

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

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14th AAC meets in Toronto, reflects on priorities

The 14th All-American Council of the Orthodox Church in America was held at the Sheraton Centre in Toronto 17-22 July 2005. The final registration tally was 1,187 : hierarchs, clergy and lay delegates, observers, guests, and a large youth contingent—all gathered to reflect on the theme of “Our Church and the Future.” With a little over a hundred delegates and observers present, the Archdiocese of Canada was well-represented.

Metropolitan Herman’s address to the Council on the first day set the tone of thanksgiving for the past, concern and reflection in the present, and determination and hope for the future. He called attention to the fact that the OCA has a long history, as evidenced by this year’s celebrations of the 100th anniversary of St Tikhon’s Monastery in Pennsylvania and the 35th anniversaries of the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in America by the Moscow Patriarchate, and the glorification of St Herman of Alaska.

“The experience of the Orthodox Church in America and its vision of Church life, as expressed through the All-American Council, are unique among the world’s local Orthodox Churches,” the Metropolitan said. Our understanding of the Church, he continued, “is not a narrow understanding.” There is “a shared involvement in the Church’s life—by hierarchs, clergy, and laity alike.” This means, he said, that “every Orthodox Christian, having received the Holy Spirit, may properly express concern for the Church, discuss the Church’s challenges and needs, and suggest insights and answers to the challenges faced by the Church, as long as this is in keeping with the Church’s Faith and Tradition.” It is a vision and an experience which is not democratic, because it will always be the responsibility of the hierarchy to ensure the purity of Orthodox Faith and Tradition. But it is a vision and an experience of conciliarity.

Concluding his address, the Metropolitan urged Council delegates and observers to a “greater appreciation of our identity and a stronger affirmation of who we are and who we are called to be We are autocephalous, yet we are also well-experienced in living in relationship with the many jurisdictions also present in North America We know what it means to live in diversity, in circumstances without precedent, and we possess the creativity to address situations that can often be very complicated. We bring to this our commitment to good Church order and our reputation for adhering to the Orthodox Church’s ecclesiological and canonical principles. This is a gift we must share—and which we must share with boldness.”

In order to focus on the theme of the future of the OCA, the Council’s plenary sessions were organized around reflections on five “pillars” of Church life : vision and identity as the Orthodox Church in America; clergy formation and development; parish health; evangelization in North America ; and relations with other Orthodox churches and with other Christian bodies. At least one plenary session was devoted to each one of these topics of reflection and concern, with expert speakers, panel discussions, and limited time for questions and suggestions from those assembled.

On the subject of *vision and identity*, delegates expressed a vision of the Church as essentially missionary, and stressed the need for the ongoing work of revitalizing older communities while planting new missions, especially in regions which in the past had little or no Orthodox presence. During workshop sessions, both clergy and lay delegates emphasized that the OCA’s autocephalous status reflects an understanding of the Church as serving all who would receive the Gospel, rather than a “diaspora” (emigration) sharing the same ethnic, cultural, or linguistic background.

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In the area of *clergy formation and development*, delegates strongly affirmed the central, traditional role of seminary training, as well as the importance of providing appropriate, or even full, funding for theological students. They also offered proposals for ongoing formation of clergy, including such things as continuing education, distance learning and satellite programs. For seminarians they emphasized pastoral, rather than theoretical, skill building, resource sharing, mentoring, and internship programs. Many delegates suggested the reestablishment of the Summer Internship Programme, recently suspended because of diminished free-will offerings. A number of clergy who had participated in this programme spoke of the benefits they gained from the experience.

On the "pillar" topics of *parish health* and *evangelism*, delegates stressed the importance of education and formation of both clergy and laity as basic for successful evangelization and the health of parish communities. Strong opinions were expressed about the need for experiential, practical, skill-based education for every member of the Church, clergy and lay, of whatever age. Also emphasized was regular personal contact among members of the Church to share skills, provide mentorship and direction, and receive and offer spiritual and pastoral care. Some delegates noted the talents of retired clergy, suggesting that they be called upon to share their experience for the benefit of parishes and individual persons alike. Many delegates also expressed the need for sensitivity in regard to ministry, not only to traditionally Orthodox immigrant groups, but also to peoples of other backgrounds: Aborigines, Blacks, and those of Hispanic and Asian backgrounds. In plenary sessions as well as workshop groups, many related their experiences in successfully opening their parishes to neighbourhood groups and the broader communities in which they exist rather, than abandoning the "old neighbourhoods" altogether.

Finally, with regard to *relations with Orthodox and non-Orthodox*, delegates made it clear that the health of parishes and successful evangelism cannot be seen as apart from the quest for Orthodox unity in North America. While the importance of inter-Orthodox cooperation in the quest for administrative unity in North America surfaced as a central concern, the reality—that such unity is not likely in the immediate future—should not hinder the work of local parishes in developing and strengthening cooperative efforts and ministries in order to proclaim and witness to the Gospel.

In the area of "ecumenical" dialogue, several delegates expressed concern over the Church's participation in such agencies as the National Council of Christian Churches (USA). It was noted that such matters remain within the

competency of the Holy Synod of Bishops. In a powerful presentation on the Church's current inter-Christian relations, Fr Leonid Kishkovsky, Assistant to the Chancellor for External Affairs and Inter-Church Relations, echoed the sentiment expressed in Metropolitan Herman's opening address, in which he recognized the tensions that exist as a result of the Church's participation in inter-church organizations while sharing even greater concern for the Church's responsibility to proclaim the fulness of the Gospel. He also described the connections between the "ecumenical" participation of most of the Orthodox Churches, both in North America and globally, and the Orthodox Churches' common witness and common theological voice in these organizations and events. He noted clearly that "ecumenical" participation requires exceedingly careful discernment. As further proof of the OCA's commitment to this task, it was reported that the Holy Synod of Bishops had blessed the Church's participation as a founding member of Christian Churches Together, thereby providing yet another opportunity to proclaim the Gospel on this continent. It was noted that in the *Tomos of Autocephaly*, the Church is charged to "maintain direct relations with all other churches and confessions, Orthodox and non-Orthodox alike."

One of the more interesting things about the 14th AAC, at least to those who have attended previous Councils, was the first-ever use of a "Summary Team." This very hard-working group of people, headed by Mr David Wagschal of Canada and Mrs Valerie Zahirsky of the USA, spent many hours day and night collecting information from the plenary sessions, mid-day workshops, and sometimes even more casual gatherings of delegates (and also including the sifting through of literally thousands of post-it note suggestions), in order to report in detail to the Council on what were the major concerns and priorities of all those assembled.

In their final plenary session report, the Summary Team noted that the comments, suggestions, and proposals of the delegates fell broadly under three main priorities, with suggestions for both long-term and short-term action. Under the *first priority, mission (evangelization)*, delegates wanted to see fifty new missions established, as well as fifty revitalized parishes achieved within the next five to ten years. Within the next three years, they would hope to see the establishment of some kind of Church-wide evangelization programme, as well as seeing the topic of evangelization become a central component in seminary curriculum. Within this three-year perspective also, they called for the establishment of local mission directors, a heightening of the profile of the Mission

Appeal offering, and a dedication of the next AAC to the topic of mission. They suggested that within the next three months, the Department of Evangelization develop specific recommendations to implement these long- and short-term goals before the Fall 2005 meeting of the Holy Synod.

Under the *second priority, education and formation*, the team reported that within the next five to ten years, delegates would like to see funding provided for all seminarians studying for the priesthood; the development of a richer, more varied system of educational resources, especially those which are skill-based and focused in person-to-person contact; and the development of mentoring and internship programmes as norms of Church life. It was felt that within a three-year framework, there should be the creation of annual North American "Orthodox life" conferences, as well as the establishment of a programme and director(s) of "ongoing pastoral education and care." It was hoped that within the next three months there would be the revitalization of the Summer Internship Programme and that the Department of Christian Education would consider developing the five- to ten-year and the three-year priorities.

Under the *third priority, Orthodox unity*, the Summary Team reported that four general recommendations had emerged among the delegates. First, they reaffirmed the role of the OCA as a leading voice for Orthodox unity. Second, they recommitted themselves to the prayerful support of Metropolitan Herman and the Holy Synod in their ongoing efforts to promote Orthodox unity. Third, they encouraged the development of inter-Orthodox collaboration, especially on the local level. And finally, they recommended that the bilateral commission between the OCA and the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America be reestablished.

Throughout the week, Council participants took advantage of nearly two dozen luncheon forums exploring a wide variety of topics. There was a full schedule of activities and outings organized by the Department of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry for the Council's 250 youth observers. There were receptions—for all delegates on the evening before the first plenary, for Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards members, and for graduates of St Tikhon's and St Vladimir's seminaries. On Thursday evening the Grand Banquet was held, with over a thousand delegates and guests present. For Canadians there was the Wednesday evening get-together with dinner at the hotel, an event which Bishop Seraphim said made him feel as if it were "like an Assembly of the diocese," because there were so many.

The Archdiocese of Canada booth at the AAC :

Canada's friendly welcome

Hundreds of visitors streamed by the Archdiocese of Canada booth at the 14th All-American Council held at the Sheraton Centre, Toronto, July 17 - 22, pausing to pick up many items, including a four-page historic newspaper collage of articles on the Archdiocese, a Maple Leaf pin in honour of our new Cathedral in Ottawa, and to get a bottle of pure Canadian maple syrup for home.

In striking reds and blues, our illuminated exhibit was a welcoming one, strongly visible from the tradeshow doors. A fine replica of Holy Resurrection Church, Sifton—built by Sargie Kachur of that community to inform people of the historic restoration of this focal Orthodox heritage site—attracted much interest, and donations to the Sifton project were made in memory of many, from Texas to Alaska.

