

Go therefore and make disciples of
all nations
Mt 28:19



Allez, faites de toutes les nations
des disciples
Mt 28:19

CANADIAN ORTHODOX MESSENGER

Founded by the blessed Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov), 1866 – 1945
Published by the Archdiocese of Canada, Orthodox Church in America
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New Metropolitan elected at 13th AAC

Late on the opening business day (Monday, July 22) of the 13th All-American Council, and after two rounds of nominations by clergy and lay delegates, the Holy Synod of Bishops elected His Eminence Archbishop HERMAN of the Diocese of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania to be the new Metropolitan of the Orthodox Church in America.

Although His Grace Bishop SERAPHIM of Ottawa and Canada received the majority of nominations on the first ballot, it was not the required two-thirds majority, so a second balloting was held. Again he received the majority, but the Statute of the OCA requires that on a second round, the two top candidates' names be given to the Holy Synod for selection. In the sanctuary the seven bishops eligible to vote chose Archbishop Herman. It should be noted that there is strong precedence for this: both Metropolitan THEODOSIUS and Metropolitan IRINEY were candidates with the second highest number of nominations from clergy and lay delegates.

Metropolitan HERMAN, born Joseph Swaiko on 1 February 1932, has been a bishop of the OCA since

1973. He has a wealth of experience on every level of the Church's life, including serving as temporary administrator of the OCA from May until September 2001, during Metropolitan Theodosius' medical leave of absence. His Beatitude will be enthroned at St Nicholas Orthodox Cathedral, Washington DC on 7–8 September 2002.



His Beatitude, the Most Blessed HERMAN, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada

Held in Orlando, Florida from July 21 through July 26, the 13th AAC was the best-attended in history, and it had as its theme "The Parish Community—Our Life in Christ." There was an intense focus on this theme, from the keynote address by Protopresbyter Thomas Hopko, through the major presentation on the Bible and parish life by Archpriest Andrew Morbey of Ottawa, to all the various adult workshops during the five days of meetings and the various study sessions for children and youth, of whom there were

approximately 400 at this assembly (perhaps at least partially attracted by the nearby "wonderful world of Disney" and the opportunity to enjoy this theme-park world in the fellowship of other Orthodox children and youth!).

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In business matters, the delegates and observers heard reports about the state of the Church, and the delegates passed, after lengthy and often heated debate, two very important resolutions which, for the time being, do not affect Canada—the Resolution on Fair Share Giving as a new method of funding the Church cannot apply to Canada because of Canada Customs and Revenue Agency rules, and the Resolution on Property Held in Trust is related specifically to various American legal jurisdictions.

Of utmost importance at this Council was the honouring of the OCA's much-beloved retiring Metropolitan THEODOSIUS, who has served so faithfully, brilliantly, and lovingly as Primate for the past 25 years. In his final address to the assembly as Metropolitan, he received many lengthy standing ovations, and not just because of his rousing calls to Orthodox unity and true autocephaly in North America: it was palpably clear that the entire Church is filled with loving gratitude to him for his consistently Christ-like pastoral care and leadership over so many years. At the end of his last Divine Liturgy as Metropolitan on Monday morning, he was given many gifts, including a special gramota from the Holy Synod, presented to him by Canada's Bishop Seraphim, its secretary. Also, the Grand Banquet on Thursday evening was held in his honour, and upon this occasion, both Archbishop DEMETRIOS, the head of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, and Metropolitan KYRILL of Smolensk, head of the external affairs department of the Moscow Patriarchate, spoke warmly in appreciation of the retiring Primate's life and work.

There were more Canadians at this Assembly than have ever attended since 1977. It is quite possible that many of them also felt quite "at home": the national anthem of Canada was sung upon at least two occasions (as was the anthem of Mexico); Canada's bishop was given the popular nomination on both ballots; both Archbishop Andrew Morbey and Priest John Hainsworth gave important presentations, the former to the Council as a whole and the latter to one of the workshops; and four of Canada's young adults displayed

strong leadership with youth: Petros Kalyvas, Sofia Lopoukhine, Becky Machnee, and Simeon Morbey.

As is usual for the past several assemblies, the Canadian contingent met together on Wednesday evening for their national dinner which, as always, included also a few "friends of Canada." Ably organized by Mary Ann Lopoukhine, this was a most joyous occasion, with 48 people seated at one long table of warm fellowship.

For the record, a total of 49 Canadians were present at the 13th AAC. In addition to the Bishop and the Chancellor, Fr Dennis Pihach, there were: Archpriests Alexander Janowski, Oleg Kirilow, Andrew Morbey, Orest Olekshy, John Tkachuk; Igumen Irénée (Rochon); Priests

John Hainsworth, Robert Kennaugh, Vasyl Kolega, Rodion Luciuk, Alexander Shkalov; Deacon Geoff Korz; monastics Amvrosi (Mlodzyk), Sophia (Zion), Innocent (Green); and lay delegates, observers and youth participants Moira Calder, Emily Demkiw, Lorraine Grier, Dr John Hadjinicolaou, Jennifer and Elizabeth Hainsworth, Lesley-Ann Judge, Tim Katsikas, Dianne Kennaugh, Oksana Kolega, Linda and Sophia Korz, Dr Emanuel and Petros Kolyvas, George Koutchougoura, Brian Lehr;

Nikita, Mary Ann and Sofia Lopoukhine; Becky Machnee; Alexandra, Rowan, Simeon and Vera Morbey; Eugene Rezanowicz, Julianna Schmemann, Richard Schneider, Christopher Sprecher, Mary Tkachuk, Alexei Vassiouchkine, David Wagschal, and Dr James Wurtele.

—ed.



Bishop Seraphim presents a special gramota from the Holy Synod to retiring Metropolitan Theodosius.



Shown with Bp Seraphim are a few of the Canadians present: l to r, Richard Schneider, Monk Amvrosi (Mlodzyk), Igumen Irénée (Rochon), Dn Geoff Korz, Alexei Vassiouchkine, Dianne and Fr Bob Kennaugh, and Lesley-Ann Judge.

From the Bishop's desk:

This year we were faced with the retirement of our beloved Metropolitan Theodosius, for health reasons. The Holy Synod gave the blessing, since we prefer to have him with us as long as possible, even if it be in retirement. Metropolitan Theodosius, apart from his paternal love, is a living resource, a connexion with our ancestors.

The process of choosing a new Metropolitan is much misunderstood. We often try to treat it like an ordinary election. This is not so. What happens is that the faithful assembled make nominations, and they may nominate anyone who is qualified. And they did. There was a long list of persons nominated. Since, on the first round, no one received 66 % of the nominations, there was a second round. In the second round of nominations, the names of the two persons who received the most nominations were given to the bishops. It is the historical custom of the Church that the people propose two or three names to the bishops, and it is the bishops who elect. Sometimes they vote, and sometimes they choose with prayer by lot. This time the bishops elected Archbishop Herman of Philadelphia to be Metropolitan, and then he was immediately installed in office. I was, myself, happy to see how he was able, with all his experience, to lead the remaining sessions so well, and to see him acting decisively in other meetings. And for myself, I am very happy to be able to remain here at home, and to be able to continue our missionary work in Canada together. Glory be to God for all things!

In the course of the coming year, it is our hope and expectation that we may receive in Canada both Metropolitan Herman and Metropolitan Theodosius. Let us support and protect them both with our prayers.

