these Saints in our church, and have always kept their day with the celebration of the Liturgy. GTI Photography of Knaphill have photographed the icon, and in due time we hope to produce icon prints for distribution. Parishioner Elena Matthews has also given us an hand-painted icon of Saint John of Rila, one of the most beloved Saints of her native Bulgaria. We are also grateful to Peter Woodrow, who made a grave cross for us, which we can use for one of the graves which has not yet been blessed with one.

Bonchurch Mini-Pilgrimage: The Mission in Ryde, Isle of Wight, celebrated their dedication feast on Wednesday 5th/18th June, the day of St Boniface of Crediton. On that day, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at Brookwood, and on the nearest Saturday at the chapel on West Street, Ryde. After the service, we made a short pilgrimage to Bonchurch on the South-east coast of the island. There is an eleventh century church there which replaced an earlier one and marks the place where St Boniface and his disciples landed and preached in the early eighth century. On a gloriously sunny day, we chanted a moleben to the Saint in the nave of the church. After refreshments at a seaside cafe, we hastened back to Ryde to catch the ferry and return to England. Special thanks to the parishioners who arranged the visit, and to Mary Bowler who, unable to join us herself, bankrolled the refreshments!

Printing Department: On leaving to settle in the Far North, Gabriel & Helena Lawani kindly gave us their collator, booklet-maker and guillotine to help us continue with the production of the magazine. We have also bought a new Risograph RN2000EP to do

the reproduction. Helena is still helping us with setting out the format, but otherwise the June issue was the first that we produced ourselves. We apologise if it was in any way rather worse than usual, and hope you will bear with us while we are learning new tricks. For technical reasons, we are having to replace the booklet-maker, and have purchased a new Foldnak M2 from Weston-super-Mare. The total cost of these purchases is in the region of £4,850, but they will enable us in time to produce other things besides "The Shepherd." Naturally, if any readers would like to contribute to these costs, which have rather stretched our resources, donations, made out to Saint Edward Brotherhood, would be gratefully received.

School Visits: In addition to individual visitors and smaller groups, we have had visits to St Edward's Church from the Knaphill School, from Westfield Primary School, who both after seeing the church picnicked on our lawn, and from St Peter's Catholic School in Guildford in the past month.

PRACTICAL TIP

THIS MAY SOUND RATHER OBVIOUS, but strangely it needs to be said: when you approach to receive Holy Communion, open your mouth wide and stay still. Some people seem to play, unintentionally I am sure, cat and mouse with the priest, opening a bit then closing, waiting to the last moment to open, moving, or even pecking at the spoon and risking spilling the Holy Gifts. Keep your mouth wide open until the spoon is placed therein, then close, so that the deacon can wipe your lips, and thus make sure that you do not risk a spillage.