Information on the St Arseny Theological Institute, on our Cathedral, on "Nashi" (an Orthodox organization working to stop human trafficking in Eastern Europe) and the Spring, 2006 Pilgrimage to Ukraine also enriched our booth, along with a map of our parishes, missions, theological institutes and other endeavours. At most times, the chairs beside our exhibit were full as people stopped to chat and rest, Canadians too!

The pictorial banner above the booth, designed and supplied by Deacon Gregory Scratch of Ottawa (a graduate of the Emily Carr Institute), received so many favourable comments that they could fill a book! We send Dn Gregory our deepest thanks for representing our Archdiocese in such graphic splendour. Archdiocesan Archivist, Katya Szalaszyj, was able to tap the memories of "ex-Canadians" at the table. The photos of Archdiocesan youth in the exhibit were a highlight, a tribute related to the AAC theme, "Our Church and the Future."

Information, cooperation and fun came together at the Canadian booth. A special thanks to all who worked for it and at it!—KS

Wanted : a few good people!

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." (Matt 28:19-20) Has this verse ever stirred a feeling of excitement and anticipation in you? Have you ever felt God calling you to spread and promote the Orthodox Faith? If you have always had the desire to bring the Orthodox faith to the masses, then we are looking for you!

In order to accomplish this, our Archpastor, His Grace, Bishop Seraphim, has blessed the establishment of a church growth network within the Archdiocese of Canada. We are looking for lay volunteers for the task of bringing the "best-kept secret" in Canada, our Orthodox Faith, to the Canadian people. In the article from the Winter 2004/2005 issue of the Canadian Orthodox Messenger, p 8, a plan was laid out for church growth, a possible solution, and how to get started. Now it is time, and His Grace has told me that he wants us to start this holy work!

A lay volunteer is required in each parish or mission to be the strategic person working with his or her priest and the Archdiocese to develop a parish/mission plan for growth, based on the plan in the previous article. In order to grow we must have a plan. Perhaps your parish/mission already has a plan in place. This is great! We would like you to share it with us and share how it is working. The purpose of the church growth volunteer is to be the coordinator of developing and carrying out a plan for parish evangelism in conjunction with the parish priest and a church-growth team. The church-growth volunteers will be able to exchange ideas of what works, as well as what does not, with the other church-growth volunteers. There will also be training so that you can fulfill your ministry as a church-growth volunteer.

If church growth is your ministry, talk to your parish priest and then contact me, Deacon Gregory Kopchuk, via email at gkopchuk@yahoo.com, or call me at (780) 451-2758.

Is it possible to grow a church?

—by Deacon Gregory Kopchuk, St Herman's, Edmonton

The answer to the above title question is—Yes! "How?" you might well ask. The Church is the Body of Christ. It is a living, breathing organism and will naturally grow the same way babies grow up and flowers grow every spring. The question to ask is not "How do we grow?"

but rather "What are we doing to prevent growth?" A parish will naturally grow because it is the Body of Christ. It will grow if we let it. Our job is to promote those things that will bring healthy growth to the Body of Christ, and to identify and improve in those areas that may be preventing growth.

As St Paul writes in 1 Cor 3:6: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." So do we actually grow the Church? No. The Holy Scriptures make it abundantly clear that it is God Who grows His Church. We plant the seeds of growth, we water them, and the growth is given through the operation of the Holy Spirit. When the time to harvest has come, we are called to harvest, but first we must plant! If we want to grow we have to plant seeds of growth with those who are Orthodox and not attending church, with those who were baptized in another faith and have fallen away from their churches, and with those who were never baptized. In Canada this represents close to 22 million men, women and children.

Planting seeds of growth with these three groups is similar, however their concerns are different. Many of the Protestant converts we have received into Orthodoxy were very active in their own churches. Many were priests or pastors in their Protestant churches, Bishop Seraphim being the most obvious example. So, in our seed-planting, expect to see those who are active in their own faiths coming to see us. The field is huge in which to sow our seeds of growth, the labourers are few, but the harvest will be plentiful.

In our radio program called "Welcome Home," we have aired many interviews with Protestants who have converted to Orthodoxy. One thing to be learned through these interviews is that the process of the Holy Spirit's moving people to come to "the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church" is not a short-term project. The journey has taken many of these converts from five to thirty years. In all cases it was because someone they knew or heard of (for examples, Fr Peter Gilquist, Frankie Schaffer) became Orthodox. Many of the converts were not even looking for the Orthodox Church and were quite happy where they were going to church. We never know what the Holy Spirit will do with the seeds we plant, but we still must plant them!

One of the most common statements made by those who are life-time Orthodox is "If God wants the Church to grow, He will send people to us." Part of that is true; however, if people who are looking do not know who we are or where they can find us, how can they come to us? We have to let them know where to find the Orthodox Faith. Many of the Protestants who have fallen away from their churches do not even know that the Orthodox

. . . a priority of the 14th AAC: mission and evangelism . . .

Church exists. They are taught church history from 1517 AD, the time of the Protestant Reformation which started with Martin Luther, to the present day. They know very little about what happened in the Church from Pentecost to 1517 AD.

To illustrate, I share with you the story of my Protestant friend who attended my ordination to the Diaconate. The other week we were talking and I mentioned that the Orthodox Church was the original Church founded at Pentecost. He did not know this and found the statement quite a surprise. Why? Because no one, not even me, had ever told him. This is why we have to make the general public aware of the Orthodox Church and why we are here.

If we start now with people who have never heard of Orthodoxy, it may be at least seven years before the harvest is ready. If God wills it, it will be sooner. This is not a short-term project and it is not for those looking for quick gratification. It is easy to see why many parishes have either given up on church growth or never tried. It requires a lot of hard work and sometimes, but not always, you might not see any results for a number of years. It is a bit like farming!

Acts 2:42-47 tells us : *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food*

with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

This passage tells us the basics of what we need to do to grow : plant seeds, water them, watch them grow, and harvest the crop. It starts with your parish and where it is now. A healthy parish can grow, but a healthy parish is not a guarantee that you will grow unless you start doing the things necessary for that growth. A parish that is not healthy has no chance of growing unless it heals itself and removes the barriers that are preventing God-ordained growth from occurring. Is there a way to measure the health of a parish? Yes. A brief outline of this process is found in the previous article and there will be more detail in the next issue of the *Messenger*.

Remember, when a vineyard is planted, it takes at least seven years for the newly planted vines to begin bearing grapes for the harvest. Let us begin planting, so as to reap a bountiful harvest for the Master.

For more information, you can listen to the stories of the journeys to Orthodoxy of several of our Protestant converts on our website at www.orthodoxradio.ca and click on Previous Shows. Each show is 30 minutes in length. We are also requesting and accepting donations to run the radio program. Each show costs \$150 to air. Any help which you are able to provide is greatly appreciated. A charitable receipt will be issued for all donations received.

If you have any questions about the foregoing or are interested in being a lay volunteer for church growth in your parish, please contact me via email at gkopchuk@yahoo.com or call me at (780) 451-2758.

Sifton project is ready to roll !

This is an appeal to please support the Sifton Restoration Project, where Holy Resurrection Church is getting a new foundation, its roof and walls redone. This Church was **built by St Arseny**, one mile from the Monastery grounds, in 1926. Our Archdiocese is in partnership with the parish, the Sifton Historical Society and Manitoba heritage programs for it, and work begins in September. A replica of the Church at the All-American Council made by Sargie Kachur of Sifton brought In Memory donations from Unalaska, Texas, Illinois and Russia. Some just wrote their own names as donors, which works, too. **Our list for the plaque is growing, but we have very few Canadian names on it. Please do not be left out! Send your donation, however, small, and the name of the person you might like on the plaque to: Katya Szalasnyj, Archivist, 2506 Woodward Avenue, Saskatoon, SK, S7J 2E5.** (Make the cheque, please, to Sifton Restoration Fund.) You will become a partner in this holy rebuilding taking place in the heart of Canada, a place of Orthodox Outreach to come—and your loved ones will be remembered! (Income tax receipts will be sent; all requests for anonymity will also be respected.) Thank you.



Protodeacon Andrew Piasta Ordained to priesthood

On the Saturday before Pentecost 2005, a glorious occasion occurred with the ordination of Protodeacon Andrew Piasta to the priesthood. The excitement of the festal occasion could be felt throughout the church. After much preparation, the members of St Mark the Evangelist, Yorkton, were gathering to participate in this glorious event. The church soon filled up not only with St Mark's parishioners, but also with Protodeacon Andrew's family and friends. People were in attendance not only from the Yorkton area but also from across the western provinces.

To celebrate this event, joining His Grace, Bishop Seraphim were four priests from the Archdiocese of Canada, two priests from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (one a classmate of Fr Andrew twenty years ago), one from the Romanian diocese, as well as four deacons, two from the Romanian diocese. Because of Fr Andrew's many years of service as a protodeacon, Vladyka elevated him to the rank of Archpriest immediately upon his priestly ordination.

Archpriest Andrew is a graduate of St Andrew's Seminary in Winnipeg. He was ordained to the diaconate and served at St Herman of Alaska's Sobor in Edmonton for many years before moving to Yorkton. For many years also Fr Andrew served as Bishop Seraphim's Western Secretary and in that capacity served on the Archdiocesan Council. Fr Andrew's own father, William, was thrilled to be at his son's priestly ordination. William fell asleep in the Lord one month afterwards. Memory eternal!

