

The Shepherd

An Orthodox Christian Pastoral Magazine

VOLUME XXIV NUMBER 6 FEBRUARY 2004

FROM THE FATHERS

"TO THOSE who recognise the distinction of essences in the one and same hypostasis of Christ, and who attribute to the one hypostasis the properties of being created and uncreated, visible and invisible, passable and impassable, circumscribable and uncircumscribable; and who attribute to the divine essence the properties of uncreatedness and the like, while they acknowledge with word and icons that circumscription and the like properties belong to the human nature, Eternal memory (*thrice*)."

"TO THOSE who understand Moses when he says, 'Take heed to yourselves, that in the day when the Lord God spake in Horeb on the mountain, ye heard the sound of words, but we saw no likeness'(Deut.4:12, 15), and who know to answer correctly that if we saw anything, truly did we see it, as the Son of Thunder has taught us: 'that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen, which we have looked upon with our eyes and our hands have handled, of the Word of life, to these things do we bear witness'(1 John 1:1-2); and again, as the other disciples of the Word say, 'and we did eat and drink with Him' (Acts 10:41), not only before the Passion, but even after the Passion and the Resurrection; to those, therefore, who have been strengthened by God to distinguish between the commandment in the law and the teaching which came with grace, between that which was invisible in the former, and both visible and tangible in the latter, and who for this cause depict and worship in icons these visible and tangible realities, Eternal Memory (*thrice*)."

"TO THOSE who hear the Saviour when He said in regard to the priestly service of the divine Mysteries delivered by Him, 'This do in remembrance of Me' (Luke 22:19), but who do not understand the word 'remembrance' correctly, and who dare to say that the daily sacrifice offered by the sacred ministers of the divine Mysteries exactly as our Saviour, the Master of all, delivered to us, re-enacts only symbolically and figuratively the sacrifice of His own body and blood which our Saviour had offered on the Cross for the ransom and redemption of our common human nature; for this reason, since they introduce the doctrine that this sacrifice is different from the one originally consummated by the Saviour and that it recalls it only symbolically and figuratively, they bring to naught the Mystery of the awesome and divine priestly service whereby we receive the earnest of the future life; therefore, to those who deny what is staunchly proclaimed by our divine Father, John Chrysostom, who says in many commentaries on the sayings of the great Paul that the sacrifice is identical, that both are one and the same, Anathema (*thrice*)."

"TO THOSE who say that the flesh of the Lord is exalted by this union and that it surpasses every honour, since by this complete union it became immutably one with God, without change, without confusion, and unaltered by reason of the hypostatic union, inseparably and continually abiding in God the Word Who assumed it, and who say that it is honoured with a glory equal to His and worshipped with one worship and

is established on the royal and divine throne at the right hand of God the Father, and is endowed with the attributes of Divinity, while the properties of the two natures are preserved, Eternal Memory (*thrice*)."

Four Extracts from the Synodicon of Orthodoxy

What is an Anathema?

Saint Theophan the Recluse

RARELY does the Rite of Orthodoxy, which is now being performed, take place without censures and reproaches on somebody's part. And no matter how many sermons are given explaining that the Church here acts wisely for the salvation of her children - still the malcontents just keep repeating their line. Either they do not listen to the sermons, or these sermons do not strike home as regards the latter's perplexities, or perhaps they have formed their own conception of this rite and do not want to abandon it, no matter what you tell them.

To some people our anathemas seem inhumane, to others constricting. Such charges might be valid in other situations, but there is no way they can apply to our Rite of Orthodoxy. I will clarify for you briefly why the Church acts thus, and I think you yourselves will agree with me that in so doing, the Church acts wisely.

What is the holy Church? It is a society of believers, united among themselves by a unity of confession of divinely revealed truths, by a unity of sanctification by divinely established Mysteries, and by a unity of government and guidance by God-given shepherds. The oneness of confession, sanctification, and administration constitutes the rule of this society, which is obligatory for anyone who joins it. Membership in this society is contingent upon accepting this rule and agreeing with it remaining in this society is contingent upon fulfilling it. Let us see how the holy Church grew and how it continues to grow. The preachers preach. Some of the listeners do not accept the preaching and leave; others accept it and as a result of accepting it are sanctified by the holy Mysteries, follow the guidance of the shepherds, and thus are incorporated into the holy Church - they are churched. That is how all the Church's members enter her. In entering her, they are mingled with all her members, they are united with them, and they remain in the Church only as long as they continue to be one with them all.

From this simple indication regarding how the Church is formed, you can see that as a society, the holy Church came to be and continues to exist just like any other society. And so regard it as you would any other, and do not deprive it of the rights belonging to any society. Let us take, for example, a temperance society. It has rules which every member must fulfil. And each of its members is a member precisely because he accepts and abides by its rules. Now suppose that some member not only refuses to abide by the rules but also holds many views completely opposed to those of the society and even rises up against its very goal. He not only does not himself observe temperance but even reviles temperance itself and disseminates notions which might tempt others and deflect them from temperance. What does the society ordinarily do with such people? First it admonishes them, and then it expels them. There you have an anathema! No one protests this; no one reproaches the society for

being inhuman. Everyone acknowledges that the society is acting in a perfectly legitimate manner and that if it were to act otherwise, it could not exist.

