

*And he shall have dominion from
sea to sea and from the river to the
ends of the earth
Ps 71.8*



*Et il dominera de la mer
à la mer, et depuis le fleuve
jusqu'aux extrémités de la terre
Ps 71.8*

CANADIAN ORTHODOX MESSENGER

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History of Holy Resurrection, Saskatoon Reveals Witness and Growth in Christ

—by David Grier, Chairman of Holy Resurrection's Parish Council from 1982 to 1993

Our parish, like most things, began before it began. There was a group of four or five members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Saskatoon who began seeking a more fulfilling experience of God. They started a prayer meeting in someone's home where they met, talked and prayed. They heard about a young priest who was open to spiritual things and invited him to join their meetings. The small group then began to grow with the addition of students through the priest's connections at the University of Saskatchewan.

A turning point came when the group invited a Greek Orthodox priest from the United States, Fr Eusebius Stephanou, who exposed them to "life in the Spirit." The core group experienced the "baptism in the Holy Spirit" and, to use phraseology common in some circles of protestantism, became "on fire" for the Lord.

A note from the Bishop:

This account of the history of Holy Resurrection Church, Saskatoon, is a condensed version of the speech David Grier delivered on the occasion of the parish's 20th anniversary. It is an interesting story and an important one, because it illustrates in a very concrete way the struggle to which all of our Orthodox communities are called: the struggle to live out, and to present to others, the Orthodox Christian faith in a way which addresses our Canadian culture.

Each parish of our diocese has its own unique situation, problems, and gifts from God. Holy Resurrection, a very small community of Orthodox Christians with a strong evangelical bent to begin with, was given early on the gift of a significantly large number of persons who had a clearly western, evangelical protestant formation. For these converts, the liturgical worship, as well as the Orthodox way of life itself, would have to be grown into gradually.

As David shows, this growth has happened, and it continues even to this day. The openness and outreach continue also, as does the serious attempt to live according to the Gospel. For some of us their life is an encouragement to continue steadfast. For others it is an encouragement to take the risk of deliberately reaching out to the culture and society around us. For all of us it can serve as a reminder that we are Orthodox Christians who, by God's grace, have been placed here in Canada—at this time and in this specific culture—to bring souls to Christ, in Him to find their salvation. +S

First attempts to begin an English language mission that would focus on the faith, not on ethnic expression of faith, failed. The young mission priest, I am sure you have figured out by now, was Fr Orest Olekshy. He was thrilled by the new life that had begun in the mission group and knew that he could not leave it. He stayed and served the Paschal Liturgy to those who would become the founding members of Holy Resurrection parish.

Not long thereafter the newly formed mission parish, made up of about a dozen people, mostly young singles and all of Ukrainian background, was received into the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of America under the Patriarch of Constantinople. They held their first official liturgy in a print shop owned by one of the founding members, Martin Zip. During the first three years the place of worship shifted from the print shop to a mobile home owned by Fr Orest, and then to the gym of a school where another member taught. Parish life centred around prayer meetings and gatherings in the Olekshy and other homes. Even though its constitution included the statement "To preserve and propagate, more particularly among the Ukrainians, the true and undefiled Christian Orthodox Faith," its members began to reach out to students and others from many backgrounds. In less than a year its membership included three ethnic Scandinavian Lutheran converts.

continued, next page . . .

Saskatoon parish, *continued from p.1:*

The small group lived its commitment to the Lord through giving of their time, talents and money. In the spring of 1978, less than three years after its beginning, the parish bought its first building, a former Pentecostal church at 25th St and Avenue C. Within four years Fr Orest was able to quit his job at the print shop and live on the support provided by the parish.

In those years the parish was characterised by a strong contingent of young people, committed to the spreading of the Gospel and ministering to others. Because the parish was so far from its Bishop and going a different direction from other Orthodox parishes in the area, it sought support and fellowship from groups that shared a similar disposition. These included fellowships

unchurched that they would not give it a chance. The liturgy was adjusted to accommodate a style of worship that was thought would reach people. The music shifted from traditional Ukrainian Orthodox hymns to the choruses common to charismatic and evangelical churches complete with instruments. However, the core of Orthodox liturgy was never altered.