—Fr Rod Luciuk, St Mark's, Yorkton



Archpriest
Andrew
with his
family. In
the wheel
chair is his
father,
William

Clergy who celebrated with Bishop Seraphim at the ordination. Kneeling, l to r: Dn John Bujea, OCA Romanian Episcopate, St George's, Regina SK; Dn Ken Gaber, OCA Romanian Episcopate, St Elias, Lennard MB; Dn Gregory Kopchuk, St Herman of Alaska's Sobor, Edmonton, AB. Second row, l to r: Fr Rodion Luciuk, St Mark's, Yorkton; Fr Roman Kocur, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, Holy Transfiguration, Yorkton; Fr Andrew Piasta, St Mark's, Yorkton; Bishop Seraphim;

Fr Dennis Pihach, St Herman's Sobor, Edmonton AB; Protodn Raphael Cole, Holy Trinity Sobor, Winnipeg MB; Dn Taras Papish, Holy Resurrection Sobor, Saskatoon SK; Fr Mel Slashinsky, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada, Holy Ghost, Ituna SK; Fr Octavin Mahler, OCA Romanian Episcopate, St Elias', Lennard, MB. Third row, behind Bishop Seraphim, l to r: Fr Stephen (Robert) Kennaugh, St Nicholas', Narol, MB; Fr Anatoliy Melnyk, Holy Trinity Sobor, Winnipeg MB.



Both photographs courtesy of Subdeacon Jim Davis

All Saints' Day celebrations At All Saints' monastery

It was a glorious All Saints' Day celebration this year at the Canadian Orthodox Monastery of All Saints of North America (also called New Ostrog Monastery) in Dewdney, British Columbia. On Sunday, June 26 the annual Healing Service was held, attended by more

than two hundred people of Russian, Romanian, Ukrainian, Greek, Arab, and convert backgrounds. They came from the churches of St Nicholas, St Herman of Alaska, Mar Elias, Holy Resurrection, and Holy Trinity, and it was heartwarming to be gathered in the undivided "nation of the heart" we call Orthodoxy. Held outdoors on the breathtaking grounds in Dewdney, amidst a rock garden, butterflies, and mountains, the service was presided over by His Eminence, Archbishop Lazar, the Abbot, and His Grace, Bishop Varlaam, and concelebrated with Fathers Lawrence Farley (Dean of British Columbia), Johanna Ayoub, John Bingham, Mikhail Fourik, Nicolae Lapuste, and Stephen Slipko.

Services began with prayers, seven Epistle and Gospel readings, candle-lighting, and a blessing of the Holy Oil "for the healing of soul and body." Soon a large Cross-procession followed, in which many women, myself included, were asked to carry holy relics, in imitation of the Myrrh-bearing Women who tended Christ long ago. By the edge of the "Jordan River" and the field of "Little Kosovo" we journeyed, with sweet birdsong drifting on the wind, up to the stone monument erected in memory of the faithful who lie asleep in Serbia and all the world, waiting to awaken in the new dawn.

The procession of clergy and laity, united in the "royal priesthood" (1 Pet 2:5 - 9), our voices raised in hymns, was like the great pilgrimages held every year in the Holy Land, Russia, and Eastern Europe—a timeless fellowship hoping for the Heavenly Kingdom to come.

And the invisible presence was clearly felt of Angels and Saints whose relics we bore, in elegantly carved boxes draped in linens, as together with them we offered our hearts in prayer to the King of the Universe. Then we traced our steps back along the path and the priests held the beloved Gospel over us like an archway, as one by one we walked underneath it, back to the garden. In this, I thought there was a spiritual symbol: our journey ending in the place where it began, to be anointed with Holy Oil



Photograph courtesy of Bryan Osbourne

Clergy and faithful lay people gather at the "Little Kosovo" monument erected in memory of the Orthodox fallen in Serbia and all the world.

once by each priest, who then anointed each other, as the Holy Spirit descended to heal us all. During the anointing, we sang "O Lord, save Thy people," led by Hieromonk Moses, and young and old alike were deeply moved with sincere emotion and felt very blessed.

As the light slowly dimmed into evening, and we shared in the breaking of bread at an agape feast, I think there was not one person who did not give thanks for this beautiful, touching experience. For I could not help but look upon these men, women, and children—Bishops, Priests, Monastics, and all the Faithful—with a smile and tears of joy. It is they, and all those like them, who keep the spirit of Orthodoxy alive in this part of the fallen world. Here, in British Columbia, the Gospel is vibrantly thriving, and I encourage everyone to come to this sacred monastery, a place of true Christian love and devotion, and rejoice in our Lord, God, and Saviour Jesus Christ.—*Rebekah Goodyear, St Nicholas' Parish, Langley BC.*

Saskatoon holds Mother Oksana lecture

On Bright Saturday, May 7th, a joyous event brought parishioners, parish friends and the general public together: the first-ever Mother Oksana Memorial Lecture held at Holy Resurrection Sobor, Saskatoon. It is seven full years since Presbyteria Oksana Olekshy of blessed memory, wife of Archpriest Orest Olekshy, passed away. Holy Resurrection Sobor wanted to honour her nearly thirty-year involvement with the parish by holding a lecture that brought her Christian attributes of affirming personhood and loving beauty to the foreground.

This was fulfilled by having Archbishop Lazar (Puhalo) of the All Saints of North America Monastery, Dewdney BC, deliver a lively, well-researched memorial lecture on "Marriage as Prophecy and Revelation." It was preceded by four "sketches" of Mother Oksana's life that illustrated her ability to see the extraordinary in the very ordinary, and to bear her cross daily with much love. Downstairs, an exhibit of her art, writings and theatre

Archbishop
Lazar
delivers
memorial
lecture in
honour of
Matushka
Oksana
Olekshy.



debuts, as well as a Paschal Agape wine-and-cheese awaited the participants after the talk. The event was a good blessing, and as we were able to have Archbishop Lazar visit with our youth on Friday night, as well as be with us in Divine Liturgy on Thomas Sunday, the whole weekend took on the atmosphere of a Paschal, very-festive Retreat!—*Katya Szalaszyj, Saskatoon*

Hamilton faithful blessed by lenten retreat speakers

April 16th saw nearly 140 faithful from Greater Hamilton, Niagara, Western Ontario, and Toronto gather for a lenten retreat at the Mission of All Saints of North America in Hamilton to hear Mother Theadelphi, Abbess of the Skete of the Entrance of the Mother of God in Ohio, and the well-known author Hieromonk Ambrose (Alexey Young).

The afternoon session began with Mother Theadelphi's addressing the topic of "The Scandal of Gender" from the mind of the Church. She addressed the central differences between the world as it was created by God, and the world as it now exists since the Fall of Man. What we usually think of as "natural" in our world, is not natural at all from an Orthodox worldview, and our purpose in living an Orthodox life is to return to the fullness of the Likeness of God which was lost at the Fall. Abbess Theadelphi explained that this understanding is crucial if Orthodox Christians are to understand our own personal relationships, as well as moral questions in our society. The topic was a broad one, and the keen interest and numerous questions from those attending the lectures made it clear that much more time needs to be given to provide Orthodox faithful with answers to questions of human identity, sexuality, and relationships—the major questions of our times.

Following a well-attended Vespers service and a delicious lenten meal prepared by a team of volunteers, Hieromonk Ambrose spoke on the topic of "Orthodoxy and the Challenge of Our Times." He used the icon as his model for the Orthodox life—a reflection of the true Likeness of God, to which Orthodox Christians aspire. He contrasted true icons with the numerous false icons of modern society, stressing the need for faithful people to immerse ourselves in the prayers of the Church, the images of the holy ones, and the writings of the Fathers, in order to have any chance of surviving as Orthodox Christians today and, most importantly, if we are to cultivate loving, Christian hearts.

Booktables, set up by the parish and through the efforts of the Apostle Paul Brotherhood of Toronto, were busy, as pilgrims enjoyed the opportunity to find spiritually edifying reading. Audio and video recordings were made of the lectures, and will soon be available. For more information or to order an audio tape, video, or DVD, call Father Geoffrey Korz (905-387-6907) or e-mail him at korzg@hotmail.com. May God bless all those who laboured on this event, as we thank God for its success, and pray for more events of this kind in the months ahead!—*Fr Geoffrey Korz, All Saints of North America, Hamilton ON*

Worship is Liturgy is Life

—by Igumen Philip (Speranza), Holy Trinity, Edmonton AB

On Tuesday in Clean Week this writer had the dubious delight of attending his city's "Mayor's Prayer Breakfast." The event was sponsored by the local evangelical ministerium, so the menu was hardly lenten; but there was enough coffee to keep one awake during the speechifying. One unintended high spot was repeated reference to the mayor as "His Worship." To ears raised on the US side of the border, that sounded quite absurd; we may equate politicians with many things, but worship is not usually one of them. The references did, however, raise a crucial question: what does "worship" mean?

Worship

The English word "worship" is a contraction of "worth-ship," so the word's basic meaning is "to assign worth, to ascribe proper value" and then to express or celebrate that estimate of value. To call the mayor "Your Worship" is to affirm that said notable has real worth and value (and thus is usually an exercise in blind faith or extreme charity!). But with respect to God, "to worship" means to recognize as much as we are able, and to express and celebrate as best we can, the worth, the proper value, of the true and living God.

Genuine worship is the *total* self's expressing God's worthship. The English word "worship" seems to denote something essentially cognitive, an activity occurring primarily in the mind. The Greek text of the New Testament uses words that point in a different direction. In a very few instances (e.g., Matt 15:9, where the Lord Jesus says "in vain do they worship Me") the word translated as "worship" is *sebomai*, which means "to feel awe or fear; to feel shame; to worship, pay high regard or respect to." While subsuming the valuing activity of the English word, it goes beyond the mind to include the heart. Slightly more frequently, we find the word *latreuo*, which means "to work for hire; to be bound, to work as a slave for; to be servant to the gods." In, e.g., Philippians 3:3, the apostle says that we "worship God in the Spirit"; the word also appears in Matthew 4:10, when, quoting Deut. 6:13 and 10:20, the Lord Jesus says that we are to "serve" God alone. Here "worship" and "serving God" describe a relationship between us and God: servant to Master.