So what is there to reproach the holy Church for when she acts likewise? After all, an anathema is precisely separation from the Church, or the exclusion from her midst of those who do not fulfil the conditions of unity with her and begin to think differently from the way she does, differently from the way they themselves promised to think upon joining her. Recollect how it happened! Arius appeared, who held impious opinions concerning Christ the Saviour, so that with these notions he distorted the very act of our salvation. What was done with him? First he was admonished, and admonished many times by every persuasive and touching means possible. But since he stubbornly insisted upon his opinion, he was condemned and excommunicated from the Church - that is, he is expelled from our society. Beware, have no communion with him and those like him. Do not yourselves hold such opinions, and do not listen to or receive those who do. Thus did the holy Church do with Arius; thus has she done with all other heretics; and thus will she do now, too, if someone appears somewhere with impious opinions. So tell me, what is blameworthy here? What else could the holy Church do? And could she continue to exist if she did not employ such strictness and warn her children with such solicitude about those who might corrupt and destroy them?

Let us see - what false teachings and what false teachers are excommunicated? Those who deny the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, divine providence; those who do not confess the all-holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the One God; those who do not acknowledge the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and our redemption by His death on the Cross; those who reject the grace of the Holy Spirit and the divine Mysteries which bestow it, and so forth. Do you see what manner of issues they touch upon? These are issues which are the very reason the holy Church is the Church, principles upon which she is founded and without which she could not be what she is. Therefore those who rise up against such truths are to the Church what those who make attempts against our lives and our property are to us in our daily life. Robbers and thieves, after all, are nowhere permitted to carry on freely and go unpunished! And when they are bound and handed over to the law and to punishment, no one considers this to be inhumane or a violation of freedom. On the contrary, people see in this very thing both an act of love for man and a safeguard for freedom - with regard to all the members of society. If you judge thus here, judge thus also concerning the society of the Church. These false teachers, just like thieves and robbers, plunder the property of the holy Church and of God, corrupting her children and destroying them.

Does the holy Church really err in judging them, binding them, and casting them out? And would it really be love for man if she regarded the actions of such people with indifference and left them at liberty to destroy everyone else? Would a mother permit a snake to freely crawl up to and bite her little child? Who does not understand the danger? If some immoral person were to gain access to your family and begin tempting your daughter, or your son - would you be able to regard their actions and their speeches with indifference? Fearing to gain a reputation for being inhumane and old-fashioned, would you tie your own hands? Would you not push such a person out the door and close it against them forever?! You should view the

actions of the holy Church in the same way. She sees that individuals of corrupt mind appear, and corrupt others - and she rises up against them, drives them away, and calls out to all those who are her own: "Beware: so-and-so and such-and-such people wish to destroy your souls. Do not listen to them; flee from them." Thus she fulfils the duty of motherly love, and therefore acts lovingly - or as you put it, humanely.

At the present time, we have a proliferation of nihilists, spiritists and other pernicious clever ones who are carried away with the false teachers of the West. Do you really think that our holy Church would keep silence and not raise her voice to condemn and anathematise them, if their destructive teachings were something new? By no means. A council would be held, and in council all of them with their teachings would be given over to anathema, and to the current Rite of Orthodoxy there would be appended an additional item: "To Feuerbach, Buchner, and Renan,* to the spiritists, and to all their followers - to the nihilists - be anathema." But there is no need for such a council, and there is no need either for such an addition. Their false teachings have already all been anathematised in advance in those points where anathema is pronounced to those who deny the existence of God, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, the teachings concerning the all-holy Trinity and concerning the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Do you not see with what wisdom and foresight the holy Church acts when she makes us perform the present proclamation and listen to it? And yet they say "This is outdated." It is precisely now that it is relevant. Perhaps 100 years ago it was not relevant. But one must say concerning our time, that if a Rite of Orthodoxy did not as yet exist, it would be needful to introduce one, and to perform it not only in the capital cities but in all places and in all churches: in order to collect all the evil teachings opposed to the Word of God, and to make them known to all, in order that all might know what they need to beware of and what kind of teachings to avoid. Many are corrupted in mind solely due to ignorance, whereas a public condemnation of ruinous teachings would save them from perdition.

Thus, the Church excommunicates, expels from her midst (when it is said, "Anathema to so-and-so," that means the same thing as, "So-and-so: out of here"), or anathematises for the same reason that any society does so. And she is obliged to do this in self-preservation and to preserve her children from destruction. Therefore there is nothing blameworthy or incomprehensible about this present Rite. If anyone fears the act of anathema, let him avoid the teachings which cause one to fall under it. If anyone fears it for others, let him restore him to sound teaching. If you are Orthodox and yet you are not well disposed toward this act, then you are found to be contradicting yourself. But if you have already abandoned sound doctrine, then what business is it of yours what is done in the Church by those who maintain it? By the very fact that you have conceived a different view of things than that which is maintained in the Church, you have already separated yourself from the Church. It is not inscription in the baptismal records which makes one a member of the Church, but the spirit and content of one's opinions. Whether your teaching and your name are pronounced as being under anathema or not, you already fall under it when your opinions are opposed to those of the Church, and when you persist in them. Fearful is the anathema. Leave off your evil opinions. Amen.