The early 1980s marked a turning point. Mount Zion Christian Centre dissolved and its people were scattered. Holy Resurrection and Church of the Way offered themselves as homes for the drifting souls. An amazing number came to Holy Resurrection though none of them had much real knowledge of Orthodoxy, and most had real problems with such things as liturgy, icons, incense, and vestments. But they came because they saw past the things

they did not like to the people of Holy Resurrection who had a real "heart for God." They stayed because after they were here for a while, they recognised a stability that they did not have in their previous situation. Here they could have leadership that was connected to the Church of the Apostles, which meant that a great burden was lifted from their shoulders: no longer did they have to be constantly inventing the faith, because it was already fully existent.

The character of the membership of Holy Resurrection changed again. The parish was no longer primarily young singles evangelising on the street. Its people were now married or becoming married.

Weddings and baptisms were

regular occurrences. People were dealing with jobs, mortgages, and children's lessons. The parish's Christian colleagues changed as well. We no longer circulated in the Charismatic circles. Now we associated with a group of people I will call "the Orthodox in training." This was the Evangelical Orthodox Church which had started a parish in Saskatoon. Our friends at the Church of the Way were seriously entertaining joining the EOC en masse. Through our association with the EOC, we met and learned from now prominent Orthodox people like Fr Peter Gilquist and Fr John Braun.



Bishop Seraphim blesses the congregation of Holy Resurrection with the dikiri and trikir; on the left is Subdeacon Taras Papish, on the right, Reader Leonard Herrem.

of Catholic, Anglican and other charismatics, Women's Aglow, and Full Gospel Businessmen. Two groups played a special role in Holy Resurrection's life: a non-denominational charismatic group called Mount Zion Christian Centre and a Pentecostal church called Church of the Way.

The influence of these protestant groups and the type of people that the Lord was sending to Holy Resurrection affected the style of worship. Fr Orest lived a very difficult tension: on one hand he knew the fullness and the meaning of the Orthodox liturgy, while on the other he believed that its expression was so foreign to the

Everything appeared to be peaceful and settled. However, this was not entirely the case. We longed for a Bishop who would participate actively in our life. The parish had several potential clergy. One of them was one of our founding members, Reader Dennis Pihach, who had completed seminary just as Holy Resurrection began. In 1986, he approached Metropolitan THEODOSIUS to see if the Orthodox Church in America would consider him for ordination. He was welcomed with open arms. And so was the whole parish.

But this was not a simple transition. Even though its language was English and its outreach was to all, the OCA was popularly understood to be more "Russian." The non-Ukrainians, who by this time were a significant majority of the parish, could not see the problem. By this time these people strongly believed in ecclesiastical authority and desired a personal relationship with that authority. We did not understand the fears that some of the Ukrainians felt. Eventually, however, God's will prevailed, and the parish joined the OCA.

The fall of 1986, when we entered the OCA, marked the beginning of a new era at Holy Resurrection. One might call it the regularising of our Orthodoxy. We returned to a full liturgical cycle. We began to serve Vespers on Saturday evenings. We moved into a new building and began the slow process of making it look Orthodox. Our former building went to our new-old friends from EOC/Church of the Way, who by this time had become St Vincent of Lerins Orthodox Church. Our protestant support group was replaced by a new network of Orthodox friends including St Vincent's in Saskatoon and those in the OCA in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Recently, through a pan-Orthodox seminar series called *Windows to the East* that Holy Resurrection was key in establishing, we are developing relationships with other Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic parishes in Saskatoon. The strongest and most appreciated member of our present support group is His Grace, our beloved Bishop SERAPHIM.

The OCA definitely solved the ordination problem. Many of those who began at Holy Resurrection continue to play a prominent role in Orthodoxy, here and elsewhere. Of the pre-Holy Resurrection prayer group we have Fr Dennis of St Mark's in Yorkton, Wasil Szalasnyj who continues to serve Holy Resurrection in almost every lay capacity, and Martin Zip, the president of All Saints Ukrainian Orthodox Church and chairman of the *Windows to the East* committee. Of the founding/first year members we have Deacon Rodion and Denise Luciuk of Swift Current. And still connected to Holy Resurrection there

is Reader John Szymick, Deacon Phillip and Barb Eriksson, Sub-deacon Terry Papish, Reader Leonard Herrem, and Wasil's wife Kathy, who is a key *Windows to the East* organiser and our Church school leader.