The word for "worship" used most frequently in the Greek New Testament is, however, *proskynesis*, from *proskynéo*, "to prostrate one's self before, to do obeisance to; to worship the gods." (The Slavonic translation of *proskynéo* is *poklonitisja*, which literally

means "to make a prostration.") In Matthew 2, for example, where both the magi and Herod speak of wanting to "worship" the new-born Jesus, the word is *proskynéo*, as it is in Matt 4:9-10, when the devil tries to tempt the Lord Jesus to "worship" him and the Lord retorts that "it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God'" (cf. also Jn 4:20-24, the dialogue between Our Lord and the Samaritan woman over "worship").

So what? So the frequent use of *proskynéo* plus *sebomai* plus *latreuo* makes the valuable point that "worship" is not only the moral and intellectual activity of assigning value, but encompasses the physical and relational as well. True worship is an activity of human beings in their complete personhood: body *and* mind, emotions *and* spirit. It is a total response, a total self-giving to God. To attempt, as some elements of the Protestant "Reformation" did, to strip away every action, gesture, and/or material component is an attempt (albeit usually unwitting) to sunder the human person; it is a fundamental rejection of the unity of the human body, soul and spirit, as taught explicitly by the holy apostle Paul in 1 Thess 5:23 and as exemplified by the Logos Himself in His Incarnation and, more particularly, in His Resurrection. Admittedly, there is the very real danger of substituting ritual for worship, of becoming so concerned with vestments and rubrics and the minutiae of the Typikon that instead of using ritual to worship, we end up worshipping ritual. But throwing the baby out with the bath water only hurts the baby.

Let us note also that worship is *by its very nature* corporate as well as personal. Throughout salvation history the God in Whose image and likeness we were made (Genesis 1:26-27) reveals Himself, especially in and through Jesus Christ, as Trinity; and whatever else "Trinity" may mean, it certainly means that at the very heart of His Being, God is self-sharing community. Therefore, true worship of the true God *demand*s affirming and celebrating *that* aspect of God and expressing it *in* community *as* community. Such worship almost inevitably leads to the experiential understanding of ourselves as not existing and being meant to exist in isolation, but rather in self-sharing community. Consequently, corporate worship is not an "extra" or mere option. Hebrews 10:25 commands us "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together" precisely because corporate worship is a fundamental part and expression of our very identity as beings made in God's image and likeness, as branches united to the Vine and to each other (Jn 15:1-5), as members of the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 4:1-16, etc.), and as members of that "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy

continued, next page . . .

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nation, His own special people...the people of God" (1 Pet 2:9-10). To enter intentionally, attentively, and wholeheartedly into corporate worship is to enter as fully as we can this side of eternity into the experience of human wholeness.

Liturgy

The word *leitourgía*, whence comes our word "liturgy," is a combination of *laós* (people) and *ergon* (work). But we must reject the simplistic and inaccurate notion that *leitourgía* means "work of the people." It means, rather, "work for the people." The primary classical meaning of *leitourgéo* is "to perform public duties, to do the state service"; at Athens, it had the more specific meaning of "serving public offices at one's own cost." Hence *leitourgía* is "a public service"; at Athens it was "a burdensome public office or charge," which the richer citizens discharged at their own expense. Examples would be serving in the army without pay and providing one's own armour, weapons, and horse; or serving in public office without pay and at one's own expense. So a *liturgy* is essentially understood as "a public work or work done for the public good at private expense." However, there is also a secondary meaning of "service to the gods."

In the New Testament, the Church has adopted the word in both senses. In Luke 1:23 and Acts 13:2 we find both Zacharias and Paul and Barnabas "ministering" in that secondary sense of conducting divine service (cf. also Heb 1:4; 9:21; 10:11). But the heart and centre of the Church's understanding of *leitourgía* is Heb 8:6, where the word refers first and foremost to the worship that Jesus offered in His perfectly obedient life and saving death. The verse proclaims that Jesus "has obtained a more excellent ministry [*leitourgía*]" than Moses because His life of perfect obedience to the Father, obedience "unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil 2:8) is the ultimate work for the people: public redemption at the private expense of His own life. By extension, the word is rightly used of the worship we offer by entering into the life of Christ. Note in Phil 2:17 that the apostle says he is being "poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service [*leitourgía*] of your faith." He equates participation by these believers in the obedient and faithful life of Jesus with participation in the sacrifice, the liturgy, offered by Jesus on the cross. The New Testament understands the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus to be the *one* and *only* liturgy of the New Covenant (cf. Matt 26:26-28; Heb 9:12,28; Heb 10:12), and in it He alone is "the Offerer and the Offered, the Receiver and the Received," as the priestly prayer before

the Great Entrance puts it. But Christians certainly share in that one liturgy to the extent that they are "in Christ," to the extent that their own lives are formed, shaped, lived in the likeness of and lived for Jesus Christ. So at a very basic level, *liturgy* is *life*: life lived in, with, and for Jesus Christ, just as His *leitourgía* was a life lived in, with, and for the Father.

We apply the word *leitourgía* to the celebration of the Eucharist because it is in the Eucharist, where we make the *anamnesis*, the remembering and proclamation, of Christ's liturgy that we participate most directly and intimately and vividly across time and space in the life, death, and resurrection of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 10:16-21 and 11:26). Particularly as we receive Holy Communion we are being "united with the holy Body and Blood of Your Christ" (Prayer before "Our Father," *Liturgy of St Basil*) precisely so that we may live out in ourselves Christ's life, death, and resurrection. But note also how Scripture teaches (cf. Rom 15:27; Phil 2:25) that whenever and however Christians enter into and express the work of Christ in faith, obedience, commitment and loving service, they are entering into the one liturgy of Christ.

Life

Which leads us to the point that *leitourgía* encompasses both in-reach and out-reach. Obviously, it is in-reach, in that it is expressing and celebrating our own share in and committing ourselves to the one liturgy of Christ. But it is also out-reach, in that the community gathered is then called to become the community scattered into the world as salt and light (Matt 5:13-16), to live out the one liturgy as faithful and obedient and loving people who, in their everyday lives and choices, share both the story and the redemptive power of Christ's saving work. So again, *liturgy* is *life*: not just how we worship corporately, but also how we do our jobs, recreate, live out our interpersonal relationships, handle our money and other resources; how we participate in our community, our nation, our world. The liturgy "in church" as the gathered community is the pattern of and source of empowerment for incarnating the one liturgy of Christ as a scattered community in the world.

One last point. In John 4:24 the Lord Jesus says that we must worship [*proskyneîn*] "in Spirit and in truth." This means that worship which is truly an encounter with and response to God in Christ cannot be generated, empowered or sustained by us and by our own efforts; it must be, rather, very much a matter of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because it is the Holy Spirit alone Who personally bears witness to our spirit about Who Jesus is and all that He means (Jn 15:26); Who personally bears witness to our spirit that we are indeed children of God

(Rom 8:16); Who discloses to us the mind and heart of God (1 Cor 2:9-13); Who empowers us for life and witness (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:8). It is the Holy Spirit's power which baptizes us into the one Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13), and it is the Holy Spirit's power which changes the bread and wine into the very Body and Blood of Christ (cf. full epiclesis prayers in Liturgies of St John Chrysostom and St Basil the Great). Without the Holy Spirit and His power, all we have is form without substance.

But worship must also be "in truth," in fidelity to the Covenant. Note how in the Old Testament there are definite moral qualifications for and components of worship, inseparable from the cultic action. In Ps 15:1, the Psalmist asks, "LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill?" The answer, which takes up the rest of the Psalm, is everyday moral conduct which keeps the Law of Moses and which, therefore, keeps covenant with God. Similarly, Micah 6:6-8, begins by asking, "With what shall I come before the LORD and bow myself before the High God?" The answer? "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Keeping the moral aspect of the covenant with God is true worship.

The New Testament continues the theme. In Matthew 7:21-23, the Lord Jesus is utterly insistent that worship (calling "Lord, Lord!") without obedience to His word is worse than empty; and as we see in Matthew 5:1-7:20, much of His word deals with what is moral and relational. Likewise, the holy apostle James (Jas 2:1-26) and the Beloved Disciple (1 Jn 3:16-18) insist that failure to meet the covenantal obligation of charity renders faith and worship empty.

So worship "in Spirit and in truth" does *not* mean worship devoid of any material component and/or something "free-form." In Acts 2:42 immediately after the Day of Pentecost, those first believers "continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in the prayers (*kai tais proseuchais*)," not merely "in prayers" or "in prayer," as most English translations mangle it. Clearly there was a prescribed set of prayers in use in the Christian community right from the get-go. And the apostolic demand in 1 Cor 14:40 that worship be conducted "decently and in order" puts paid to the notion that free spirits could "do their thing" *ad libitum*. Worship "in Spirit and in truth" does mean, however, a worship which gets beyond words to the Pre-eternal Word and which celebrates a covenant with God that is lived in the everyday.



Sharing love in truth

—by Priest Geoffrey Korz, All Saints' Mission, Hamilton ON

North Americans love to be liked. Two centuries as a minority faith in North America has often stricken Orthodox people with a desperate desire to fit in, to be like the world around them, and to minimize differences with their neighbours. For the faithful who lived under the Muslim Turks or the Communists, such a desire to get along in order to avoid arrest or execution is perhaps understandable. Living in this society, however, such temptations are harder to understand, and perhaps more subtle, and harder to resist.

In a recent issue of *St Vladimir's Seminary News*, Fr Thomas Hopko engages the question of relating to our heterodox neighbours, in an excerpt from his book, *Speaking the Truth in Love*. The article represents a very visible trend in Orthodox circles in North America on the very serious question of how we should live with others. Fr Hopko rightly states that there is no evangelism without dialogue, a fact testified to by evangelists from St Paul and the other Apostolic missions, through the missionary saints of every time and place, up to the present. The human component of such dialogue is crucial, since in meeting others face to face, we gain the chance to understand each other, to avoid the delusion of caricaturing others, and to show our love for other people in concrete ways.