Translated from the Russian text published in "Pravoslavnaya Rus," #4, 1974.

Editor's Footnote:

Feuerbach, Ludwig Andreas (1804-72), a German philosopher and pupil of Hegel, who attacked traditional Christianity and believed that religion was "the dream of the human mind."

Buchner, Karl Friedrich Christian Ludwig (1824-99), a German materialist philosopher, forced to resign as lecturer at Tubingen after publishing his controversial "Kraft und Stoff" in 1855.

Renan, Joseph Ernest (1823-92), a French philosopher and historian, whose studies of Hebrew and Greek Biblical criticism led him to abandon his faith. He doubted the miraculous elements in the life of Christ.

FROM THE SACRED CANONS

IN THAT many persons numbered among the clergy, out of greed and in pursuit of shameful profits, forget the Divine scripture which says, "He hath not lent his money on usury"(Ps. 14:5),and in making a loan have demanded interest, the Holy and Great Council has decreed that anyone, who after the adoption of this order, should receive interest for the use of money or otherwise exploit the matter, or demand commission, or through any other subterfuge should contrive to exact shameful profits, he shall be expelled from the clergy and shall be an alien to the clerical order.

Canon 17 of the Twenty Canons of the First Œcumenical Council

Adapted from

"THE HOUSE OF GOD AND THE CHURCH SERVICES"

By the Priest N. R. Antonov

Continuation

§83. The General Content of the Priest's Liturgical Prayers. In the Prayer of Oblation, which is said towards the end of the proskomidi or prothesis, petition is made to the Lord to bless the offering, and to receive it upon His altar above the heavens, and to remember those who have made offerings and those for whom they have been made.

In the Prayer of the First Antiphon, which is read during the Great Litany, we ask God to look upon those who are praying in church and upon the holy church itself.

In that of the Second Antiphon, read during the first Little Litany, -to sanctify those who love the beauty of the house of God.

In that of the Third Antiphon, read in the second Little Litany, - to fulfil the requests of His servants to their profit.

In the Prayer of the Entrance, which is read at the time of the Little Entrance with the Book of the Gospels, - that He ordain that with our entrance there may be an entrance of the holy angels of God.

In the Prayer of the Thrice-Holy, (which is read when the troparions and contakions are being chanted, and which ends with the exclamation, "For holy art

Thou, O our God..."and "O Lord, save the pious") we ask that He accept the Thrice-Holy hymn from the mouths of us sinners, and forgive us every offense.

In the Prayer Before the Gospel, we ask that he will open our noetic eyes, that is, the eyes of our understanding, to the preaching of the Gospel, and that He implant in us the fear of, or reverence for, His blessed commandments which are contained in the Gospel.

In the Prayer of Fervent Supplication, said during the Threefold Litany, that He send down His compassions upon the priestly ministers and upon all His people.

In the Prayer for the Faithful Departed, we ask for the forgiveness of their sins.

In the Prayer for the Catechumens, read during their litany, we pray that they may be united to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

In the First Prayer of the Faithful, read during the first Little Litany after the expulsion of the catechumens, we ask that the priestly ministers be granted worthily to offer the bloodless sacrifice for the people there present.

In the Second Prayer of the Faithful, read during the Little Litany before the Cherubicon, we ask that might be granted to stand before the Holy Altar without guilt and condemnation.

In the Prayer of the Great Entrance, read during the first portion of the Cherubic Hymn, we ask that the souls and hearts of the priestly ministers might be cleansed that they might worthily celebrate the Holy Eucharist.

In the Prayer of Oblation, which is said during the Litany of that name, the first "Grant this, O Lord" litany, we ask that the worshippers may be prepared to participate in the impending consecration.

In the Eucharistic Prayer, we enumerate God's benefactions, commemorate the Mystical Supper, and implore the sending down of the Holy Spirit.

In the Prayer for the Living and the Dead, read during the Magnification of the Theotokos, we make intercession for them.

In the Prayer during the Second "Grant this, O Lord" Litany, we ask that we might be made worthy to receive Holy Communion.

[Fr Antonov makes no reference to the prayer immediately after the Our Father, but continues:] In the Prayer before the Exclamation "The Holies are for the holy," we ask that we might be deemed worthy to be imparted the Holy Gifts.

In the Prayer Before Communion," I believe and I confess," we ask that we might receive Communion worthily.

And in the Thanksgiving Prayer, read during the short litany of that name, we give thanks for Communion.

The Prayer Beyond the Ambon is a resume of all the other prayers and petitions that we have made.

§ 84. The Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great. The Liturgy which we have been describing is called that of Saint John Chrysostom, who was the Archbishop of Constantinople, and was distinguished for his holy life and his fiery oratory, and who died in 407 A.D.