Those who came in during the Mount Zion demise period include Sub-deacon Bob and Colleen Polson, now at St Herman's Seminary in Alaska, Reader James and Karen Davis, Reader Bob Rohr of St Mark's, our chairwoman Chrystal Herrem, Fr Orest's secretary Lorraine Grier, and myself. Another more recent member who is serving the Lord in a formal capacity is Brother Samuel (Panchuk) who was with us in that time of his life when he made the commitment to become a monastic. Through Bishop Seraphim, he found his way to Fr Gregory (Papazian) in Quebec.

Recently the parish has been experiencing two simultaneous phenomena. We have been attracting immigrants and Orthodox without a home as well as a few new members who come from non-Orthodox backgrounds. At the same time, we have been exporting members to other parts of the country at the same rate. In addition to Yorkton and Swift Current, already mentioned, we have long time members in Regina, Calgary, Edmonton, Kamloops and Victoria. The result is little or no visible, actual growth in membership. Our challenge, and the challenge facing all of Orthodoxy, is to renew the evangelical attitudes of our youth.

It seems to me that so far, the life of this parish has paralleled human life quite closely. First there was the gestation period of prayer meetings before the birth on Pascha 1975. Then there was the childhood, when we explored life with friends down the street. Next came adolescence, when we re-discovered the faith that was handed down from our fathers and learned how to walk it and live it. God willing, we are now ready to embark on our adult life.

David Grier, who gave this account of the history of Holy Resurrection, is a member of the diocesan council of the Archdiocese of Canada.



OCW, OTI to Hold Spring Conferences

On **Saturday March 2**, the **Orthodox Christian Women of Montreal (OCW)** will sponsor its fifth annual Lenten conference. The theme of this year's conference is **"Icons: Windows into the Kingdom."** The keynote speaker is **Fr Andrew Tregubov**, well known iconographer and woodcarver from New Hampshire. Other speakers/workshop leaders are Hieromonk Cyrille [Bradette] of St-Benoît de Nursie French parish, Montréal, and Rhoda Zion of Kingston, Ontario. Location of the conference is St George Antiochian Church, Montréal. The cost of \$25 for the day includes registration and lunch. Call Masha Tkachuk at 514/481-5093 or fax her at 514/481-2256 for more information. Registrations must be received no later than February 23.

"Gender in Orthodoxy" is the topic of this year's **Orthodox Theological Institute of Montreal (OTI)** retreat to be held in Chateauguay (as in previous years). **Constance Callinicos** will be the featured speaker for the three-day retreat (**Thursday-Saturday, April 4-6**). Ms Callinicos is the author of *American Aphrodite* and numerous articles, and is a lecturer on issues relating to the politics of gender as they exist not only in secular society but also in cultural institutions important to her: church, family, and the men in her life. She has travelled throughout the USA, conducting workshops and seminars as well as presenting lectures. Her "first love," as she puts it, Byzantine music and the rituals of the Orthodox Church, have occupied most of her time in the past three years. She has conducted Orthodox choirs and been a chanter. A native of the USA Midwest, she recently returned to her roots after having lived in Southern California for over 20 years, and now lives in Indianapolis. The \$100 cost of the retreat includes room and board. Registrations must be received no later than March 29. Call Fr John Tkachuk at 514/481-5093 or fax him at 514/481-2256 for more information.

Chancellor Resumes Canadian Forces Contacts

After a three-year hiatus, diocesan Chancellor Fr John Tkachuk recently resumed contacts with the Deputy Chaplain General at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa regarding the possibility of (a) obtaining a statistical breakdown on the numbers of various nationality-Orthodox members in the Canadian Forces,

and (b) formulating a specific but inclusive "religious preference" wording for the Orthodox Christians that would distinguish them from Protestants. Currently our difficulty is that all Orthodox are categorised as belonging to the "various Orthodox denominations" (Greek, Ukrainian, Russian, etc.) and further confused by being lumped with Protestants, after Anglicans and United Church, between Christian Science and Salvation Army, but before the Latter Day Saints and "other Protestant denominations." The Deputy Chaplain General recommends that a letter be addressed by the bishop(s) to the Minister of National Defence to begin this lengthy, tedious but necessary review and restructuring. Chancellor Tkachuk will be drafting such a letter for our bishop(s)' signature(s).