Within the Church, this dialogue means discovering the mind of Christ. The whole inherited Holy Tradition is a result of this dialogue within the Church. It bears its particular fruits of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit preserves the Church against falsehood. For so many North American converts to Orthodoxy, this is the very reason Orthodoxy drew us: it has spiritual integrity that bears the test of time, and the loving communion of the faithful has never been conquered by the gates of Hell.

One of the fruits of this dialogue in Holy Tradition is a clear consensus about the parameters of the Church, and the way it should relate to those outside. In St Paul's experience, the church at Corinth presented a similar challenge to ours today: a pagan society in which Christians had to struggle with the questions of how (a) to get along and (b) to evangelize. There were all sorts of temptations to compromise, as well as the temptation to forget about loving others in the process of doing the right thing. In these circumstances, St Paul writes, "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers . . . what communion has Christ with Belial?" (2 Cor 14-15).

Up until the last century, the standard practice of the Church was loving evangelism, with an exercise of care to preserve the faith "once and for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). This is the reason that modern "dialogues" with other religions, and even with heterodox Christians, were usually viewed with great skepticism. It is the same reason

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continued from p. 11:

that continues this skepticism among most Orthodox in the world today. Missionaries like Sts Innocent of Irkutsk and Innocent of Alaska were quick to incorporate cultural elements of those to whom they were reaching out, but they by no means saw themselves "in dialogue" with the pagan religions of these peoples.

The pervasiveness of relativism today presents a real challenge for the Orthodox, in a way never experienced in past centuries. In the past, disputes arose out of attempts to find the truth; few then disagreed that there was truth to be found, although there were obviously conflicting views on what it was. Today, with a fundamental rejection of absolute truth by much of Western society, and the embrace of the idea that "no one really knows" the fulness of truth (since there is no truth to be known), inter-faith and inter-Christian dialogue can become an exchange of speculations. The descent into relativism can be very quick.

Fr Hopko asks, "do we have authentic dialogue that images [does he mean 'reflects'?] the divine dialogue between God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit?" This dialogue is already reflected within the Church, in the communion of love and truth shared by the faithful. It does not refer to the expectation of such a "divine dialogue" being possible with those removed from, or even opposed to, Christ's Body, the Church. The Church is Christ's bride, and while we as members of Her can often be estranged from Her Divine Husband, the restoration of harmony with Christ is always our task. The "fruitful dialogue" one can expect with those outside the Church is to bring them into union with the Church. To expect anything else suggests some sort of strange spiritual polygamy, where Christ has many brides, many churches. The Orthodox have never entertained this idea, and Orthodox people who subscribe to it today have either picked it up outside the Church, or have made a purposeful search for any biblical or patristic quotes they can find to back up their innovative ideas. This should not be a surprise, since this is the way in which virtually every heresy has emerged in the history of the Church.

The dynamic which exists for us with those outside the Orthodox Church is this: out of love for others, we hope to share our joy with them, and that joy is the fulness of Truth of the Orthodox faith. St Paul reminds us that in caring about the welfare of other people, he only has one choice: "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Cor 9:16). He also points out that his task in dialogue with others is to present the gospel "without change, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel" (1 Cor 9:18). He "endures all things lest (he) hinder the gospel of Christ" (1 Cor 9:12). It is this which allows God to act: presenting the gospel unchanged, without personal gain, including the prizes of popularity, concord, or peace based on misguided expectations or diplomacy.

A risk which can occur in dialogue involves compromising the unique treasure of Orthodoxy. If the Church is not the Church, the Body of Christ, unique, unchanging, and undefiled, what do we have to offer others? The great love that Orthodoxy has to give is to be found in the distinctness of Christ's death and resurrection, and His transfiguration of His likeness in us who are distorted by sin. The power of the Orthodox faith is that it gives us the Holy Mysteries, as well as the hesychastic tradition of prayer. We believe that no one else has these gifts in fulness to offer. A consequence one sometimes sees of "ecumenical" dialogues is the adoption of the belief that they are a dialogue between "Christian churches." As Orthodox who yearn to share the unique treasures of Christ's Church with the world, it is not honest—with ourselves or with the heterodox we claim to love—to speak, as some do, of "deeper communion between churches," for this blurs the fact that inter-Christian dialogues are dialogues between the Church and those who have left Her, in the hope of calling all back to Her.

Sadly, those who advocate inter-Christian dialogue based on love and mutual understanding can sometimes give short shrift to those with whom they disagree. In the excerpt from *Speaking the Truth in Love*, Fr Hopko seems to fall into this mode. Those who oppose the dialogue must not be painted with terms such as "irresponsible, careless, cynical, (and) self-serving" participants who "must not betray fruitful dialogue." To suggest that "Christians must not oppose such dialogue," as Fr Hopko states, assumes that all Orthodox are defining "dialogue" in the same way, when it is clear we are not.

Current inter-Christian dialogues have not borne the fruit of enlightenment leading to conversion hoped for by the evangelists throughout the centuries. Instead they bear a form that departs very much from the Tradition of the Church, but even more importantly, distorts the Orthodox understanding of love. The end result does not even evoke the best behaviour between Orthodox people; rather, it leads to the caricaturing of each other that Fr Hopko laments. This is a sin and a scandal, growing not simply out of Orthodox people's behaving badly, but out of a distortion of the normal, Orthodox understanding of the Church, and what constitutes a loving response to those outside Her.

The desert fathers have often said that our love for God and other people can be obscured by false loves: of food, of riches, of power, and especially of being esteemed by others. This false love of esteem puts us at risk in the modern environment, and constantly tempts us; but as Orthodox Christians we must burn in our minds the reality that "friendship with the world is enmity with God" (Jas 4:4). It is realizing this that preserved the martyrs to their end. It preserved the Church through Islamic and Communist persecution to our present day. And it will preserve in us true love which we can share with the world.

St Gregory Peradze :

“Through a crown of thorns and the Cross”

The following account is printed with the gracious permission of the Polish journal ‘Przegląd Prawosławny.’ The author is Alla Matrenczyk, and the translator Dr Michael Zurowsky of The Sign of the Theotokos Church, Montréal.

The telegram from Auschwitz arrived on 11 December, 1942. It was short and terse. The commandant of the camp informed about the death of Fr Gregory Peradze. The office of the Metropolitan in Warsaw in vain tried to obtain the urn and ashes and inquired about the last will and testament of the deceased. The registry office in Auschwitz only gave the exact date of death : 6 December, 4:45 p.m.

As regards the circumstances of his death, there is no definite information. But there are two probable versions. According to the first version, on the day of the saint’s demise, it was very cold. The camp officials had discovered a theft of bread in the camp. They told the inmates they would be forced to stand outside in this cold until the guilty party confessed. Fr Gregory stepped out from the ranks.

“I admit to doing it.” he told the officials while at the same time he asked his fellow inmates to pray for him. The camp guards covered him in gasoline and burned him there and then.

According to the second version, on 6 December, the Germans sent the next consignment of Jews to the gas chambers. One of them who was a father of many children was in a state of deep despair. Fr Peradze took his place by his own free will.

“Father Gregory is no longer alive.” The contents of the telegram spread throughout the Orthodox community in Warsaw. The faithful of The Suffering of the Lord basement chapel of the Warsaw Cathedral (sobor) lost their pastor; the students of the Orthodox Theological Centre, their mentor of many years’ standing; Metropolitan Dionysius, a faithful adviser and colleague.

They first met in Lausanne at the World Conference of Faith and Order. This took place in 1927. Metropolitan Dionysius had had a difficult experience of rebuilding the life of the Church during the interwar era while the young Grigol Peradze also had his share of unpleasant experiences.

He was born in Georgia on 13 September 1899. His father was a priest. The latter did not enjoy his parenthood for very long. Fr Romanos (Romanus) Peradze died in 1905. His mother and uncle—his father’s brother—took upon themselves the responsibility of bringing him up. He first graduated from the church primary school in Tbilisi; later he was enrolled in the local seminary. The rector was Fr Cornelius Kekelidze who was a distinguished specialist in old Georgian literature and liturgy. Was it due to him that

the young seminary student discovered what he wanted to specialize in? Because already in seminary Gregory began to be interested in the origins of Georgian Christianity, literature and liturgy. He was an excellent student—all the theological academies were willing to accept him. But the October Revolution upset these plans. As a result, he chose to study at the department of Philology at the University of Tbilisi. However even these plans were put off by military service and later by the invasion of Georgia by the Bolsheviks.

Fortunately, the former rector of the seminary, Fr Kekelidze, had not forgotten his old student. Due to his efforts, the Patriarchal Council urged Gregory to study in Berlin. In 1921, Gregory left his homeland. He was 22 years old and had a stipend and letter of recommendation from Patriarch Ambrose in hand. In the capital of Germany, he mainly studied theology and eastern languages (Hebrew, Syraic, Arabic, Coptic, Armenian and Greek). He also learned German, English, French and Latin. He already knew Russian, Old Church Slavonic and Georgian.

All the world’s literature on early Christianity in the Near East was then open to him. What fascinated him the most was Patristics.

In 1925, he received his Master of Theology degree. Afterwards, he left for Bonn to the university there. He studied the history of religion and perfected his knowledge of eastern languages. He translated then into German the life of the Greek monk, George the Hagiorite, adding to it a critical introduction and footnotes. He worked on his doctoral dissertation entitled “The history of Georgian monasticism from its origins to 1064 : a contribution to the history of eastern monasticism.” His [dissertation] defence, which took place on 26 February 1926, brought him fame and recognition. But he continued to study at the Bollandists in Brussels and at the Catholic University of Louvain. As well, he studied Georgian manuscripts at the British Museum and at the Bodleian Library in Oxford.

Only after an abortive attempt to return to Georgia (he failed to receive a visa) did he return to the university in Bonn as a lector and lecturer. He had already published his first works, [and] participated in orientalist conferences where in 1927 in Lausanne he met Metropolitan Dionysius. Was he informed of the large Georgian colony in Paris? Because actually the capital of France had become the centre of emigres from Georgia and the seat of the government-in-exile. In 1929, the first Georgian parish outside Georgia was established there and Gregory turned out to be one of its founders. It had no permanent pastor.