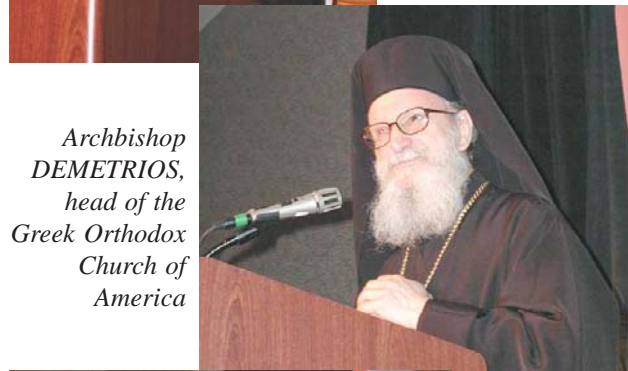
One of the most difficult things for us, it seems, is to trust God. We are trapped in organising and manipulating things, and being in control of things. Because we have fallen away from God's love, we are full of fear, and that is why we so much want to be in charge. We cannot trust Him somehow. But it is really only in trusting Him that we are anything like our real selves. The irony is that the more we try to be in control, the more we are actually slaves of various fears, and we are, simply, distortions of ourselves. Instead, the more we allow the Lord God to be in charge, the more we are liberated from fear, and the more true we are to ourselves, because we are in harmony with His love, and His pattern for us. Let us ask the Lord Jesus Christ to reach into the dark, fear-bound recesses of our hearts, and shine there the light of His love. Let us help Him to do so both by praying, and by encountering Him in our daily reading of Scripture.

+Seraphim

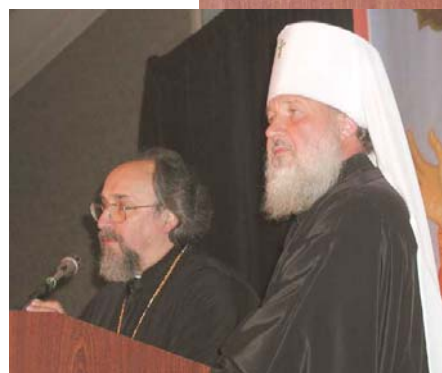
Photo memories of the AAC



Metropolitan THEODOSIUS



Archbishop DEMETRIOS, head of the Greek Orthodox Church of America



Metropolitan KYRILL of Smolensk, with translator, Archpriest Alexander Golubov



In the exhibition hall, Bp Seraphim enjoys ringing bells with Tim Katsikas (l) and Christopher Sprecher (r).

Implementing Bible study In the parish

—by Priest John Hainsworth, Victoria BC

The following is the text of a presentation made at one of the workshops of the 13th All-American Council. It is hoped that in the next issue of the Messenger we will be able to reprint the text of the major presentation on parish Bible study which was given at the fifth plenary session of the Council by Archpriest Andrew Morbey of Ottawa—ed.

Why a Bible study in the first place?

There is an incident in Acts which offers a special insight into the character of Christian witness. Peter and John, just days after the descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, are taken into custody by the priests, the Sadducees, and the captain of the temple guard. The charge is that “they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead” (4:2). The highest religious and temple authorities, including those directly instrumental in the Lord’s crucifixion, gathered together and had the two uneducated and unknown fishermen placed in the centre—an intimidation tactic. The question asked of them was simple: “By what power, or in what name, have you done this?” (4:7). This was a question which Jesus had faced many times as well—the intention in both cases being to provoke an “heretical” answer. Peter’s response, filled as he was by the Holy Spirit, stunned the authorities to silence.

Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John, and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were marveling, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus (4:13).

In this remarkable verse we see that the Apostles, like true disciples, have taken on the character of their master. But what was that “confidence” of Jesus that the authorities recognized in the Apostles as well? It was simply that the Lord spoke with absolute authority about the only authority that mattered—the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets. He not only knew the Scriptures better than his learned opposition, but He could quote them with absolute confidence in their meaning. In His mouth, the enigma of the Scriptures, which took a lifetime of study and interpretation to understand, became perfectly clear in an instant. The authorities questioning Peter and John realized that these disciples possessed the same infuriating ability with the Scriptures. And this, we learn from the verse above, is the defining characteristic of Christian witness: it is deeply rooted in the Scriptures.

We can even say that that confidence in the Scriptures is the birthright of the Christian. Why?

Because the Christ whom we serve, and follow, and to whom we are being conformed, is the fulfillment of Scripture itself. The Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets—commonly called the Old Testament today—are, according to the Lord Himself, the primary witness to who He is, even the justification for who He is: “You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me” (Jn. 5:39). Thus, the Orthodox Christian, having been baptized and initiated into the mysteries of the Faith, possesses the one key which unlocks the whole of the Scriptural story and its meaning because, as the Apostle Paul says, he possesses “the mind of Christ” (1Cor. 2:16). And, it must be added, we are nothing without this key because we are nothing without the story it reveals. Christians are the people of a story. The Lord did not appear from nowhere with a message and language of His own invention. He came as the fulfillment of a promise made in the beginning to Abraham, in conformity to the prophecy concerning Him. Knowing the promises and the prophecies, the peoples and the sins, the punishments and the mercies, in short, knowing our story, because it is the story of Christ, is the duty and joy of every Christian. Without this knowledge we are bereft of the substance of our conviction, we lack the justification to our actions. When Peter and John were being questioned by the authorities, they had nearby the man who had been “lame from his mother’s womb” but whom they had publicly healed in the name of Jesus Christ. The authorities knew about this man—his healing had led to the Apostle’s arrest—but their miracle alone was not sufficient to release them; it was that the Apostles could also use the Scriptures authoritatively to justify their teachings and actions.

What does all this mean for the Orthodox parish today? If one of the primary characteristics of the Christian witness is that it is rooted in Scripture, then no parish can ignore this aspect of its education ministry except to its serious detriment. Teaching and discussing Scripture must be the central paraliturgical activity of the parish. The 21st century Orthodox parish in North America exists within a culture which is not only ignorant of its roots but demands that those who are not similarly impaired become so in the name of “tolerance.” It is essential that we do not slip into this predicament, especially if we are to remain, as we are commanded to be, “the light of the world” (Mt. 5:14). Being knowledgeable about who we are, where we come from, and what we are meant to do is to keep our lamps trimmed and bright, and to keep our proper perspective in the world.

The parish Bible study is the key to this effort for several reasons. First, it sends the message that the Scriptures, and our place in them, are important enough to give time and effort to their study outside of Liturgy.

Second, the collective nature of a parish Bible study reinforces our faith that the Holy Spirit guides us as a people. In addition, a Bible study offers another opportunity for the children of God to be nourished by His Word (after all, the Lord, quoting Scripture Himself, said “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God”—Mt. 4:4). This nourishment is not simply an academic need. People crave real, workable answers to questions of faith, doctrine, liturgy, and life in general. Often people just need responses to give to others who question them about their faith. Merely by offering a forum for such questions and concerns, the Bible study will richly reward those who participate in it. We are accustomed to answering questions about the validity of Orthodox tradition by saying that the whole of our Tradition is according to Scripture, that in fact it is the Scriptural tradition which informs and keeps in check the Orthodox mind on any matter. We can hardly claim this to be the case, at least not in practice (which is the only real proof), when our own parish does not consider the primacy of Scripture in tradition a good enough reason to study and learn it.