Givers Blessed by Giving During Christmas Fast

"Be a Blessing, Give a Blessing" was the focus of part of the 1995 Christmas Fast for Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral, Ottawa. Parishioners took part in a number of ways to help the homeless in the nation's capital. First of all the afternoon of Saturday, December 16 was set aside for cookie baking at the church. Families brought prepared cookie dough, rolling pins, cookie cutters, sprinkles, and cookie sheets, and baked many wonderful batches of Christmas cookies together. All of these cookies would be part of our gifts to the needy. The second activity was a collection of non-perishable food items on Sunday December 17th. During the usual stewardship collection at the Liturgy, children brought these gifts of food up to the front of the church and put them in a wicker basket. (We will continue this practice once a month.)

The third opportunity took the form of preparing "Shoebbox Gifts." Over 30 boxes were given: each included such items as a comb, toothbrush/paste, shampoo, soap, warm mittens, socks, bus tickets, McDonald's coupons, and that all-important "treat," a chocolate bar.

Parishioners of all ages and stages contributed. Children especially enjoyed the cookie baking and shopping for the Shoebbox Gifts. Many participated in more than one activity and overall, the response to this first-time effort was terrific! Staff at Shepherds of Good Hope (a shelter for the homeless in Ottawa) were happy to receive our donations, and they gave us a tour of their facility, in which the most striking feature was the icon of the Theotokos and Child in their chapel. How unexpected that was! (Shepherds was originally an RC institution.) Seeing the icon was the crowning blessing of our endeavours to reach out to help those in need.

—reported by Larissa Rodger

Bishop Recounts Recent OC/RC Dialogue

From 26 November to 6 December 1995 I participated in the annual meeting of the Joint Committee of Orthodox and Roman Catholic Bishops, which is a committee made up of representatives of the Standing Conference of Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA) and the National Council of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) of the USA. It was the second one of these meetings which I have attended, and it was different from their usual meetings ("usual" meaning three days). Besides the greatly extended length, this time the meeting was convened in Istanbul (Constantinople) at the invitation of His All-Holiness, the Patriarch of Constantinople, BARTHOLOMEW.

We 14 bishops (seven Orthodox, seven Roman Catholic) first assembled in Rome for some preparation, as well as "courtesy visits." On Monday we met with two departments of the Vatican which affect the world dialogue with the Orthodox: first, the Undersecretary of State for Relations with States and member of the Permanent Interdicasterial Commission for the Church in Eastern Europe, Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran; and second, the head of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy. We asked questions and were informed of current conditions in both departments, about matters relating to this dialogue. The comments were quite frank and forthright on both sides, and to some extent resulted in a clarification of the territory of the dialogue. In other words, points of agreement and disagreement were set out more clearly.

On Tuesday we visited the Pontifical Oriental Institute, near the basilica of St Mary Major. The Institute is an important centre for graduate study and research in matters dealing with the so-called "eastern" Church (its library is very rich indeed). Then we were all received by Pope John Paul II who encouraged us to keep talking. Afterward the bishops were taken through the excavations under St Peter's Basilica, archaeological digs about which I read a few years ago. The best part of this was that were taken as close as is possible without touching, to what are most probably the bones of the Apostle Peter. As always, at that time and other similar times, I carry all my beloved brothers and sisters with me in my heart. And if my heart does not deceive, I perceived the blessing of being at least near the Apostle.

On Wednesday we flew to Constantinople and were almost immediately received by Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW. He likewise encouraged the progress of the dialogue. Afterward, we attended Great Vespers at

the Phanar (where the Patriarch's residence and offices are), and then on Thursday we attended the Patriarchal Divine Liturgy for the Feast of the Apostle Andrew, the patron of the Church of Constantinople. It has become customary for many years now for a delegation from Rome to attend this feast, and so Cardinal Cassidy with several other bishops were among those assembled. (On the feast of Sts Peter and Paul the Patriarch also sends a delegation to Rome). Later there was a state reception at the Patriarchate.