Beside this there is another Liturgy, that of St Basil the Great, who lived earlier than St John and was the Archbishop of Caesarea in Asia Minor and died in 379 A.D. In the Greek and Russian Churches, the Liturgy of St Basil the Great is served ten times a year: namely on the Sundays within Great Lent (this does not include Palm Sunday), on the Thursday and Saturday of Passion Week (i.e., Maundy [Great] Thursday and the Great Sabbath), on the eves of the Great Feasts of the Lord's Nativity and the Theophany (or on the day of the feasts themselves if they fall on a Monday or on a Sunday), and on the feast of the Circumcision, 1st January, which is also the feast of St Basil himself.

The order of the Liturgy of St Basil the Great is substantially the same as that of St John Chrysostom, although there are a number of differences. Firstly the Eucharistic Prayer and that for the Living and the Dead are much longer than their counterparts in the Liturgy of St John. For this reason, the chants used by the choir in singing the hymns at this time are also much more extended. Secondly, between the two exclamations within the Eucharistic Prayer "Take eat,..." and "Drink ye all of it,..." the priest says aloud the phrase that introduces these words within the prayers: "He gave it to His holy disciples and apostles, saying" Thirdly, in place of the Magnification of the Theotokos, "It is truly meet," we chant "In thee, O Full of Grace, all creation - both the company of angels and the race of men - doth rejoice. O hallowed temple and spiritual paradise, boast of virgins: from thee God was incarnate, and became a child, He, our God, Who existed before the ages; for He made thy womb a throne, and He made thee more spacious than the heavens. In thee, O Full of Grace, all creation doth rejoice. Glory be to thee." And finally, St Basil is commemorated in the dismissal at the end instead of St John.

[In fact, Fr Antonov does not mention other differences: - A) the secret prayers of the priest are the same as in St John's Liturgy up to and including that of the Litany of Fervent Supplication, but thereafter they are usually different; B) the Prayer Beyond the Ambon, "O Lord, Who blessest them that bless Thee," is often replaced by another: "O Christ our God, Who for a sacrifice of praise...."]

In a footnote, Father Antonov adds this about the Eucharistic Prayer and that for the Living and the Dead: "These prayers of St Basil the Great are distinguished from those of St John Chrysostom not only by their greater length, but also by their greater lyricism, feeling, their figurativeness and the compositional definition. Thus, for example, we have the following from the prayer which replaces the usual one for the Living and the Dead: "Have in remembrance, O Lord, the people here present, and those who for a reasonable cause are absent, have mercy upon them and upon us according to the multitude of Thy mercies. Fill their treasuries with every good thing; maintain their marriage bond in peace and concord; rear the infants, guide the young, support the aged, encourage the fainthearted. Gather the erring and turn them from their wandering astray, and unite them to Thy Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. Set at liberty those who are vexed with unclean spirits, voyage with those who voyage, journey with them that journey, defend the widows, protect the orphans, free the captives, heal the sick. Have in remembrance those who are under trial, and in the mines, and in exile, and in bitter slavery, and in all affliction, distress and tribulation.... And upon them all pour out Thy rich mercy, granting unto all their petitions as are unto salvation."...to be continued with "The Hierarchal Liturgy"

LET US SET OUT with joy upon the season of the Fast,
and prepare ourselves for spiritual combat.
Let us purify our soul and cleanse our flesh;
and as we fast from food, let us abstain
also from every passion.
Rejoicing in the virtues of the Spirit,
may we persevere with love,
and so be counted worthy to see
the solemn Passion of Christ our God,
and with great spiritual gladness
to behold His holy Pascha.

From Vespers on the Sunday of Forgiveness

On the Saturday and Sunday immediately before the Fast, we read two lections from the Gospels, which in fact run on from one another. On Saturday we have Matthew 6:1-13, and on Sunday Matthew 6:14-21. Read together, these two sections tell us precisely how to keep the fast. In turn they speak of almsgiving, avoiding show, praying, mutual forgiveness, fasting, and accumulating heavenly treasure of the heart rather than earthly and material things. Undoubtedly it is profitable to refer to these twenty-one verses again and again within the fast to mark how one is going.

The Great Fast itself begins on Monday 10th/23rd February, which ushers in Clean Week. After Bright Week and Passion Week, this is the week in the year which demands the greatest religious observance for the conscientious Orthodox Christian. At Compline we have the reading of the Penitential Canon of Saint Andrew of Crete from Monday to Thursday. On Friday evening: the Akathist Hymn to the Mother of God. On Saturday: the commemoration of the Miracle of the Great Martyr Theodore the Recruit. And on Sunday - (weeks run from Monday to Sunday during Lent) - we have the culmination of all these struggles in the celebration of the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

On this Sunday a special procession around the church is appointed with the icons, and on this day in cathedral and other major churches they have a service called the Rite of Orthodoxy, during which Eternal Memory is proclaimed for the pillars of the Faith who have gone before us to their rest, Anathemas are proclaimed against the impious and against false teachings, and the Many Years is chanted for those hierarchs and faithful ones who are still struggling in piety. On this day too, in some churches, the Synodicon of Orthodoxy is read, and it is because of these rites, - (a kind of beating of the bounds, not of the parish territory, but of the Faith) - through which the purity of our Faith is protected, that we have included extracts from the Synodicon in this month's "From the Fathers" section, and reproduced Saint Theophan the Recluse's article on the significance of proclaiming the Anathemas.