So what is stopping us?

There may be, however, many obstacles to overcome before the parish Bible study can ever really get off the ground, and it would be impossible to tackle them all here. Perhaps they are all just species of the same serious impediment, which is fear, otherwise known as perfectionism, or pride. Few priests are actually Bible scholars, and very few among the laity feel qualified or invited to lead a Bible study. It is also true that for many the Scriptures are a monolithic set of books demanding more effort and brainpower to understand and convey than we have to offer in our frazzled lives. They are like a mountain range which we are safer admiring from a distance than setting foot on. What is needed here, however, is some humility. Our faith, we must remember, is built upon the confession of a fisherman, and upon the witness of “uneducated and untrained men.” We are not expected to be scholars and experts of the Bible, we don’t even need to be so-called “chapter and verse” people; we just need to start by learning what the Bible says. “Ignorance of the Scriptures is a precipice and a deep abyss,” says St Epiphanius, and it is this abyss which we are seeking to avoid. The humility comes not only in the matter-of-fact recognition of our ignorance and our unworthiness—this is hardly to be avoided in any aspect of our life with God—but in undertaking the task of “doing a Bible study” anyway. As a well-known priest and speaker is said to have remarked, “if it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing poorly.” This is not to say, of course, that we would not do our best to bring forth something worthwhile, only to acknowledge

our inevitable poverty before the Living God and to press on, in our awkwardness, for the sake of one another. According to the Lord’s parable of the labourers in the vineyard, we are called to this work, and to all work in service of the Gospel, regardless of the hour, and we will receive our wages regardless of our unworthiness of them. In other words, it is not experts that God needs, it is dedicated, humble workers, and there is no better way to learn than by teaching. If we are called to organize or lead Bible studies in the parish, then there is no reason why we should be our own obstacles to that calling.

What does one need to get started?

When a time is set, the word is out and a topic or book of the Bible is chosen, the leader will need some resources. Unfortunately, the resources are endless for every topic we can imagine in Scripture, and there is no simple sure-fire Orthodox Bibliography. What one person finds useful will be unhelpful to another. There are St Theophylact’s commentaries, and of course there are the volumes written on Scripture by the Fathers of our Church. Both of these resources are essential, to be sure; we should not, however, stop there. Many other useful studies exist, and we should do the work of discovering which ones are most helpful, which ones contribute to the deposit of the Fathers, and which ones suit us best. In other words, merely finding out what the Fathers say about a particular passage and then stopping is not enough; we must strive to read and explore the Scriptures with them, using them as our guides. Apart from commentaries and helpful studies, our Church has a great wealth of resources which are just at our fingertips. Liturgy, festal material, service rubrics, the calendar—all of these aspects of the life of the Church can contribute deeply to our understanding of Scripture. Most importantly, however, is the attitude we bring to the Scriptures. A talented scholar of the Bible once told me to read the Bible on my knees (not literally, but in my heart) and to remember that what I read lives more truly than I, and will be my judge on the Last Day: “Until heaven and earth pass away,” says the Lord in Matthew’s Gospel, “not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished” (Mt. 5:18).

A few resources

One way of leading a Bible study, especially if the leader lacks confidence, is by choosing a commentary and working through it alongside the Bible. There are many commentaries available for this purpose, but only a few modern ones are by Orthodox scholars. The most recent Orthodox commentary has just been published (June 2002) by Conciliar Press and is designed both for personal study

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and group study, all the while aiming at the average layperson and non-professional. Currently, only a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans has been published, but the whole New Testament will eventually follow:

The Orthodox Bible Study Companion - The Epistle to the Romans: A Gospel for All, by Fr Lawrence Farley (Conciliar Press, 2002).

However, the best way to sort through the bewildering array of New Testament commentaries is to invest (\$11 at Amazon.com) in

The New Testament Commentary Survey, 5th Edition, by D.A Carson (Inter-Varsity Press, 2001).

This survey is current, concise, and extremely helpful—well worth the money.

Lastly, anyone interested in carrying on serious research in the Bible, or just anyone who will be using the Bible to preach from or prepare articles with, will benefit immeasurably from the following software:

Bible Works, Version 5, (Bible Works, LLC, Distributed by Hermeneutika, 2001).

The website for this software, www.bibleworks.com, explains its many uses. In a nutshell, however, Bible Works offers unlimited search capabilities, 15 original language texts, dozens of Bible translations (21 in English alone, as well as Russian, Slavonic, Romanian, and Ukrainian) many different lexicons, analysis tools, reference works, and 5 hours of training videos. The software is adaptable, as well, to one's level of competency and software use through the Beginner, Standard, and Power Use interfaces. Bible Works really is one of the best tools a student of the Scriptures can have. Again, well worth the purchase

Pastoral Notes

On 1 June 2002 the Mission of All Saints of Alaska in Victoria BC was renewed and given the name All Saints of Alaska and St Arseny of Konevits. **Priest John Kaleeg Hainsworth** was appointed Priest-in-Charge of the mission.

On 2 June 2002 **Deacon Alexei Kaliouzhnyi** was ordained to the Holy Priesthood at Christ the Saviour Sobor in Toronto, to which he was attached.

On 12 July 2002 **Deacon Mark Korban** was ordained to the Holy Priesthood at Sts Peter and Paul Sobor in Montréal QC. He is attached to the Sign of the Theotokos Church in Montréal, with responsibility for the Eastern Townships.

On 13 July 2002 **Subdeacon Juan Pablo Ruiz-Gomar** was ordained to the Holy Diaconate at St Seraphim of Sarov's Church in Rawdon QC, to which he is attached.

On 1 August 2002 **Priest Alexei Kaliouzhnyi** was released from Christ the Saviour Sobor in Toronto ON and assigned as Priest-in-Charge of Holy Trinity Church, Edmonton AB.

On 6 August 2002, with the blessing of Metropolitan Theodosius, at St Herman of Alaska's Sobor, Edmonton AB, **Archpriest Valdimar Kuchta** was received from the Ukrainian Catholic Church and attached to the Bishop's Chapel of St Silouan the Athonite, Johnstown ON.

On 11 August 2002 **Deacon Michael Schaplowsky** was ordained to the Holy Priesthood at St Herman of Alaska's Sobor, Edmonton AB, to which he is attached as third priest.

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*Dedicated to the memory of St Tikhon,
Patriarch of Moscow (+1925),
Archbishop Arseny (Chahovtsov),
and other missionary labourers
of the Orthodox Church in America.*

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Bishop Seraphim's Visitation Itinerary September – December 2002

6 – 9 Sep	Washington DC: enthronement of Metropolitan Herman
12 – 26 Sep	British Columbia deanery
27 – 29 Sep	Toronto ON
5 – 10 Oct	Chicago: SCOBA dialogue
12 – 18 Oct	New York: SVS and Holy Synod
19 – 20 Oct	Montréal QC: Sts Peter and Paul, and The Sign of the Theotokos
22 Oct	Montréal QC: Mayor
26 – 27 Nov	Toronto ON: Orthodox – Roman Catholic Bishops' Dialogue
11 – 31 Dec	Alberta Deanery

New sobor in Saskatoon

When Holy Resurrection Church in Saskatoon was designated a sobor in the Spring 2002 Paschal awards of the Archdiocese of Canada, the parish was able to use this fact as a means of generating some positive publicity for the church in the local newspaper. The writer is Kathy Szalasznyj. Below is the article, followed on the next page by what we hope is a very helpful "Ten commandments of getting published," written by Ms Szalasznyj specifically for the Messenger as a help to other parishes which might have a story to tell.