Finally on Friday, after this long introduction, we began the process of the official dialogue, which took place in several instalments. This session of the dialogue took place at the Phanar. Our dialogue consisted, as is the usual pattern with this committee, in hearing papers presented on appropriate topics by either side, and hearing also a formal response by the other side, and then discussion. The main aim at present is to see better where we agree, where we disagree, and to try to understand why. Resolving the differences is quite another matter.

After the first session of dialogue, we visited the Patriarch of the Armenians in Turkey, KAREKIN II, and over tea had a pleasant talk with him and some of his staff and faithful. After that we had the singular blessing of visiting the Monastery of the Life-giving Fountain (Zoödochos Pighi), and of drinking water from the spring. Within the confines of this monastery, which is not far from the Theodosian Walls, are the tombs of many of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchs. It is also important to know that the sign of this Monastery's Spring is remembered every Bright Friday in Pascha week.

The dialogue resumed early Saturday morning at our hotel. Once again there were papers, responses and lively discussion. Then in the afternoon we were taken briefly to the Topkapi Museum (formerly a palace of the Sultan), and there saw relics of the Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord, John. It was not pleasant seeing these relics on display in a secular museum. Then we went to the museum Church of Holy Peace (St Irene) where the Second Ecumenical Council met, and then the museum Cathedral of Holy Wisdom (St Sophia), which is truly awesome. But so is St Irene in a smaller way.

On Sunday we attended the first Liturgy served by one of the new metropolitans, and later the Orthodox Bishops met privately to discuss some matters. Then on Monday we all went by boat to the island of Halki (about one hour away in the Sea of Marmora) to visit the Holy

continued, next page . . .

Bishops' dialogue, continued from p.5:

Trinity Monastery, and the now closed famous seminary, and its library. We held our final session of dialogue on Halki.

On Tuesday there was some free time, which I spent with our Father Pierre (Vachon) of our skete at St-Eusèbe in Québec, who is spending the winter on Mount Athos. He sends his love to all. Then in the evening the bishops went to the city of Chalcedon on the Asia side of the Bosphorus, and attended Vespers for the feast of St Nicholas. It was in Chalcedon, but in a church now destroyed, that the Fourth Ecumenical Council met. On Wednesday, we attended Liturgy for the feast of St Nicholas in a Church on the Bosphorus, and then it was time to begin the trip home, with an overnight stay in Rome. It was certainly a long time to be away, and the trip was not without its difficulties. But as always, the Lord has ways of bestowing blessings in the midst of difficulties, and it is important to recognise them.

There are some who believe that I in particular and we in general should not participate in such dialogues as this. From time to time I hear about it, and there are also those who write about it. I want to respond by saying that not participating is more dangerous than participating. The reason I say this has to do with motivations. Why not participate? The reasons given are usually that we Orthodox will either simply be eaten up, or the bishops will give everything away and sell us all. This is an attitude of fear and cynicism. What has this negative attitude to do with the Gospel? The Gospel of Jesus Christ compels us toward unity in reconciliation. But it is not unity at any price, and it is not reconciliation by conquest, because that is neither unity nor reconciliation. Our participation in this dialogue hopes for both unity and reconciliation, but it must be found only in the Truth which is Jesus Christ, and therefore an honest and true unity and reconciliation. Regardless of statements which are excessively generous and optimistic, the process will take time and care. The separation did not come instantly, and neither will reconciliation. And so we talk. We talk, so that we can hope to begin to understand each other. We talk, so that we can overcome the past mistakes of falling into the passions of hatred and retribution. We talk, so that we can begin in all honesty and without fear to discuss seriously and openly what separates us, and to find the honest and true ways according to the will of God which can bring us again to true unity in Christ. The very least we could do is to come to a better understanding. The very best would be to achieve true healing. And I ask you to pray for me that I will not make any mistakes!