THE COMING MONTH

THE GREAT FEAST of the Meeting of the Lord in the Temple (2nd / 15th February) this year falls on Judgment Sunday, the day on which we commemorate the events surrounding the end-times and in particular the Lord's dread Judgment at the end of time. So, this year the services of this Sunday will be combined with those of

the Meeting. It may appear rather inappropriate that a feast celebrating our Saviour's being presented in the Temple as a forty-day-old infant, a feast which is popularly reckoned to be one of the Mother of God, is combined with texts which tell of death and the particular judgment which follows it, and the coming apostasy, of the tribulations at the end of the world, of the reign of the Antichrist, of the Second Coming and the Judgment itself. And yet, in the Gospel reading for the Meeting itself, we hear the aged Simeon speaking of judgment: "Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." The Judgment centres around this little Child, and it is entirely appropriate and indeed beautiful that these two festivals fall on the same day.

The next Sunday is Forgiveness Sunday. Perhaps one of the things which first strikes the newcomer to Orthodoxy, especially the English one, is the emphasis on mutual forgiveness. For the Englishman asking forgiveness, except in a perfunctory way, is something we are very loath to do. We prefer to let things simply die down and cease to be an issue, or simply to walk away. Among the Orthodox asking forgiveness is common currency. People ask each other's forgiveness after every upset, they do so before going to confession, and they bow and ask forgiveness before receiving the Holy Mysteries. Each day in the full monastic cycle of services, we bow or prostrate to each other at the end of the day at Compline and ask forgiveness. And we have this special Sunday, when on the very cusp of Great Lent, we ask each other's forgiveness for all our sins and offences committed during the past year, so that as Saint John of Shanghai explains, we may set out upon the course of the fast, lightened of a burden. Also, so that we may receive God's forgiveness. The Saviour says: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Matt. 6:14). He does not say, "If ye keep the fast, your heavenly Father will forgive you." If we do not begin our fast with forgiving each other, and maintain that forgiveness through its course, we shall be little profited by our efforts.

Among the Saints in February, we have:-

Holy Martyrs Ennatha, Valentina and Paul (10th/23rd): These holy martyrs celebrate on the day as the Holy Hieromartyr Charalampus, which this year is the first day of Great Lent. In the year 308-309 A.D., the Christians of the Roman Empire were undergoing a second year of renewed persecution. A group of Christians were apprehended in Gaza and brought before the governor Firmillian in Caesarea. Most had the tendons of their left feet seared with red-hot irons and their right eyes put out. Thus maimed, they were sent to labour camps. One, Ennatha, was ordered to be forced into prostitution, and this so offended her that she rebuked the governor for the infamy of his order. She was then put to cruel torture. Seeing her tortured, another woman, Valentina, ran forward and rebuked Firmillian for the cruelty he was inflicting upon her sister in the Faith. She was ordered to offer sacrifice to the idols, and when she refused and kicked over the brazier for the incense and the pagan altar, she was also put to torture. The two were then condemned to be burned at the stake. St Paul was also arrested in Gaza and condemned to death on the same day. Before his execution he asked for a space to pray, and he besought the Lord that the Christians would be delivered from persecution, and that the Jews, Samaritans and the pagans would be enlightened by the True Faith. Then he prayed for the authorities who had

condemned him and for the executioner who was about to behead him. Then he lay down his head to receive the crown of martyrdom.

The Holy Virgin Georgia of Clermont (15th/28th): The life of this righteous one is recorded by Saint Gregory of Tours. She lived in her native town, quietly serving the Lord and following the example of Anna, constantly attending in the temple. Nothing more is known of her life, except that she lived in the fifth century, but St Gregory tells us, that when, after her death, her body was prepared for burial and being carried to the church, a great company of doves gathered and flew over her body, and while the funeral rites were being chanted they settled on the roof of the church.

Saint George of Amastris (21st Feb./ 5th March) was born and grew up at a place called Chromna, near Amastris on the shores of the Black Sea. As a child he fell into a fire and burnt his hands and his foot, which were thereafter disfigured with scars, but he was not deprived of their use. As a youth, he went out into the desert of Mount Sirik, where he placed himself under obedience to a hermit-monk, who instructed him in the monastic life. When this Elder died, fearing to be deprived of the blessing of obedience, he went to the monastery of Bonysa and joined the brotherhood there. Here, on account of his continual prayer and his life of ascetical struggle he became widely renowned, and when the Bishop of Amastris died, the faithful elected George to be consecrated in his place. Although the Emperor had a preferred candidate, noting that the people had clearly elected this chosen one the Patriarch St Tarasius performed the consecration, and the hierarch became a luminary of the Church. He took special care over the ordering of the divine services and the education of the clergy, and he also took particular care of the widows, orphans, the sick and the needy. At one point his diocese was invaded by Saracens, and foreseeing this St George travelled round his diocese calling the people to flee within the city walls for protection. He gave up his soul in the year 805. Sometime afterwards invaders from what is now Russia invaded the region and attempted to rifle the Saint's tomb, but they were fixed motionless to the spot, and it was only through the prayers of the Saint that they were released from this binding.

POINTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE

"I KNOW some Orthodox use the Gregorian Calendar and some the Julian, and think I understand most of the issues about this difference, but I keep seeing references to the "Revised Julian Calendar." What is this? Is it a third option? - M.W.P., Slough.

NO, this, in fact, refers to the New Calendar or Gregorian Calendar. The fact is that the so-called New Calendarist Orthodox use the Gregorian Calendar for the immovable feasts of the year, those that are appointed by date: Christmas, Annunciation, Ascension and the vast majority of the saints' days. But they still use to Old or Julian Calendar to determine the date of Easter (Pascha) and the feasts that depend upon it. This is one reason why the New Calendar option simply does not work liturgically. Easter can be as much as a month out of kilter with the rest of the year. It is like expecting a clock to work after replacing one of its cogs with one of a different size. But I suppose that, because they are not using the Gregorian Calendar to determine the time of both movable and immovable celebrations, they can argue that

the Calendar which they are using is not the papal Gregorian one, and so among some this term "Revised Julian" has been adopted - a touch of religious political correctness. The term seems to be a neologism, and like most rather unfortunate. Also like most neologisms, it seems to be used in an attempt to cover up a mess, and on the excellent principle that one should not fix things that are not broken, one is tempted to ask, "If that is the revised version, why not stick with the unrevised?"

NEWS SECTION

ISRAEL RECOGNISES PATRIARCH

AFTER OVER TWO YEARS, the Israeli government has officially recognised Eirenaios I as Patriarch of Jerusalem. He was elected in August 2001, after the death of Patriarch Diodoros I. Legally his election must be recognised by the civil authorities in the territories which his Patriarchate covers, these presently being Israel, the Palestinian Authority and Jordan. Israel had objected to his candidature, believing that Eirenaios was too pro-Palestinian in his sympathies, but these fears have now been allayed or dismissed and, after the long delay, she has accepted his election, a move which was immediately praised by the Greek government in Athens.

ORTHODOX HIERARCH GAOLED

AFTER WWII, nationalistic movements in what is now the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia caused problems in church life, and in 1959, in an attempt to bring a measure of peace, the Serbian Patriarchate created an autonomous Macedonian Archdiocese. However, this did not satisfy nationalist feelings, and undoubtedly stirred by communist agitation, in July 1967 the autonomous archdiocese broke completely from the Serbian Church and, without the blessing of their Mother Church, proclaimed itself the "Macedonian Orthodox Church." This Church has continued an independent existence to this day, although she is not recognised by any of the other Orthodox Churches throughout the world. For over 35 years, the Serbian Church had hoped and prayed that the situation would be rectified, and last year in June, their Synod once more appealed to the Macedonians to return to their canonical Mother Church. Metropolitan Jovan of Veles and Povardarje was the one hierarch to heed this call and joined the Serbian Patriarchate. He has been followed by other clergy and monastics, and in time two other bishops, Marko and Joakim, were consecrated. The autonomous Archdiocese of Ochrid was set up with Metropolitan Jovan at its head, canonically re-creating the situation before the schism of '67. However, this year, on 11th January Metropolitan Jovan and Bishop Marko, the abbot of the Dormition Monastery in Resna, Fr David, and the abbot of the Saint Demetrius Monastery, Fr Maksim, were together arrested by the Bitolj police, "for 'illegally' performing Holy Liturgy in a private home of the Vranishkovski family where a congregation of 50 had gathered." Of the congregation some thirty people were monks and nuns, eleven of whom were also detained. The next day Judge Slobodanka Bakoshka of the Municipal Court sentenced Metropolitan Jovan to thirty days in gaol for "provoking national, racial and religious hatred and division." The other detainees were released. Patriarch Pavle of Serbia has protested against this injustice.