If you drive by what used to be Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church at 2202 Lorne Avenue in Saskatoon, it is no longer. It is now the Sobor of the Holy Resurrection by Bishop's decree. While designating a church a *sobor* is a practical detail of diocesan administration, becoming one is also a high ecclesiastical honor. Any connection to being sober? "Not quite!" answers Father Orest Olekshy, veteran priest of the parish, whose punchy sermons have been heard there for 27 years.

A sobor is a mother parish, recognized by the Bishop for its central, supportive work. Representing growing maturity, every province or deanery in time usually has one, and often it is the oldest, geographically-central parish. Sometimes mistakenly referred to as a cathedral, the

Orthodox *sobor* is of Slavic origin, denoting a gathering, a collect. The same word is used for a coming together of the faithful, as in the calling of a diocesan assembly. *Sobornost* has also entered the English language through the writings of Dostoevsky and others as the mystical union of believers, those departed, those still on earth, and those to come.

Semantics aside, the bestowing of this title reflects, among other things, the new sobor's encouragement and practical help provided to other Orthodox Church in America congregations and missions throughout Saskatchewan, at Yorkton, Kayville, Assiniboia, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. Holy Resurrection also has the historical feature of being the first Saskatchewan parish in the Archdiocese of Canada (OCA) to use English completely in liturgical worship.

It has been a long road to a sobor for Holy Resurrection, which began as a handful of people in a school gym in 1975. Diversity grew, from largely university students in the beginning, to families; and serving in English reflected the local need, especially of Orthodox who had married intraculturally. A ministry to street people once earned the pastor a concrete expression of love—a blow to his face for his Gospel message: "The truth hurts and not everyone wants to hear it," Olekshy recalls.

In almost three decades, Holy Resurrection has grown to a hundred ethnically-diverse families (including Eritrea,

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photo credit: James Davis

Parishioners of Holy Resurrection Sobor, Saskatoon, on the occasion of the parish's 25th anniversary.

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Egypt, Romania, Russia and Greece), about 250 people in all, who observe the ancient Orthodox cycle of feasts and fasts in active, modern parish life. Youth abound and have their own coffee-houses and retreats. The parish operates a food bank, undertakes hospital visits, participates in the annual Windows to the East symposium on campus, supports theological courses connected with its head seminary, St Vladimir's, in New York, and meets local neighbourhood needs by opening its downstairs auditorium to Exhibition-area Seniors for meetings and carpet-bowling on Mondays. It has spawned a remarkable number of clergy, four priests, five deacons and numerous minor-order clergy, including the current Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Canada, Fr Dennis Pihach, with an export of clergy to other provinces and even Alaska.

"We experience our life in Christ mainly in the parish," says Fr Orest. As the Anaphora prayers of St Basil explain, the parish community is where God raises the infants, guides the young, supports the aged, encourages the

faint-hearted, reunites the separated and leads back those who are in error. While a parish has a particular, sociological form, it is also an expression of the one Church, the household of God, "Christ's body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph 1:23). It is to be consistently apostolic, unchanging in theology and worship, as it keeps and lives "the faith which was once and for all delivered to the saints," that which has been guarded and developed by Orthodox Christians, particularly their bishops, in all times and places, from apostolic times until now.

"Becoming a sobor is not a retirement award," Olekshy says. "It is a call to continue the work of the Church, following Christ, living and presenting the Gospel. Modern life is a search for answers. The Church has the answers."

The Canadian Archdiocese's 72 parishes, missions and brotherhoods form a part of the larger Orthodox Church in America, numbering approximately 1,000 parishes and priests throughout North America, its roots dating to the earliest Orthodox missions in Alaska in 1793.

Ten commandments for getting published (Well, maybe getting published)

- 1 Have a story**, something the newspaper considers newsworthy. Having a human interest story as a preface to more historical writing quite often works. When you call the paper, be prepared to tell them why you think this is a story, as they will ask.
- 2 Write background material**, the bare bones of an article, and then call the journalist in charge (*e.g.*, editor of the Religious Page) and offer it to him for a quick look. By doing this, you are weighing acceptance in your favour because some of the work is already done. If you can send it as an e-mail attachment, it is not taking up much of his time (or yours) to have a rapid review of it.
- 3 Scout up a suitable photograph** and if you have access to scanning, turn it into a JPEG; this can also be sent to the editor. Otherwise, just suggest a photograph that might work. Sometimes a catching photo is the difference between getting published or getting rejected.
- 4 Don't forget humour** if you are asked to write the article. Sometimes we are tempted to present ourselves extremely seriously and forget the lighter touches. Modern expressions are also useful: think of it as "becoming all things to all that we might win some."
- 5 Add quotations that fit the rest of the piece.** If you need a quotation, perhaps ask your priest or other person in the story for opinions on the issue, comments on the historic anniversary, etc.
- 6 Be accurate.** This is important: spell names correctly, take time to look up addresses, etc., as needed. Internet searches are quick and easy.
- 7 End the piece with a general statement that puts your parish in the larger perspective** (*e.g.*, of the Archdiocese of Canada, number of parishes, roots dating to Alaskan mission, etc.). It gives the broader picture to the reader.
- 8 Stick to the story at hand.** Editors are quick to spot proselytism even in its softest forms!
- 9 If you don't hear from the editor shortly, call him.** They live in a fast world and their memories need to be jogged. (It's not called bugging . . . now they will give you a clear yes or no.)
- 10 Get a blessing on the project—it really helps!** And develop a tough skin should rejections come. Don't take it personally. (Remember *Gone with the Wind* took over fifty attempts . . .)

Rejection humbleth. Publication rejoiceth the heart!

New priest, deacon ordained in Québec

On 12 July 2002, Bishop Seraphim ordained Fr Mark Korban, who has been a deacon for ten years, to the Holy Priesthood in Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral in Montréal. A carpenter by trade, and who along with his wife is a convert to Orthodoxy, Fr Mark and his family live in northern Vermont, close to the Québec border. They live very gently on the earth, having built their own home from straw bales, and growing their own food. The new priest is attached to The Sign of the Theotokos Church, with responsibility for services in the Eastern Townships of Québec.



Pictured above with Bishop Seraphim in the garden of Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral, Montréal, are the Korban family: from l to r, Martha, Peter, Jesse, Matushka Rebecah, Father Mark, Micah, and Daniel. The eldest son, Jonathan, was not available for the photograph.

Pictured below, looking up at Bishop Seraphim as he encourages them in their new ministry, are the Ruiz-Gomar family: from l to r, Deacon Juan Pablo [Pao], Matushka Catherine, Daniel, and Miquel.



On 13 July 2002, Bishop Seraphim ordained to the Holy Diaconate the subdeacon Juan Pablo [Pao] Ruiz-Gomar, who is a Catalan by birth and an academically accomplished linguist, and who now works in hospital care-giving to the elderly. He and his wife, an Albertan by birth, were members of two l'Arche communities in France over the two decades before their conversion to Orthodoxy. Father Deacon Pao is attached to the Chapelle de Saint-Séraphim de Sarov, Rawdon QC, where his ordination took place.