Seraphim

**Bishop Seraphim's Visitation Schedule
January — May 1996**

6 Jan	St-Benoît, Montréal
6-8 Jan	Sts Peter & Paul, Montréal
8-10 Jan	Holy Transfiguration Skete, Fitch Bay QC
2-4 Feb	Sign of the Theotokos, Montréal
16-19 Feb	Holy Trinity Sobor, Winnipeg
20 Feb-4 Mar	British Columbia Deanery
15-18 Mar	Christ the Saviour Sobor, Toronto
18-21 Mar	Holy Synod, New York
21-24 Mar	St Vladimir's Seminary, New York
21-25 Apr	Holy Transfiguration Skete, Fitch Bay QC
25-27 Apr	Archdiocesan Council, Montréal
27-28 Apr	Sts Peter and Paul, Montréal
3-13 May	Manitoba-Saskatchewan Deanery

Advanced notice:

23-27 July	Archdiocesan Assembly, Ottawa
27 July	1 - 5 p.m.: Archdiocesan Picnic/BBQ, at Fair Haven, the Diocesan Centre & Bishop's residence: one hour south of the Assembly site

Pastoral Notes

Effective 9 November 1995, **Archpriest Basil Zion**, having left the communion of the Orthodox Church, has permanently suspended himself from all priestly function and cut himself off from receiving Holy Communion in the Orthodox Church.

On 21 November 1995, Bishop Seraphim, with the blessing of Metropolitan Theodosius, ordained Subdeacon **James Silouan Griggs** to the Holy Diaconate at St Vladimir's Seminary in Yonkers, New York. He is attached to the seminary's Three Hierarchs Chapel. (Deacon James and his family are from Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral parish in Ottawa.)

On 7 January 1996, at Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral in Montréal, Bishop Seraphim blessed **Protodeacon Cyprian Hutcheon** of the Sign of the Theotokos parish in Montréal to wear the purple kamilavka within the Archdiocese. He also blessed **Archpriest Alexander Janowski** of Sts Peter and Paul Cathedral in Montréal to wear the jewelled cross within the Archdiocese.

Celebrating Christmas in the Traditions of the Eastern Churches

Most of the Christian Churches of the East, whether Orthodox or Uniate, Chalcedonian or pre-Chalcedonian, now celebrate Christmas on one of two dates, 25 December on the New (Gregorian) Calendar, or 25 December on the Old (Julian) Calendar, which happens to be, in this century, 7 January on the New Calendar. In the year 2001, and throughout the next century, 25 December (OC) will fall on 8 January (NC), which will add to the confusion.

The Armenian Church is one of the five churches condemned for the heresy of "monophysitism" at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD. That dispute has caused much misery and misunderstanding over the past 1500 years, though modern scholars, such as the late Fr John Meyendorff, tend to explain it in terms of the political motives of the Byzantine Empire. The actual theological dispute is almost absurd: whether Christ has one nature (*monophysis*), a unique combination of the divine and human natures, or whether Christ has two natures which remain distinct in His person. Such a scholastic dispute should not have divided the known world: it was the first of the great schisms of Christianity, and left the Copts, the Armenians, the Ethiopians, the Syrians and the "Jacobites" of India ever since on the margins of Christendom.

For the Orthodox today, the "Oriental Orthodox" (the preferred designation) should be an invaluable ally, and a profound source of liturgical and spiritual wisdom. These churches make present to the Orthodox much that has been lost, forgotten or neglected over the past millennium and a half. For example, the Armenian Church, though it is on the New Calendar, celebrates the Nativity not on 25 December but on 6 January, and in fact does not distinguish between the feast of the Nativity and the feast of the Theophany. It is most fitting, then, that Fr Shenork Souin, priest of the Church of St Gregory the Illuminator in St Catharines, Ontario (the oldest Armenian parish in Canada), should have organized, on 16 December 1995, an "ecumenical" evening "Celebrating Christmas in the Traditions of the Eastern Churches."

There was a large attendance, made up of Armenians from the parish, other Christians from St Catharines (including a number of Anglican priests and Lutheran ministers), and Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox visitors from southern Ontario. The celebration took place in the church, and was therefore liturgical. Opening prayers in Armenian were followed by a choir of Coptic deacons, led by Abouna Ammonius of the Coptic Church in Scarborough, who chanted, with percussive accompaniment, Nativity verses in Coptic, Greek, and English.