ŒCUMENICAL PATRIARCH IN CUBA

PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEOS of Constantinople visited Cuba, where there are less than 2,000 Orthodox believers, at the end of January for the "opening" of the Saint Nicolas Greek Orthodox Church there. Cuban President Fidel Castro was present at a ceremony and handed over the keys of the church to the Patriarch. He was also given an order from the Ministry of Justice signing over ownership of the property to the church. The head of the American diplomatic mission to Cuba, James Casson, held a reception in the Patriarch's honour at the delegation building. To Casson's "intense discomfort," the Patriarch was not present in person, but only represented by Archbishop Dimitrios. This reception was attended by members of the Cuban opposition, by the mothers of three people recently executed by the regime, as well as by the wives of political prisoners, who held photographs of their husbands. Expressing their hurt that the Patriarch did not join them, they told the Archbishop that "brave men act, they do not just speak." The Patriarch did indeed speak about human rights issues at the ceremony at the church. Metropolitan Athenagoras of Panama and Central America stated that this was the first visit of an Œcumenical Patriarch to Latin America, and he said that the Patriarch would bring "the same message that Jesus Christ brought 2,000 years ago." And in attempting to explain why the Patriarch was going to award Castro (a Communist dictator who had repressed religion in Cuba from the revolution in 1959 until it eased its policies just over ten years ago) the Order of St Andrew, he said that the Orthodox hierarchy occasionally bestows the Order on personalities who help the Church. It seems to the present writer that all this was not quite the message that Jesus Christ brought 2,000 years ago.

FUND HORRIFIED BY FINDINGS IN KOSOVO

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX "Andrew the First-Called Fund" is preparing a report concerning its findings in Kosovo which will be presented to the UN, PACE and UNESCO. After visiting the area, the Fund's president Alexander Melnik commented: "We knew that destruction of Orthodox relics was catastrophic, but we did not expect it was so dangerous. We say this is genocide." A delegation visited Kosovo between 3rd and 8th January, and found that since 1999, when the peacemakers took over after the war, 120 Orthodox churches have been destroyed in the region. Hundreds of Serbs have been killed and 250,000 people have been ousted from their homes. Melnik described the Serbs that remain there as living in a modern ghetto, suffering from unemployment and a lack of medical care.

PUTIN'S UKRAINIAN VISIT

AT THE END of January, President Putin of the Russian Federation visited Ukraine, and was received by the President, Leonid Kuchma. He also met the head of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), Metropolitan Volodymyr, who presented Mr Putin with an icon of Sts Antony and Theodosius of Kiev and was given one of Saint Seraphim of Sarov in return. During his Ukrainian visit, President Putin made a trip to the historic Kiev Caves Monastery, and in a meeting with churchmen, he assured them that he was not going to meddle in church affairs, but he noted the present splits in the Orthodox community in the Ukraine (there are three different jurisdictions), and expressed the desire for union among them, and his support for a Ukrainian Patriarchate. (One of the three jurisdictions already existing

calls itself a Patriarchate, but it is not recognised as canonical). Mr Putin also stated that the Ukrainian Church is now totally independent," including from the Russian Church." These statements do indeed appear to be meddling in church affairs. Given that the UOC-MP is at present autonomous but within the Moscow Patriarchate, it is not clear from the RTR reports, whether the President was speaking advisedly, having been informed of a change in the situation by the Church authorities in Moscow, or whether he was simply expressing a personal wish.

PATRIARCH ALEKSII GRANTS AWARDS

AT THE CATHEDRAL of Christ the Saviour in Moscow, His Holiness Patriarch Aleksii II of Moscow presented five prizes, awarded by the International Fund for the Unity of Orthodox Peoples. In his speech, the Patriarch said: "The prize is not only a sign of recognition of the merits of individuals, it also encourages spiritual ties between states and serves to enhance the role Orthodoxy has to play in the world." The five recipients of the prizes were His Holiness Patriarch Petros VII of Alexandria and All Africa, President Constantinos Stephanopoulos of Greece, the French Academy's Permanent Secretary H el ene Carrere D'Encausse, the businessman and patron of the arts Vladimir Potanin, and Belgrade University's Theological Department. The prize-giving provided the opportunity for a meeting between the two Patriarchs. In a rather oddly translated communiqué on their meeting, Itar-tass explains: "It [the Patriarchate of Alexandria] has the second position on the list of 15 local Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Orthodox Church of Constantinople *and the Universe* occupying the first position"! This is something certainly more exciting than the papal claims, but is obviously one of those journalistic errors which so bedevil religious reporting. Also in listing "the really outstanding theologians" who have come forth from the Church of Alexandria, Itar-tass begins with the heretic Origen.

CONSTANTINOPLE - GREECE CONTENTION

In an earlier issue we mentioned the contention between the (Ecumenical Throne and the Church of Greece over the elections of bishops within the so-called new territories, those parts of present-day Greece in the North, which were not part of the state of Greece when its Church gained her autocephaly, and over which, therefore, Constantinople still claims some jurisdiction. Now the Church of Greece has decided to put the matter on hold until after polling day, 7th March. On 16th January the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece agreed to postpone any decision on the matter until after the national elections. However, commentators have seen a link between this contention and unfortunate remarks made by Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens, who is reported as saying that the Turks are "barbarians" who should not be admitted to the "Christian family" of Europe. The Greek government moved quickly to distance itself from these remarks, and later the Archbishop rather toned them down, stressing that he felt respect for the Turkish people," but that he also wanted "to see Turkey adopt democratic sensibilities and European manners." Both Patriarch Bartholomeos and Archbishop Chrysostomos are seen to be keen supporters of the European Union (how else could anyone possibly describe it as a "Christian family"? - it is more like a bureaucratic kolkhoz). However, the Patriarch has called for the EU to be expanded to include Turkey, probably hoping that this will necessitate an improvement in the country's human rights record and ease the situation for the tiny

Christian minority living there, whereas Archbishop Chrysostomos evidently does not want to see Turkey within the EU. The press commentators have expressed the thought that he has taken this position as another arrow in his quiver in his dispute with the Œcumenical Throne over the bishops in the northern territories. Although this supposition might well be totally groundless, it does indicate that sadly the political posturings of so many of today's "leaders of World Orthodoxy" are breeding more disaffection towards the Church.