St Innocent award given To Bishop Seraphim

The fifteenth anniversary of Bishop Seraphim's consecration to the episcopate (June 13, 1987) was a fitting expression of the respect, admiration and affection of laity and clergy in the Archdiocese. Parishioners and guests gathered at the Cathedral of the Annunciation / St Nicholas for a beautifully joyous and festive vesperal service on the eve of the feast.

Metropolitan Theodosius awarded to His Grace the Order of St Innocent, silver medal. It was presented by Protopresbyter Robert Kondratik, Chancellor of the OCA, who came to Ottawa for the occasion. The Archdiocesan Council sent greetings in the form of fifteen roses, one for each year, presented by Olga Jurgens, Eastern Secretary of the Bishop. In the presenter's words, the roses were an expression of greeting from the whole Archdiocese with much, much love and gratitude, and with wishes that God would grant him many, many years and blessings.



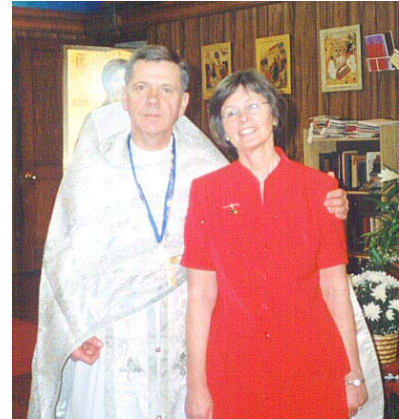
"Fr Bob" Kontratick, Chancellor of the OCA (l) presents Bishop Seraphim with the St Innocent award.

The Cathedral gave a reception afterwards, organized by Fr Andrew Morbey, Dean of the Cathedral. In lieu of formal speeches, Fr Andrew had issued an invitation for stories and reminiscences about Bishop Seraphim's time with us. It was a fitting tribute to Vladyka's gift of ease and acceptance that so many graceful raconteurs spoke, filling the evening with heartwarming, humorous and colourful stories, a fitting accompaniment to the display of photographs assembled by Alexandra Lophoukhine. —Jane Sminiski, Ottawa

*"No matter how much you know about your faith, no matter how well-read you are, no matter what a strong vision you have of how things should and could be; without the fundamentals of prayer, of worship, of self-emptying love, **without a real balance**, you will find that your efforts can be fruitless."* —Bp Seraphim, in his commencement address to graduates of St Vladimir's Seminary, 18 May 2002.

St Tikhon medal awarded To Archpriest John Tkachuk

The Archdiocesan Award of St Tikhon of Moscow was presented to Fr John Tkachuk, pastor of The Sign of the Theotokos Church in Montréal, at the Paschal Services on 5 May 2002.



The Very Rev'd Archpriest John and Matushka Masha Tkachuk.

Protodeacon Cyprian Hutcheon made the presentation after the Matins on behalf of the Bishop. The accompanying citation reads, "By the grace of God, Seraphim, Bishop of Ottawa and Canada, we wish to express our archpastoral gratitude by invoking God's blessing upon Archpriest John Takachuk with the Archdiocesan Award of St Tikhon of Moscow, giving thanks to God for his outstanding and dedicated service in founding the parish of The Sign of the Theotokos in Montréal, Québec, and in serving as Secretary and Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Canada in the Orthodox Church of America."

25th annual OTI retreat held

The 25th annual retreat of the Orthodox Theological Institute in Montréal was held 4 – 6 April 2002 on "In Pursuit of Spiritual Health," with Archpriest Arthur Liolin of the OCA Albanian Archdiocese as guest-speaker. He is pictured below, 2nd from the right, bottom row.



An account of the funeral of Frank Vladimir Natawë (1928 – 2000)

—by *Nadezda Nesnik, Montréal QC*

Some time ago, I attended a “Mohawk Longhouse” funeral for Frank Vladimir Natawë. Vladimir is the name he took at his conversion, at baptism into the Orthodox Faith. In time, he became also a Subdeacon. Born Frank Curotte in 1928 in Kahnawake, of full-blooded Mohawk parents, he was educated by Roman Catholic nuns who referred to the Mohawks as savages, which hurt, even in old age. A brilliant man, speaking the five dialects of the Iroquois Nation, Vladimir had travelled the world and had come home to his people for his final rest.

He was humble, fervent, and very religious, and he kept the fasts, feast days, and all the rituals of the Church. He enjoyed nothing better than to serve in several Orthodox churches, although mostly at The Sign of the Theotokos Church in Montréal, and he made friends among the clergy. Vladimir was a most talented man, a linguist, musician, academic, teacher, and with all this he was decent, kind and generous.

He is remembered as never refusing anyone in need, as can be seen at his funeral in Kahnawake, a Mohawk Reserve just across the St Lawrence River from Montréal; by the attendance and generosity of the villagers (as they prefer to be called) who all participated in one way or another. Some donated, some volunteered, some baked, built, served, worked, arranged the funeral, a bit long as will be evident. The cost was shared by the whole village.

When he died suddenly, around 4 pm, word spread quickly among the 7,000 population; the elders took him to the funeral parlour, where they washed his body (the old custom). The elders dressed the body in the regalia of the chief of the Turtle Clan—the finest, soft deer skin, fringed and beaded for leggings; a shirt of coloured ribbons and beads, and fringed; on his chest, necklaces of coloured beads and a pendant of the turtle. On his feet, were placed the most exquisite beaded and fringed moccasins, and on his head, he wore a headdress made of a beaded band, in the centre of which were upright eagle feathers: this denotes the status of a chief. In his hand, he held an eagle feather. His whole shroud was hand-sewn by a talented seamstress, and donated.

When the deceased was dressed, he was brought to the Longhouse through the front door, feet first, on a board;

and when he left, it would be by the back door, feet first, and then around the Longhouse, in the same order, to complete a circle, and then to the grave. The Longhouse is a long, rectangular log cabin, with a door at each end, and windows all around. The benches around the room on three sides are elevated for good viewing of various functions, and all is of wood.

The deceased was placed on a plywood board the size of his body, which was covered with a traditional hand-woven blanket, in designs for the dead. He was carried by eight chiefs through the front door, and placed in the centre of the Longhouse. The board rested on a platform a metre high for clear viewing from all sides. A plate of corn, beans, peas, seeds and fried bread was placed to one side of his head, to be buried with him. Only a few flowers were seen, as this is a modern custom, and they do not stress wreathes and mountains of flowers, but things closer to nature and earth.

The whole village kept coming throughout the three days, day and night, the Longhouse being open for viewing and paying respects, since the body must not be left alone until burial—as is the custom of the Orthodox Church, and also of Judaism. The idea that one can have the company of family and friends, even in death, is a very comforting thought. The other cabin, called a Cookhouse, is also opened throughout this time, to allow some nutrition for all. Provided was hot corn soup, aboriginal-style, fried bread, coffee, tea and juice. All the food and drink was donated and volunteered, and most appreciated by those who partook in the all-night vigil.

There was no shortage of visitors from among the local population, and they all took turns at vigil—people from all walks of life, the ones he helped, his friends, some teachers from Concordia University, where, in middle-age, Vladimir obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in linguistics and religion. Some came from the Orthodox churches where he had served and visited, and some from the days when he had enlisted in the army and played saxophone in the Canadian Grenadier Guard’s Band.