“Maybe you ought to become its rector?”

At various times this was suggested to him. At that time, he was not yet ready for it. The year 1930 arrived, the feast of Christmas. Gregory was seriously ill, on the verge

continued, next page . . .

continued from p. 13:

of death. He had a vision. After that he decided to become a priest.

At this point in time, Professor Niko Maar suggested that he accept the post of demonstrator (professor's assistant) at the University of Leningrad but his frightened mother warned him, "As a priest they will never let you into Georgia." But the decision over the priesthood came to a head. On 18 April 1931, he was tonsured a monk at the Hagia Sophia Greek cathedral in London. On 25 May, he was ordained a priest in Paris. Six days later, he celebrated his first liturgy, at his parish of St Nino.

He left the university in Bonn and only occasionally lectured at Oxford and in Paris. But he did not abandon his academic research. In November of 1932, he gave a lecture at the Jagiellonian University in Cracow. While there he made a thorough study of the Georgian manuscripts at the Czartoryski Library where he made the first-ever catalogue and description of them. Did he again meet Metropolitan Dionysius there? This we do not know.

We know however that a year later at the invitation of that hierarch he began working at the Orthodox Theological Centre in Warsaw as an assistant professor of patristics and as deputy head of the department to do with this subject. But he did not forget about his parish of St Nino. He spent every vacation with his parishioners in Paris. In Warsaw, others came, and not only Georgians, though the Georgian diaspora was sizeable there. Every Sunday, he served in the basement chapel at St Mary Magdalene cathedral.

Fr Nicholas Lenczewski recalled that the lecture room during his classes burst at the seams due to overcrowding. Not all who came were Orthodox, all of them emphasized his great erudition and charisma. In his lectures, he added the latest advances in research of Western specialists with the literary output of Russian, Greek, Georgian and Polish theologians. He maintained close contacts with the youth—he was the chaplain of the student Theologians' Circle; he was not adverse to helping the poorest of his pupils.

His small apartment on 22 Brukowa Street was packed with books. Despite the superficial disorder, he knew exactly where everything was. He was a very diligent worker. He published a number of works on patristics, for examples, a translation of an apocryphal letter of Dionysius the Areopagite, a translation of an unknown apocryphal gospel emanating from Monophysite circles, a translation of documents on the discovery of the text of the Sinai Code. He traveled widely—often for research purposes—to Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Syria, Italy and the Holy Land. Sometimes he returned from these travels with additional discoveries. For example, on Mt Athos he discovered the Greek version of the martyrdom of the Lithuanian saints Anthony, John and Eustace.

Metropolitan Dionysius twice wanted to award him with the rank of full professor but the state authorities who were hostile to the advancement of Orthodox theology refused to agree to this. The activity of Archimandrite Peradze went beyond the walls of the university. He was a member of the Orientalist Commission of the Warsaw Society of Learning and an associate member of the Polish Library of the Fathers of the Church. He maintained close contacts with the Georgian diaspora in Warsaw—as well as with the exiles in the Georgian Committee and in the Promethean Club. In 1937, he helped the latter organise the Georgian national day festivities in Warsaw. This was an important occasion since it coincided with the 750th anniversary of the presentation of the epic poem "The tiger-skinned knight" by its author, the greatest Georgian poet, Shot Rustaveli, to Queen Tamara. He wrote as well a book about Rustaveli. World War II was around the corner.

On Fr Gregory's desk lay another invitation, this time for the Byzantine Congress in Algiers which was to take place in October of 1939. At this point in time he was not able to take advantage of it. He was afraid he would not be able to return home and was concerned about the safety of his valuable Georgian manuscripts. He could have left Warsaw on 8th September since he was after all a foreigner and those in this category with the assent of the German occupying authorities were able to leave the besieged capital. He decided not to go.

Soon afterwards, the Nazis suggested he deliver lectures in Berlin but he rejected this offer. From the time when the occupying power closed the University of Warsaw, he spent entire days on research on his Georgian manuscripts. He worked as well as a translator in the offices of the Warsaw Metropolitanate. He did not stop fretting over the fate of the Orthodox Church as well as over his Georgian fellow expatriates. When Metropolitan Dionysius was interned, the archimandrite brought him medicines when the occasion demanded it.

Things were not faring well in the diaspora. The supporters of collaboration with the Nazis were very vocal. They resolutely settled accounts with their opponents by informing on them to the authorities. Fr Gregory was strongly opposed to them. And he fell victim to their plots. The archimandrite was an agent of Polish Intelligence—such a denunciation reached the ears of the German authorities in January 1941. A second one, more skillfully organised, was connected to the first by the planting of photographed documents which was to prove that the archimandrite was a British spy. On 5 May 1942, the Gestapo searched his apartment on Brukowa Street. They discovered the planted documents. He was arrested. The Germans accused him of helping to save Jews, of countering Nazi anti-Polish propaganda amongst the members of the so-called Caucasian legions, recruited from former Soviet prisoners-of-war, who fought alongside the Wehrmacht.

The archimandrite was put in Pawiak prison in the centre of Warsaw. He spent several days in the basement in temporary quarters. Later he was consigned to the transport and work detail—in both instances, he worked as a translator. He was interrogated, ill-treated and beaten. He sent two letters from Pawiak prison, both to his friend, the deacon George Berkman-Karenin. In the first, he asked that his apartment be looked after, in the second, as if knowing what would happen to him, he bequeathed his apartment and library to the Metropolitanate.

In mid-November 1942, Archimandrite Peradze was transported to Auschwitz. He remained there until the end. The Georgian Orthodox Church canonised St Gregory, priest and martyr, on 19 December 1995. The Polish Church recognised this canonisation as well. Three years later, the Brotherhood of St Gregory Peradze was established in Warsaw. Fr Henryk Paprocki, who is its chaplain, is the indefatigable researcher into the life and legacy of the saint.

The University of Warsaw also honours the memory of its lecturer. Gregory Peradze not only appears on a plaque honouring those professors of that institution who lost their lives during the war but, as of 2002, he is the patron saint of the International Caucasological Symposium organised by the Eastern European Centre of the university. He is the patron saint, as well, of the Association of Physicians of Polish Descent in Georgia.

Awareness about him is becoming increasingly more evident among the faithful as well as over a saying which he was fond of repeating: "The road to victory is always reached by a crown of thorns and the cross."

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and other missionary labourers
of the Orthodox Church in America.*

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From the Bishop's desk :

Glory to God for all things!

Recently, the Archdiocese of Canada hosted the 14th All-American Council in Toronto, Ontario. On this occasion, we had the best Canadian representation ever, and there were so many Canadians and Friends at the usual Wednesday diocesan dinner (over 100), it felt like an Assembly of the diocese. And this dinner attendance did not include children. The many children and youth who attended the Council had their own, specially focused programme.

Although there were many complications involved, the Local Committee in Toronto (with the extension of Fr Dennis Pihach), managed to fulfil their responsibilities with the help of the Central Administration. It was also the first time that all the OCA parishes of Toronto—our Archdiocese, the Romanian Episcopate, and the Bulgarian Diocese—ever worked together. I think they got to know each other better this way, and to have some more trust for each other. There were many other contributions from the Faithful across the Archdiocese. I want to thank all who contributed, regardless of whether it was small or big. And even more, I want to thank the many who, I was told, were praying for the Council, before, during, and after. May the Lord bless all who enabled this Council to do its work in Christ.

Over the last years, thanks to Dr John Hadjinicolaou, many of the Faithful have made generous contributions towards the renovation of the Diocesan Centre and Bishop's Residence. There has been a lot of improvement as the result of these contributions, and as well, contributions in loving labour. I am grateful to God for this, because it has made quite a positive difference.

Most lately, there was a collection towards the purchase of a neighbouring house. I want to report that we have not yet made this purchase, because the owner changed his mind, and decided to stay longer in the house. And so, we are awaiting the time when he will again be ready to sell. It is important, I believe, to let those who support the Bishop and his ministry, and the life of the diocese, know what is happening. I am asking God's protection and blessing on all who are helping in so many ways to develop this Archdiocese and its mission for Christ. The Lord, through your prayers and support, is multiplying your offerings.

+Seraphim

Remembering Emil

—by Katya Szalaszyj, Holy Resurrection Sobor, Saskatoon

"Who is that rumpled-up little man?" My mother asked me, when her eyes lit on Emil in our backyard. A roundish little guy—grey, wispy hair standing on end, clothes creased and stained, fingers yellow with tobacco, nose crooked as if severely punched—was smiling more to himself than at anyone else as he sat down at the table. He had come to a gathering to welcome Sue and Dana Talley, fine Orthodox musicians from New York City.

Emil. A member of our parish. My mother sat with him, and made sure he got beans, his favorite. Emil seemed to have a good time that evening. We were all having fun. There were lots of beans. We realized afterwards that he must have been rolling cigarettes in the bathroom and smoking there, but no fire broke out, so all was well.

Emil. The first time he came to our parish, Holy Resurrection Orthodox Church, Saskatoon, was in the mid-1970s, twenty-five years ago or so. He stood out in a crowd. He couldn't help it. You could not describe him as nice. He talked to himself aloud and grimaced terribly. He was running in and out for smokes so much, he seemed to be on wheels. He wasn't often clean, and only occasionally did he smell good. But he seemed all right being in the Church, and so sporadically, we began to see Emil, who wandered the streets of Saskatoon by day, and had a bed arranged by Social Services somewhere for the night.