Nicoletta Isar-Lock gave a lecture, illustrated with slides, on the iconography of the Nativity, in which she pointed out that this icon does not—as we might think—conflate two events, the birth of Christ (Nativity) and the adoration of the Magi (Theophany), but celebrates the one feast as it is still observed in the Armenian Church; she further explained that the Byzantine Church did not know a separate feast on 25 December until

late in the fourth century. The fact that this talk was presented in the Armenian Church helped to illumine our understanding of the Nativity icon as being also and equally the icon of the Theophany. Mme Isar-Lock further developed the parallel between the icon of the Nativity/Theophany and those of the Raising of Lazarus and the Resurrection: the cave is both womb and tomb, the swaddling-clothes of Christ become the grave-clothes of Lazarus: birth and death are present, each in the other.

Fr Shenork then chanted in Armenian the Nativity Hymn: "The infinite one was wrapped in swaddling clothes, though inseparable from the Father: in a holy cave he slept." Dr Charles Lock spoke on the Magi, as witnesses to the Nativity, and of how in the ancient world an event could not exist apart from its being witnessed: hence the historical truth of celebrating the Nativity only on the date of the Theophany. (This happens to have been the case in English culture until the 17th century: "On the twelfth day of Christmas...." marks the climax of the feast on 6 January.) He also drew attention to an Armenian legend which T.S. Eliot used in his poem "The Journey of the Magi."

The Syrian Orthodox priest from Hamilton, Father Ephrem Adde, sang, with his wife, some hymns of the Nativity in Aramaic, the very language spoken by Christ. We heard the strophe whose translation reads "the whole creation is suspended at His birth," and time was suspended as we heard the proclamation of the shepherds in the very words that they themselves must have uttered.

Prof Richard Schneider, a parishioner at Christ the Saviour Sobor in Toronto gave a talk on the paradox of the Incarnation, the paradox of the "God-man" that is at the centre of the Chalcedonian dispute; and the evening concluded with hymns to the Christ-child and to the Theotokos, chanted by Deacon Alex Younes of the Antiochian Church in Toronto. In the sad history of the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox churches, no aspect has been more bitter and even violent than the relations between the Syrian and Antiochian Churches. As Fr Shenork observed, before the closing prayer, we were ourselves witness that those divided for almost the entire history of Christianity could yet be made whole.—Charles Lock, Copenhagen, Denmark (formerly a parishioner of Christ the Saviour, Toronto)

Greek Monasteries in Ontario and Quebec

During the last two years, three Greek Orthodox monasteries have been founded in Ontario and Quebec. In the jurisdiction of Bishop SOTERIOS of Toronto, these monasteries have greatly enriched the lives of the many Orthodox faithful, both Greek and non-Greek, who have visited them. Near Nobleton, Ontario is the Monastery of Patrokosmas where there are two nuns and six novices, under the leadership of the Abbess, Mother Alexia. Mother Thekla is the Abbess of Panagia Parigiritissa Monastery near Brownsburg, Quebec, where there are two nuns and four novices. Near Picton, Ontario is the Monastery of St John the Theologian, where there are two monks and four novices, with Father Joseph as Abbot.

The spiritual father of all three monasteries is Archimandrite Ephrem of Philotheou on Mount Athos in

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Greek monasteries, continued from p.7:

Greece. Fr Ephrem started visiting North America in 1979, beginning in London, Ontario, where he inspired many Orthodox faithful with an intense longing for the establishment of structured, cenobitic monastic life after the Greek model. Since then he has been instrumental in founding a total of ten centres of monastic spirituality in the USA and Canada, the most recent of which is a men's monastery consecrated in mid-January 1996 in Phoenix, Arizona. These centres of monastic spirituality are places, as Bishop Soterios noted in his address to the Clergy-Laity Assembly of his diocese, where those "who thirst for this feature of spiritual life find godly sanctuary . . . and emotional relief. They find serenity and calm for their soul" [*Orthodox Way*, Oct 1995, p.8].—RZ

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*Dedicated to the memory of St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow (+1925),
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