In the army he had received a special service medal, and he was given an honorary discharge to look after his aged and ailing mother. He was the only son to survive a disastrous house-fire in which his three younger brothers perished. Other siblings died in infancy, leaving only him and an older sister out of nine children, and his sister had been ill for years. The village children came in turns, and so did mothers with babies in strollers, to pay respect. Some came in wheelchairs from the hospital, and all spoke in hushed voices, sharing remembrances, and arranging among themselves who would partake in the

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all-night vigils. They divided into two three-hour shifts. It was amazing how they all cooperated. And, to keep awake, there was always the Cookhouse.

On the afternoon of the funeral, the Longhouse was filled to capacity, as people from Akwesasne and Wnedake Reserves, as well as Kahnawake, Ottawa and other places, came to mourn and bid Natawë a fond “ona-ki-wahi.” This means more than a final good-bye and is more like “I hope your road is good.” Their language is so very expressive.

The first elder spoke only in Kanien’keha (Mohawk), as they all did, not in English, about the life of Frank Natawë, as he is known in the village: of his achievements, his good works, his philosophies, the work he did in his community, and in the establishment of the settlement of Ganienkeh, New York, where he taught in the Aboriginal Way School; of his radio programmes in Mohawk, and of his never having refused a person in need.

The second elder told about the old way in the stone age. When someone died, they carried him with them on their travels, because they did not know what to do with the dead body, they just did not know. The body began to smell, so the people decided to bury it in the ground, and this they have been doing up to this day, and this will be the case for us.

The third elder said that when someone dies, he does not take anything with him: not a house, not a car, not any of his possessions. “You can’t take the sun with you, it’ll be here the next day. You can’t take the clouds, they will be here the next day. You can’t take the nice day with you, it’ll be here the next day and so on. Each one of us will die, and go into the earth, taking nothing with us.” It was very moving, not a whisper was heard, and this I did not understand until it was translated later.

We then moved silently to view the body for the last time, and then out the back door, and the door was closed.

Left in the Longhouse were Frank’s daughter Elizabeth, her husband George, and their five children, grandchildren, and the chiefs, to prepare the body. They laid Vladimir on a bed of beaver pelts, and wrapped him up in the blanket, completely covering him, and strapped him with criss-crossed leather thongs to the “box” (because a four-inch border was put on all around the board).

After some private time, the eight chiefs, with their headdresses on, bore him on their shoulders, going out the back door, circling to the grave, where the volunteers were erecting the monument of the burial scaffold, of

thin tree-trunks. At the grave, the body was covered in a magnificent buffalo skin, which had been donated. A few words were spoken. As the body slowly descended, Elizabeth screamed: “Daddy, Daddy,” and she was held by her husband and her son. The mourners threw earth into the grave, which was quickly filled, and the scaffold was then completed. A year later the scaffold was replaced by a stone monument, which was also donated.

We slowly made our way to the Cookhouse. The memorial reception was a buffet of wonderful native and American foods. It consisted of corn soup (aboriginal style); chicken and dumplings soup; meat of wild deer, moose, cariboo, turkey, chicken, and delicious meat pies; the three staples, called “the three sisters”: corn, beans and squash, prepared in various ways from casseroles to salads; potatoes, wild leek, wild garlic, corn bread, fried bread, modern salads, and modern desserts; and fruit juices, especially strawberry, coffee and tea. Most were in fine spirit, celebrating Vladimir’s life, not death. *Vetchnaya Pamyat!*

Ten days later, some two hundred helpers, all volunteers, were invited to the Natawë home for a meal and distribution of his possessions. Any left-over food was left on the table during the all-night vigil by the family members, George, Elizabeth and their son Jason. The next morning, the food was scraped off the plates, and collected along with Vladimir’s herbs (he was a renowned herbalist), and a baby’s papoose cradle board, made for the child Elizabeth had miscarried, and all were buried in the earth in the front garden.

In sharing this experience, and relating these customs, it is clear to me how similar are many of the Mohawk and Orthodox burial customs.

The Mohawk people, the Orthodox Church, and all who knew him are fortunate to have been a part of his life. *Ona ki wahi—Vetchnaya pamyat—Memory Eternal!*

May He Who has dominion over the living and the dead; and Who Himself rose again from the dead, Christ our true God: through the prayers of His most pure Mother; of the Holy, Glorious and All-laudable Apostles; of our Holy and God-bearing Fathers and of all the Saints, establish in the mansions of the righteous the soul of His servant, Vladimir, departed this life; give him rest in Abraham’s bosom, and number him among the righteous; and have mercy upon us; forasmuch as He is good and loves mankind. Amen. —from the Panikhida

A review of Reginald Bibby's *Restless Gods*

— by Deacon Geoffrey Korz, Hamilton ON

I remember the first time I walked into a Baskin-Robbins store: it was the mid-1970s, and my idea of a “big day out” was a walk to the local shopping mall for ice cream (at that time, stores closed at the supper hour, so there was no such thing as a “big night out”—one simply had to be content to stay home to watch the Muppets).

Up until my first Baskin-Robbins encounter, I was quite content with the selection of a handful of flavours at the corner store: I liked them, I knew what I was getting, and when I was finished, I was happy, and looked forward to the next trip. In short, this was ice cream the way it had been enjoyed for generations. Baskin-Robbins changed all that. From a naive belief that strawberry was a radical choice, I was introduced to tiger tail, mint chocolate chip, cherry vanilla, bubble gum, grape, and—believe it or not—black licorice ice cream. If you weren't sure whether a flavour was worth the risk, a tiny pink plastic spoonful, free of charge, was enough to convince you. One could even get three scoops—unheard of in the innocent days of preschool! I had choice, it was risk-free, and there were no limits. In short, this was ice-cream as it was meant to be.

My earliest ice cream memories often came to mind as I made my way through the chapters of Reginald Bibby's recent book, *Restless Gods*, published several months ago by the now-embattled Stoddart Press. *Restless Gods* is Bibby's latest installment in the Project Canada Research Program, an ongoing survey of Canadian adults 18 and over conducted every five years, starting back in 1975. The book is perhaps the best demographic study of religion and belief ever attempted in Canada, and it cuts to the heart of the beliefs and practices of people coast to coast, building on the things Bibby shared in previous books such as *Fragmented Gods* (1990) and *Unknown Gods* (1995).

Like Bibby himself, the book is optimistic, but firmly rooted in the reality of Canadian religious life. Unlike other writers on the subject of religion in Canada, he does not dwell on the idea of Canadians dropping out of churches, but rather on the reality that Canadians still have solid religious loyalties (about three quarters of Canadians say they belong to a specific religious group), and simply choose to drop in at times of personal need—particularly at weddings, funerals, and for other critical rites of passage. Bibby's main point in *Restless Gods* is that Canadians are in fact receptive to religious practice: we pray, we think about the big questions of life (usually privately), and we acknowledge (at least in principle) that religion has a part to play in personal, social, and definitely in spiritual life. The catch? Canadians want religion that is meaningful to them, that addresses them where they are, and is flexible enough to change to fit them.

Bibby shares some surprising findings in *Restless Gods*. Weekly attendance has plummeted from 32% nationwide in the mid-1970s to a mere 20-21% nationwide today. Interestingly, the decrease in the use of Sunday school is even more dramatic (about an 18% drop). While people mentioned a multitude of things churches should do (organisational issues, ministry factors, and issues relating to the respondents themselves), the largest number of respondents (23%) suggested the need for churches to change their outlook and/or approach to attract new members. Instead of approaching church as a reference point for truth, religion in Canada has become yet another bastion of the free market, where niche marketing and consumer demand is key.