No one really knew who he was. His place in the parish grew gradually. People would nod at him, or say "Good Morning." He would appear at a Paschal banquet having tried to shave, his face cut badly in the effort. Over a period of years, Emil's distinctive wave became as much a part of our parish life as the sign outside. We discovered he had an extraordinary ability to remember people's names, bus routes, almost anything to do with numbers, including phone numbers, and he began to call many of us for a one-minute chat, asking the same question always, "anything going on in Church this week?" We also found he had decent Ukrainian and enjoyed speaking it, although in any language his speech was quite garbled.

He became more regular in his attendance, receiving Holy Communion, and on Holy Wednesday he would stand in the line to receive prayers with the Gospel over his head, and be anointed with holy oil. He would walk in to all kinds of lectures and gatherings, or into hospital

rooms if someone was in. He would unfailingly call your name if he saw you in the downtown mall, whether you were a teenager or a baba, or wherever, especially if you were in a business meeting with colleagues and that always felt a bit like your skin was being taken off. But Emil was always the same—friendly, knew your name, interested in who you were with. I guess you could call him a "street people-person."

I should mention about money. Yes. Over the years, he came to ask for toonies, but never as a beggar, it was a dignified "lend me" or "spot me a few." He received them quietly, with a smile and thanks. The response was varied: some would open their purses and give more than a toonie, others never gave on point of principle, and quite a few others gave exactly what he asked for. We suspected he was spending his toonies on smokes and chocolate bars, neither good for his health, and likely a bit for drinks, as well as other things he needed. After all, it costs money to smoke, and speaking from experience (as I can) it's anguishingly hard to be without. However, he didn't tell us what he used the money for, and we didn't ask, a decent arrangement. So each of us developed our own "Emil policy," give—don't give, just as we felt. And almost all of us had a rich, growing collection of Emil anecdotes, a lot of them hilarious as he foiled human plans for perfection and dashed our middle-class niceties.

The parish and Emil accepted each other. There were those who took the lead relating to him, those who found out where he lived, washed his clothes for him, those who began to take him out for breakfast or coffee on a regular basis, or bought him a scarf or boots for winter. Sometimes if you popped into the Orthodox church across town, you'd find the priest cooking Emil a meal downstairs in the kitchen. I remember he walked into our scholarly lecture, "Windows to the East," at the university. There was a Syrian monk, Fr Maurice, studying in Saskatoon at that time who was there. We introduced him to Emil, and he hugged him strongly, kissed him on both cheeks and in his broken English repeated, "Good man, Emil. Emil, good man." The night Dana and Sue Talley performed, Dana dedicated a song "to Emil, standing at the back of the church." It was "Country Road, Take Me Home," an Orthodox version, and he beamed. We discovered he was from a farm near Stenen, not far from where the OCA has a parish, and that he was keenly interested in politics, dropping into MLA offices for coffee quite regularly.

Time lapse photography on 25 years of memories. Emil stopped grimacing quite so much over the years and talked to himself a lot less. Children were no longer leery of him as in the beginning. He would walk into the

service, waving at everyone with the air of a street ambassador. He knew he fit, though he was on Emil-time, which ran different than our clocks, and if he didn't show up, we'd wonder where he was.

Last year his health began to be noticeably poor. He was diabetic and hard of breathing, but still making his rounds. On July 23rd of this year, he passed away suddenly. We all paused to think about his life. His funeral was not in Saskatoon, but we had a panikhida, a kolach was baked for him by the president of the parish, and we had a potluck memorial feast for him. We were glad he was healed of his afflictions.

In the course of his passing especially, we found out that he had been born quite normal, and due to a very high fever as a child had begun to suffer seizures. He also had experienced a lot of rejection because he was different, often being beaten up, and that accounted for his nose, and also why he was moved to Saskatoon as he was experiencing so much hostility back home. Experiencing bullying was probably a regular thing for him. I wondered whether his voice was the way it was because someone had put pressure on his throat.

We were touched by him in a way that we could not explain. A consensus is that Emil was with us more for our salvation than we were for his, although I think some related to him more than others. He was gentle, non-judgmental and looked at everyone with eyes of love. He was an unusual man who was exactly himself. He did a lot for us, especially to help us separate love from "nice." He cut through a lot. As someone said at his memorial, "Emil's afflictions showed. I have many more than Emil, but mine are on the inside and you just cannot see them. His we could see, and we had to face them."

Emil Berezniuk (1949 - 2005).

Memory Eternal to a dear, real person that we will not forget.

Memory Eternal



Emil Sat. July 23, 2005

Une des ascèses les moins compréhensibles:

Les Fols-en-Christ

«*Les plénitude du temps*» se leva sur un monde de corruption, une humanité qui s'adonnait à la sensualité. Pourtant, même alors, il y eut un certain nombre d'êtres qui luttèrent dans la vertu dans une recherche sincère de la vérité. Ils ressentaient le poids du mal et recherchaient avidement la justice. De tels êtres étaient prêts à entendre l'appel du Christ, à se repentir, à atteindre la foi en Lui et à entrer dans sa Sainte Eglise. Pour l'amour de ceux qui aspiraient à la vertu véritable et à la justice, pour l'amour de ceux qui s'efforçaient de tenir fermement à la sainte Tradition, notre Sauveur vint au monde et fit naître son Eglise après la captivité et la stérilité. Unissant Dieu et l'homme en Lui, Il unit également dans la Sainte Eglise le ciel et la terre. Dans cette Eglise, il est possible de trouver une nouvelle vie de combat contre la corruption et la sensualité du monde, vie dans laquelle, par la lutte spirituelle et l'obéissance, il est possible d'acquérir le Saint-Esprit qui vivifie l'âme pour la vie éternelle.

La vie dans la Sainte Eglise orthodoxe est vie en Christ. Le suprême accomplissement de l'amour de Dieu pour l'homme—son Incarnation et sa mort par amour pour nous et sa Résurrection des morts— a rendu possible cette vie nouvelle. Quand, par la Résurrection du Christ, l'âme est libérée de l'esclavage que constitue la peur de la mort, l'esprit des fidèles s'enflamme de zèle pour la piété de la véritable vie religieuse.

Etant appelé à combattre pour la foi et l'acquisition du Saint-Esprit, à crucifier la chair avec ses passions et ses désirs de luxure, à s'élever au dessus de la sensualité et des désirs de la nature, les fidèles entrent dans une vie de combat évangélique, d'isolation du monde, de privations, de jeûnes, de prières et de veilles. L'orthodoxie est la Sainte Eglise, le nouvel Israël. Ainsi chaque chrétien orthodoxe est appelé à cette vie de combat, à cet effort de pureté de coeur et à cette croissance spirituelle afin que, selon sa force, il croisse progressivement en Esprit jusqu'à vivre complètement «*en Dieu et pour Dieu*».

L'orthodoxie, la Sainte Eglise, est le Corps du Christ et la personne qui est vraiment jointe à Lui devient une avec les autres membres. Pourtant, chaque personne, chaque membre, est en quelque sorte différent, non pas totalement individuel, mais différent. Tous n'ont pas la même force et quelques vases sont plus forts que d'autres. De plus, l'Ecriture dit bien que tous ne sont pas appelés aux mêmes tâches dans l'Eglise. Aux tous premiers temps

à suivre, p. 18 . . .

. . . de p. 17:

de l'histoire de l'Eglise néotestamentaire, le Saint-Esprit révéla de nombreuses manières de combattre. Selon sa force et sa vocation, avec la bénédiction de son starets, chacun pouvait oeuvre à son propre salut avec crainte et tremblement.

Une des ascèses les moins compréhensibles—pour nous, gens d'esprit charnel—est celle de la folie par amour pour le Christ.

Il serait présomptueux pour nous d'essayer d'expliquer ce qu'elle est. Sans doute que chaque vie de fol-en-Christ touchera chaque âme, selon sa disposition spirituelle, et la grandeur de ce combat moral pourra émouvoir en chaque esprit un sentiment de révérence qui dépendra également de la condition existentielle de l'individu. Nous pouvons seulement noter en passant la forte similarité entre les phénomènes relatés dans les vies de prophètes vétérotestamentaires (et plus particulièrement celle du saint prophète Ezéchiel) et celles des fols-en-Christ.

Les vies de ces fols-en-Christ, comme les vies de tous les saints sont des dons précieux dans le trésor spirituel de la Sainte Eglise. Ces dons sont accordés afin de mener les fidèles vers le Ciel et pour étancher leur soif d'exemples de véritable justesse dans le combat spirituel. C'est pourquoi : « *Vous tous qui avez soif, venez aux eaux! (. . .) venez, achetez sans argent, et sans rien donner en échange* » . . . (Is 55.1-2)

—“Avant-propos,” *La vie des Fols-en-Christ : Folie du monde et sagesse de Dieu*, par Archevêque Lazar et Evêque Varlaam (l'oeuvre écrit, 1976, alors qu'ils étaient diacre Lev Puhalo et Vasili Novakshonoff), Editions du Désert, 2002, traduit de l'anglais par Claude Lopez-Ginisty.

Pastoral Notes

On 18 June 2005, **Protodeacon Andrew Piasta** was ordained to the Holy Priesthood in St Mark's Church, Yorkton SK. He is assigned to St Mark's Church as Second Priest, in the rank of Archpriest.

On 27 July 2005, Bishop Seraphim blessed the attempt to establish a Georgian Mission Station in Toronto ON, with the **Priest Teimuraz Suarishvili**.

As of 31 July 2005, **Archpriest Anatoliy Melnyk** is released from his duties as Rector of Holy Trinity Sobor in Winnipeg MB, and is assigned as Acting Rector of Sts Peter and Paul's Sobor in Montréal QC, as of 1 August 2005.

As of 31 July 2005, **Archpriest Alexander Janowski** is released from his duties as Rector of Sts Peter and Paul's Sobor in Montréal QC, and is attached in retirement to the Bishop's Chapel of St Silouan the Athonite in Johnstown, ON.