HARVARD ASKED TO RETURN BELLS

THE DANILOV MONASTERY in Russia, founded in the thirteenth century by Prince Daniel of Moscow, has asked Harvard University to return eighteen 17th century bells. The monastery was closed in 1930, under the Stalinist regime, and all but three of the monks were subsequently executed. An American industrialist, Charles R. Crane, managed to buy the bells and he donated them to Harvard. In 1983, the monastery was restored for church use, and although its bell tower had been razed, it has been rebuilt. The bells are one of only five remaining sets from the many that existed in Imperial Russia, and Archimandrite Alexy and the fathers of the monastery have launched a fund-raising campaign to raise the costs of transporting the bells back to Russia and of replacing them at Harvard. It is not yet clear whether the University, which the monks admit hold them legally, will agree to their return to their monastery, but they have agreed to finance a study of the feasibility and costs involved.

BROOKWOOD NEWS

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS: This year, as announced earlier, we had our Christmas Day breakfast in the Lord Pirbright Hall on the green in Pirbright. We are particularly grateful to Robert and Hazel Eades, who, living in the village, went in early and set things up for us and were the last to stay tidying up at the end. Mr Eades also brought and played his electric organ to lead the carol singing, and this year was accompanied by Christopher Last on his guitar. After the singing of the traditional English carols, some of the local Russian families sang Russian carols for us, although, as they are shier, we were unable to persuade any of the Bulgarians, Greeks, Romanians or Serbs to do the same! It was good to have Councillor Philip Goldenburg with us this year for the celebration and we appreciate his interest in our community. Every year we are extremely grateful to all those who contribute to our feast and this year was no exception. In fact this year we were even more grateful than usual because Brotherhood members and several of the most active parishioners were suffering from colds, flu and various ailments, and therefore we appreciated even more the help that others offered. Special thanks are due to Elena Holden and her family for help in decorating the church and organising the catering aspect of things. But many thanks to all who contributed in bringing dishes and in so many ways.

NEW VESTMENTS: For our Christmas and Theophany celebration this year, we also had new priestly and diaconal vestments, made by the sisters of the Holy Nativity Convent in Boston, Massachusetts, and given in memory of the late Edwin and Joan Carn of Eastry. May they both find God's mercies.

THEOPHANY: As usual, after the Divine Liturgy on the feast of the Theophany, we went to Chertsey to bless the waters near the site of the ancient Saxon monastery there. We are very grateful to Robin and Mary Haigh, not only for allowing us to use their "quayside" but also for inviting us in for coffee and cakes afterwards. Thanks too to Michael and Margaret Woodrow for providing us with lunch at nearby Sunbury.

NEW BUILDING FUNDRAISING: In the past few weeks, with our architect, Irina Aldersley, we have been dealing with various technical matters regarding the new monastic house, which we hope to erect on the Brotherhood property. It appears that the total cost of the new building will be somewhat in excess of £400,000, and of this amount we already have approximately £100,000 in hand or pledged to us. We shall therefore shortly publish an appeal to raise the rest. Please bear this in mind when making your Lenten almsgiving. Donations in sterling should be made payable to King Edward Orthodox Trust Co Ltd, and sent to the Brotherhood address. Those in US dollars and Euros can be more easily handled if made payable to Saint Edward Brotherhood. (Other currencies: to KEOTCoLtd please.) It is evident in the first instance that we shall have to raise a loan, and so if anyone feels unable to make an outright donation, but would feel able to offer a loan (for some part of the cost) at no interest or low interest, this is an avenue that we would be pleased to explore, and would help to reduce the total amount we shall have to raise.

PRACTICAL TIP

IN ORTHODOX WORSHIP there is considerable freedom for the individual worshipper to express their devotion or prayer as they will. However, naturally there are limits to this freedom, so that we keep good order and so that we worship together as a congregation. It is not good practice, for instance, to prostrate or kneel, even on those days when this is allowed, during the Great Entrance of the Liturgy. The gifts that are being taken in procession at this point are not yet consecrated. Although set aside and prepared for the holy oblation, and therefore treated with reverence, they are still bread and wine. To honour the consecrated Gifts is proper, and this is done by making a prostration or bow at the end of the hymn "We hymn Thee, we bless Thee," and when the Gifts are brought out for the communion of the laity. If one has not received Holy Communion on a particular day, one may also make a prostration or deep bow, when the Gifts are shown the people at "Always, now and ever and unto the ages of ages," as they are taken from the Holy Table to the table of oblation at the end of the Liturgy.