Curiously, in both this book and in *Unknown Gods*, Bibby underlines the finding that the groups that are growing the most are the most countercultural: conservative Protestants, conservative Catholics, Eastern religions, and Eastern Orthodox Christians proportionally show the greatest continued growth nationwide. The one exception to all this is the United Church of Canada, which Bibby admits has proven to have such a resilient core group of members that it has actually seen unexpected stability in numbers over the last few years, while other mainline Protestants have declined. Considering the general Canadian longing for flexibility in outlook and approach, perhaps this should not be surprising, since the United Church adopted extraordinary theological positions on Christ, ecumenism, and sexual morality.

The future will tell all: Bibby tells us that since 1984, the number of self-identified Anglican and United Church teenagers has dropped from 8% and 10% respectively, to roughly 3% each—the same 3% figure of teens who identify themselves as Muslims. As Bibby notes, most Canadians are reluctant to change religious affiliation; they prefer to remain loyal to their group, while expecting the group to change to reflect their wants and needs. This reality will likely have significant implications for the positions held by all religious groups.

The ongoing Project Canada study does not address the spiritual questions behind the demographics, for this is well beyond the scope of the project. It brings to mind, however, a host of spiritual issues for Canadians to consider. What are our real spiritual needs, as opposed to our wants? Should religious organisations be concerned about wants? If a focus on only genuine spiritual needs means a lack of growth (presumably because people are first concerned with their wants), does it matter? Shouldn't dealing with spiritual needs and their earthly implications feed people enough that they will come back? Should religious groups expect people to sacrifice their wants for what they need? Is this realistic? Does it matter? In the end, these are the critical questions Bibby forces religious groups to address.

Canadians have a multitude of religious options, now more than ever. Yet there is a dissatisfaction, a restlessness,
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among the choosers. If a plethora of religious choices has not satisfied the religious “consumer,” one must ask: will more options within religious groups make any difference? Recalling my childhood trip to Baskin- Robbins, I am not as optimistic as Bibby. For the record, out of the thirty-wonderful flavour options, I opted for the black licorice double-scoop, and came away from the experience with a three-day stomach ache. Canada’s religious options left me with a similar feeling, leading me eventually to Eastern Orthodox Christianity.

I guess it’s no surprise I now eat nothing but vanilla.

Two new books from Surrey

This year will see the publication of two books, each one written by a member of the Farley household in Surrey BC.

Conciliar Press will publish a collection of articles written by Matushka Donna Farley. Donna writes a regular column in their quarterly magazine the *Handmaiden*. The column is entitled *Seasons of Grace*, which also provides the title for the upcoming volume. The new book surveys the Church year, providing a series of meditations on the various celebrations, relating the theological meaning of each feast and season to realities in contemporary culture. In this way, it uses the Church calendar as the prism through which to view the Orthodox Faith as a whole, offering new insights, while at the same time speaking prophetically of the culture in which that Faith is lived. Though dealing with the liturgical tradition of the Church, it is no dusty technical tome, but a lively “user-friendly” introduction to Orthodoxy ideal for catechumens and new converts, as well as for those who have been in the Church their whole lives and who welcome a deeper look at their ancestral religion.

The other book published by Conciliar Press (and now available) is the first in a series of New Testament Commentaries written by Fr Lawrence Farley, pastor of St Herman’s Mission in Langley, BC. Entitled *A Gospel for All*, it is a verse-by-verse commentary on St Paul’s Epistle to the Romans. (Conciliar plans to publish three other volumes a year until all the New Testament has been covered.) The series is called the *Orthodox Bible Study Companion*, and makes the Scriptures accessible to the average person. Working from a literal translation of the original Greek, it examines the text section by section, explaining its meaning in everyday language. Written from an Orthodox and Patristic perspective, it maintains a balance between the devotional and the exegetical, feeding both the heart and the head.

Both volumes, *Seasons of Grace* and *A Gospel for All*, are available through Conciliar Press, at Box 76, Ben Lomond, CA., 95005-0076 or at www.conciliarpress.com.

Our father among the saints

St Herman of Alaska

August 9 / 22

St Herman of Alaska is a saint whose life we dearly love, a life many of us know well. His work in the Kodiak school and orphanage, his hut near Monk’s Lagoon on Spruce Island, his carrying of seaweed in a wooden trough, all are familiar to us. We read how his prayers assuaged a tidal wave as he turned in faith to the Mother of God, placing her icon at a spot above which, he prophetically said, the sea would not rise. We value the secondary relic of some soil from his grave, or water from his spring, if we are blessed to have these.

What shaped him to be the unique North American saint he is? As his prayers were ascending to heaven, in what ways did his feet touch the earth? How did he relate to those in his new surroundings without ethnocentrism and even with ease?

First, it is interesting to note what was happening in his native Russia at that time. When he left for Alaska in 1793, in the last years of the reign of Catherine the Great, the revered lover of Christ in Russia, Tikhon of Zadonsk, had been in repose for only ten years. His veneration was steadily growing.

That year, St Seraphim of Sarov had just been ordained a priest. Although they were located many versts apart in Russia, Sts Herman and Seraphim were spiritually connected: the vine joining them was the Elder Nazary, a holy man living in the Sarov wilds, later sent in obedience to Valaam. Seasoned by his reclusive life in the forest, Nazary had been sent to build up the monastery there, as state policy over the course of years had brought it into decline. He was the teacher and guide of both Frs Herman and Seraphim, returning again to Sarov from Valaam in 1804.

There is an anecdote that demonstrates Nazary’s value as a spiritual man, and the kind of roots he would have given his disciples. When Metropolitan Gabriel of Petersburg asked for Nazary of Sarov for Valaam, the Abbot of Sarov was loathe to part with him, and wrote back that he was “not fit” due to his lack of spiritual knowledge and experience. He had lived in the forest and had acquired his understanding through hard, simple labour and few books. He could read, but he could not write. But reading between the lines, Metropolitan Gabriel persisted—“I have many of my own wise men—send me your ‘fool’!” From the islands of Lake Ladoga, soon Valaam would shine again under Nazary’s good guidance and disciplined example—even to the New World.

Like Nazary, Sts Herman and Seraphim each chose the desert-like, quiet life of the forest, the practical, simple life in Christ. Both would have been experienced in the use of the Sarov prayer rule, which Nazary introduced to Valaam. They reposed in the same decade, St Seraphim in 1833 and St Herman in 1837.

Central to the life of St Herman in Alaska is faithful obedience to the instructions of his Abbot and to the same

Metropolitan Gabriel who also commissioned the Alaskan journey. It was to be an obedience that stretched through a period of over forty years. He would be the last surviving member of the Mission.

Metropolitan Gabriel's words were perceptive ones, as one whose spiritual legacy included St Stephen of Perm, famous Orthodox bishop-missionary to the northern peoples of Russia. "He advised them to remember their goal was to plant the seed; as men they could not do more. If the seeds bore fruit, it was not their doing, but God's grace alone. The missionary's role, then, was to explain the nature of God and His design for man. Above all, he was to be a witness of the Christian life and message; by this it was meant, he was to live with humility and simplicity, to have patience, to keep his mission in perspective and to avoid excessive zeal." Such a steady, peaceful, humble pace is strongly evident in the life of St Herman.