Archdiocesan Cathedral To have new home

With the blessing of his Grace, Bishop Seraphim, it gives me great pleasure to announce that the Archdiocese of Canada will soon have a new cathedral in Ottawa. The Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral parish and the Archdiocesan Council have been collaborating for the last six months in negotiations to purchase a large downtown church from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Ottawa.

By God's grace, the Ottawa Cathedral parish will leave its tiny premises and move to a building almost eight times larger (20,000 sq ft) that can serve the needs of the cathedral and the Archdiocese for many years to come. Currently known as “Our Lady of Perpetual Help,” the church has a long history of devotion to the Mother of God, and with its Romanesque arches and vaults (built in 1939) is very conducive to Orthodox worship. The building also includes a large hall, an attached rectory, guest rooms and offices. It is very centrally located, but its presence in a poorer section of the capital will give us many opportunities to serve the community in new ways.

A purchase agreement was signed on June 29th, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul. Roman Catholic Archbishop Marcel Gervais has been most encouraging in this process, and we were able to negotiate the purchase on very generous terms.

Please keep us in your prayers, as we prepare to move during the early autumn, asking the Lord to bless our move and our mission through the intercessions of the most Holy Theotokos, St Nicholas, St Tikhon and St Arseny.—*Archpriest John Jillions, Rector of Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral, Ottawa*



A partial view of the magnificent façade of the new cathedral building.

On 'walling off'

—by Mother Sophia, editor, *Canadian Orthodox Messenger*

As the lay delegate from the Monastic Community of St Silouan the Athonite, I attended the 14th All-American Council in Toronto. It was a somewhat tiring experience, because of the heavy schedule of plenary sessions, workshops, receptions, and liturgical services; however, it was almost always interesting, and even sometimes inspiring. Of all the plenary sessions, the one I found most gripping was the Thursday morning session on the "pillar" topic of "relations with the Orthodox and the non-Orthodox." This occasion produced many of the most thoughtfully articulated positions I had heard on the subject in a long time.

The rather lengthy presentation of Archpriest Leonid Kishkovsky, the Assistant to the Chancellor for External Affairs and Interchurch Relations, was meticulously argued and, in fact, was on an astonishingly high theological/spiritual/intellectual level. The panel discussion which followed—made up of our own Bishop Seraphim, as well as Archbishop Nathaniel, Archpriest Andrew Morbey, Archpriest Paul Yerger, and Professor Richard Schneider—was on a similarly high spiritual level (although as with so many of the Council's other sessions, there was not enough time for everyone, whether emphasizing witness or pressing for caution, to expand his argument fully). I have to admit to feeling on this occasion a great deal of pride—of, I hope, not the sinful kind—in our Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

The Orthodox Church in America has always held witness to the Gospel of our Lord and God Jesus Christ, with its imperative of mission to the fallen world, at the highest level of concern and practice. This sense of witness and mission is implied in the *Tomos of Autocephaly*, as Metropolitan Herman pointed out. Furthermore, the 1973 *Encyclical Letter of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America on Christian Unity and Ecumenism* carefully and clearly delineates the boundaries of such witness and mission, especially as pertaining to dialogue and discussions with other Christian confessions.

The encyclical (text of which is found at <http://oca.org/DOCencyclical.asp?SID=12&ID=5>) makes it very clear that the Orthodox Church is the one true Church, and that unity with bodies which have broken communion with Her will only come about when those who are fallen away are brought into the *unity in truth, love and holiness which is the Orthodox Church*. The document strongly warns, in detail, about the dangers and pitfalls of inter-Christian dialogue in the modern world: relativism, secularism, and false methods of union. It also sets out clear limits on any participation of the OCA in "ecumenical" activities and cooperation.

Having read this document several times over the years, and realizing also, as Metropolitan Herman affirmed at the AAC, that such matters are ultimately in the hands of our Holy Synod, I have to admit constant puzzlement with persons who seem so fearful that dialogue with those of other Christian confessions somehow compromises us, or even compromises the Orthodox Faith itself. It seems to me that if one is truly Orthodox, and therefore has some sense of obedience to those whom the Lord has chosen and consecrated to lead His Church, and to lead it in Truth, then one should leave it to the Hierarchs (and their designated representatives) to do just that, and pray for them, but always with confidence that the Lord is guiding them and preserving the Church against error.

The Bishops in the 1973 encyclical write,

Genuine Christian unity is possible only where men are one in Christ and the Holy Spirit, fully united in the truth, love and holiness of God. This unity is possible only in the one Church which Christ founded, against which 'the gates of hell shall not prevail.' (Matthew 16:18) This unity is possible only in that Church which has preserved whole and unchanged the teachings of Christ and His apostles, prophets, martyrs and saints. This unity is possible only in that Church which continues to proclaim the revelation of God in its fullness, not only in its doctrines and morals, but also in the whole order of spiritual, sacramental and hierarchal church life as established in the apostolic Christian community.

This is beyond question true, as is what they go on to say:

The possibility of positive collaboration with non-Orthodox Christians is founded in the indisputable fact that, despite all the differences which do exist between the Orthodox Church and the other Christian confessions, the non-Orthodox Christians have preserved some doctrines and practices which are compatible with those of the Orthodox Christian Tradition.

Many of these non-Orthodox Christians are sincere believers in Christ, loving Him with all their heart and mind and strength. These fellow Christians are not, surely, in some alien "religion." Because of their commitment to Christ, and even though we know them to be estranged from the true Church, they are fellow Christians, and they need and deserve our witness to the fulness of Truth in the Church which their ancestors left.

I remember so well that thirty years ago I was a very active, Christ-loving, church-going, eager-to-learn Christian in another confession. I *discovered* the Orthodox Church through a sort of "ecumenical" organization—the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius. Thank God for the Orthodox willingness to dialogue with Anglicans in that group. I would have never sought out the Orthodox on my own—I did not even know they existed in North America

continued, last page . . .

continued from p. 19:

until I was invited to the dialogue! What if they had refused to enter into dialogue because they were "walled off"?

Which brings me to the very curious term in the title of this piece. Tragically, there are some schismatic Orthodox groups which are now, and have been for several years, doing what they call the "walling off" of themselves, not only from other Christians but also from Orthodox jurisdictions which participate in inter-Christian dialogue and/or use the present-day civil calendar for feasts and fasts. What that means, it seems to me, is that because of their fears, they have broken communion with the Body of Christ, preaching against what they call the "calendar heresy" and the "heresy of ecumenicism." Now I think that the "calendar issue" is a very complex one, although not a really serious matter; and by no means, on either side of the question, should the term "heresy" be applied. But that is not my concern here. It is the calling of Orthodox participation in inter-Christian dialogue "the heresy of ecumenism" which is my concern.

Those who are tempted to the "walled off" position should read the Holy Synod's encyclical very carefully. Where is the heresy? Show it to me. Or better, don't waste your time or mine, because I can read for myself. As the former Dean of our cathedral in Ottawa has written,

... the OCA certainly, and no local Church I know of, accepts in principle or fact anything short of the traditional Orthodox affirmation of ecclesiastical particularism: the Orthodox Church IS the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. This presupposition is spelled out in all the documents—SCOPA guidelines for ecumenical activity, OCA encyclical on ecumenism, Antiochian guideline for ecumenical activity, and so on. The grounds and basis of Orthodox participation in the ecumenical movement at international, national and local levels have been well-defined and articulated and they are definitely and distinctly NOT relativistic. This is why many delightfully stubborn and confident Orthodox have found the courage and energy to participate in ecumenical activities.

Fr Andrew Morbey said this in 1996, on one of the Internet discussion groups amongst Orthodox, and he has always been, at least to my observation, rather cautious, even perhaps somewhat skeptical, about inter-church dialogue. In fact, he said in the panel discussion at the AAC that although he has been willing to dialogue, he has often felt "mugged," and he seemed to press for serious consideration of withdrawal from the National Council of Christian

Churches in the USA in particular. Nevertheless he indicated that he was hopeful about the OCA's initial joining in the new dialogue called Christian Churches Together.

In that 1996 statement on the Internet, Fr Andrew also talks about an acquaintance of his who had just joined one of the "walled-off" jurisdictions:

I think I do know what lies behind the 'walling off' of my friend: susceptibility to National Enquirer-type Orthodox sensationalism, with its editors and redactors equipped with highly refined 'orthometers'; and above all disappointment. He had hoped, and hopes, to meet the Bride of Christ on this side of the age to come manifested without spot or wrinkle, on his particular aesthetic and liturgical terms. He has suffered disappointment and discouragement. He was disheartened by parish life, seeking instead some sort of 'intentional' Orthodox community, rather than one existing as the product of biology and history—a gathering of like minded zealots, rather than one composed of Mrs Slipupchuk and Mr Lotterides and Fr Backroomboise and all the gang that immigration and fertility have produced. He wanted a heavenly fragrance, rather than that of varenniki carried up through the air vents. He wanted hair, and lots of it, and not the smooth chops signalling a 'little Russian' background. He wanted every one to be, like him, a devout and passionate lover of services, eager to stand in worship for hours and hours. He had fallen in love with a very romantic idea of Orthodoxy, not at all unlike Lawrence for Arabia, Byron for Greece, Negley Farson for the Caucasus, and countless others who have come to love Holy Russia and Byzantium.

I could not resist quoting this passage, and not just because of its wonderful sense of humour about human foibles. I quote it because it points out in the gentlest, most pastoral way the possible delusion that one who feels the need to "wall off" seems to be suffering. It is a delusion caused by fear, I think. But fear of what? That the Church Christ founded cannot be trusted? That maybe somehow the "purity" [understood as triumphalistic superiority?] of the Orthodox Church will be "contaminated"? That maybe God's chosen Hierarchs are selling us out? That the gates of hell *will* prevail against the Church? I do not know. I really cannot comprehend the "walled-off" mentality.

I only thank God that the Orthodox Church was fearless enough to reach out to me in inter-church dialogue—and in love, and above all in truth, to draw me in.

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