The spirit of these instructions would be repeated to those laboring under difficult conditions and cultural differences over the years, shaping the face of missionary interaction: "On arriving in some settlement...on no account say that you are sent by some government, or give yourself out for some kind of official functionary, but appear in the guise of a poor wanderer, a sincere well-wisher to his fellowmen, who has come for the single purpose of showing them the means to attain prosperity, and as far as possible, guiding them in their quest. From the moment when you first enter on your duties, strive by conduct and by virtue becoming your dignity, to win the good opinion and respect not alone of the natives, but of the civilized residents as well. Good opinion breeds respect and one who is not respected will not be listened to.... Do your best to win their confidence and friendly regard, not by gifts or flattery, but by wise kindness, by constant readiness to help in every way, by good and sensible advice and sincerity.... Be gentle, pleasant, simple and in no way assume an overbearing, didactic manner, for by so doing you can seriously jeopardize the success of your labours."

Whether teaching children or baking them cookies, or nursing to health the victims of cholera, or showing others how to plant or how to build things, St Herman fulfilled the precepts of being gentle, simple, sincere and pleasant. Yet "wise kindness" commanded him to take a fearless stand against the way the indigenous peoples were being cruelly treated by the Russian-American Company, to honestly oppose its manager, Alexander Baranov, known as the "Lord of Russian America." Taking up the cause of the suffering people in person and by letter, St Herman described himself simply as their *nyan'ka* or nurse.

Persecution and slander by Baranov followed, which was to last not one or two years—but twenty-three years—until 1817, when Baranov left Alaska. He was replaced in 1818 by Simeon Yanovsky, who immediately discerned something of the spiritual calibre of Fr Herman. They struck a deep friendship and Yanovsky became a strong Christian believer through St Herman's conversations and example. He would be the one who would preserve St Herman's letters intact for us today.

Persecution came in other ways, too. From 1825 until 1834 an "assistant" sent from Siberia to him created much difficulty for him, virtually plundering his hermitage and causing Herman to be exiled for three years to Kodiak. Almost a decade of forbearance was needed in dealing with this situation.

Perhaps it is best to say that the life of St Herman presents a picture of one focused firmly upwards, rooted where he served and joined horizontally to his brothers in Valaam. This may well be the key (or the cross image) that made him "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord" (1 Cor.15:58).

To become one with the people, St Herman joined in their sufferings. His simple, rugged lifestyle, and his endurance without complaint represented voluntary suffering. He took on being "one of them" in a symbolism that we can draw in the Lord's incarnation, and in the process crossed cultural boundaries, just as hospitable kindness in the face of primary need for food or shelter can join men who do not speak the same language. Perhaps it is even more accurate to say, he transcended the cultural boundaries. And given the policy of the Church, which said that no one should consider himself a missionary unless he had translated at least one of the Gospels into at least one native dialect and taught it to fifty people, the indigenous peoples would have felt the sense of being "reached toward."

In fellowship, it is obvious that Fr Herman remained very much attached in spirit to Valaam. Thirty years after leaving for Alaska, he was still writing regular letters to the Abbot (now Innokentii) as one away from home, as he said, in his heart seeing his beloved Valaam across the waters.

In all, Fr Herman gives the impression of one who, though a hermit, did not see himself as alone, in fact, did not see himself at all, for his concern was for those around him, his eyes on Christ, his understanding shaped by the missionary precepts to which he strove to be faithful. It is his steadfastness we applaud. Truly the North Star as his tropar says, faithful guide, humble acceptor of where the Lord, through His church, had placed him. And we remember the steadfastness of Nazary, for without his obedience, would we have a St Herman? And without St Herman, would some of us be here?

St Herman of Alaska, pray for us!

{The first investigation into the holy life of the elder Herman took place in 1867 by Bishop Peter of Alaska; publications about his life followed in 1894, 1900 and 1952, with an Akathist Hymn composed to him in the latter year. "The Address of the Great Council of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, 11-13 March 1969, Concerning the Canonization of the Spiritual Father Herman of Alaska" was issued, with his canonization following on August 7 - 9, 1970.}

M.A. in Orthodox theology Now offered in Toronto

A Master's degree in Orthodox thought, based on the Certificate in Theology established several years ago at the University of Sherbrooke campus in Montréal under the guidance of Dr John Hadjinicolaou, will be available to students in the Toronto area starting in September 2002. Though taught on the campus of the University of Toronto (and giving access to the resources of the U of T Library system), the degree will be granted by Sherbrooke. While Toronto will offer the same core graduate-level courses in Orthodox theology, history, liturgics, and spirituality as will be offered in the programme at Sherbrooke, the Toronto curriculum will have a unique emphasis on Orthodox iconography, iconology, music, and culture in relationship to the liturgical practice and life of the church.

The core faculty teaching in Toronto will be: Dr Andreas Andreopoulos, a postdoctoral researcher at the Pontifical Institute of Toronto; Fr Pavlos Koumarios, who holds a doctorate from the Pontifical Oriental Institute where he studied history of liturgy under Robert Taft, and who is working on a second doctorate in Patristic theology under Metropolitan John Zizioulas; and Prof Richard Schneider, who taught Church history, New Testament, Christology, and iconology for 38 years at York University, and who is Visiting Professor of Orthodox Iconology at St Vladimir's Seminary. It is expected that courses will also be offered in Toronto by distinguished visiting faculty from various Orthodox institutes and seminaries, as has been customary in the Sherbrooke campus programme.

Students in the Toronto programme may be either special status (just taking courses) or may pursue the M.A. degree either part-time or full time. All courses will be offered in the evenings to make the programme available to

those with full-time jobs. The degree can be obtained in two years of full-time study through a 10-course programme plus a Master's thesis. (It is expected that a second degree option based on more course work without a large Master's thesis will be available soon). Admission to the degree is open to any student with a four-year Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) in any subject, but those who do not have any prior university-level training in religious studies or theology will be expected to demonstrate proficiency in a range of basic subjects—Church history, New Testament, fundamentals of Orthodox thought and liturgy, and art history—either by examination or by following a series of core reading courses at the start of their programme. (Students using this latter option should anticipate three full-time years of study before achieving the Master's degree). The language of instruction in Toronto will be English.

In September 2002, the first three M.A. courses will be a required introduction to academic research—reference tools and methodologies—in theology and Orthodoxy (Dr Andreopoulos), history of the Byzantine liturgy (Fr Pavlos), and a historical introduction to Orthodox dogmas and the Councils (Prof Schneider). Anticipated for the Winter Semester are courses on the spirituality and theology of modern Orthodox art, later (8th-14th C) Orthodox Patristics, and Orthodoxy and the West from Patristic times to the 20th C ecumenical movement and to Orthodox Church life in non-Orthodox lands. Future years of the Toronto programme will see the addition of many more courses, including 20th C Orthodox theology, Orthodox iconology, more courses in liturgical history and theology, mystical and ascetic theology, readings of key sources of theology and liturgy in original languages, and other subjects.

For further information or applications, contact Fr Pavlos Koumarios [416-926-1300 ext 3440, pavlos.koumarios@utoronto.ca] or Prof Richard Schneider [416-532-5488, rchneid@yorku.ca]

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