

THE GOLDEN CHAIN

The Lives of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, Archbishop John of San Francisco, Archbishop Joasaph of Canada, Archbishop Andrew of Rockland and Metropolitan Philaret of New York

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INTRODUCTION

St. Symeon the New Theologian writes that the saints are like a golden chain, and that it is our aim to become attached to the last link in the chain: "Those who have become saints from one generation to the next through the fulfillment of the commandments take the place of the previous saints and are united to them. They are illumined and become like them through communion with the Grace of God, and they all become a golden chain, each individual being connected with the previous one through, faith, works and love." The saints whose lives are described in this little book (we call them "saints" out of conviction, even if only two of them have been officially glorified) form a golden chain of a similar kind: they represent the continuity of sanctity in the Russian Church Abroad from its earliest years to the most recent times. Thus their lives also enable us to form a kind of panorama of the life of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in time and space, from its beginnings in the South of Russia just after the revolution to its foreign mission-fields in Eastern and Western Europe, China, Australia and the United States. Moreover, since all of these saints were born in pre-revolutionary Russia, we are given glimpses into the rich spiritual life of that period. Thus St. John of Kronstadt, the Optina elders and the Tsar-Martyr enter into these pages, as well as several of the confessors of the Catacomb Church of post-revolutionary times.

These saints are linked also in more personal ways. Thus the first in the series, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, was the spiritual father of the second in the series, Archbishop Joasaph, and lived in the monastery of Milkovo in Serbia at the same time as the third in the series, Archbishop John Maximovich, was beginning his monastic struggle there. Again, both the fourth and the fifth in the series, Archbishop Andrew of Rockland and Metropolitan Philaret of New York, worked together with Archbishop John in the United States (and in Metropolitan Philaret's case, in China, too).

May this little book encourage Orthodox Christians to pray more to these newly revealed intercessors before the Throne of God, and strengthen our faith that, even in these our terrible times, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever, and that the wonderful river of Orthodox holiness will not dry up to the end of the age!

July 8/21, 2013.

*Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God.
East House, Beech Hill, Mayford, Woking. GU22 0SB.*

I. ARCHBISHOP THEOPHAN OF POLTAVA

Early Years

The future Archbishop Theophan was born in the village of Podmoshie, Novgorod province on December 31, 1874 (1873, according to another source). His father was the village priest, Fr. Demetrius Bystrov, and his mother was called Maria. He was baptized with the name Basil, since the feast day of St. Basil the Great (January 1) was the nearest to his birthday.

When he was seven years old, Basil had an extraordinary prophetic dream. He saw himself standing in hierarchical vestments and wearing a golden mitre in the high place during the Divine Liturgy. And his father went up to him and censured him. It should be pointed out that the child had never yet witnessed a hierarchical service. In the morning Basil told his mother the dream. His father, who was sitting in the next room, heard him and said:

“Look a new Joseph has appeared!”

But the prophecy in the dream was fulfilled exactly. Many years later, when Archbishop Theophan was going to be consecrated to the episcopate, the Holy Synod asked his father to take part in the service. And during the service he censured his son in the sanctuary in front of the holy altar...

As a child, his parents told him, Basil did not know any prayers by heart, but he would fall on his knees in front of the icons and burble out, weeping:

“Lord, You are so great and I am so small!”

He was quiet and concentrated, and did not take part in childish games. But at the same time he was radiant and joyful. He tasted of the fruits of prayer, and kept a strict watch on his inner life. He loved the severe landscape of the north of Russia, which spoke to him of God the Creator. And he breathed in the pious, humble spirit of the peasants around him.

Basil went to the parish school, where his extraordinary intellectual talents were first revealed. He was able to read a page once and repeat it almost word for word, and jumped class three times. Then he went to theological seminary, which he finished three years before those who had begun with him.

Having finished his secondary studies at the theological seminary, the young Basil had to pass an examination to enter the Theological Academy in St. Petersburg.

“I was then scarcely seventeen. I was much younger than all the other candidates,

and I looked like a schoolboy... I was not afraid of the entry examination because I had a good knowledge of the seminary programme. And then there came the time of the written examination in philosophy marked by the famous Professor Korinfsky. I was afraid of this exam because it was outside the seminary programme and because it was the only written exam, all the others were oral. I prayed fervently to St. Justin the Philosopher and the holy teachers of the Church Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom to enlighten my mind and give me their thought.

“The day of the exam arrived; it was due to take place at four o’clock. We sat down, Professor Korinfsky entered, greeted us and then wrote on the board the proposed subject:

“‘The importance of personal experience in elaborating one’s world-view.’

“What joy and gratitude to the Lord I felt on reading this compositional subject! It was clear and familiar to me. Thanks to the prayers of the saints, the Lord sent me rapid, light thought and I finished my work astonishingly quickly, in half an hour. I had written only one page... I got up and asked permission to give in my work. The professor was clearly very surprised! He looked at his watch and said, not without hesitation:

“‘Oh well, give it to me.’

“He had seen that I was the youngest and probably thought that I had not understood the subject. I noted his hesitation and handed him my paper. He asked me to wait for a moment and began to read. During the reading, he raised his eyes towards me from time to time, then said:

“‘Thank you, thank you... You can go.’

“My fervent prayer to the philosopher saints had been heard,’ continued the archbishop. ‘It was they, not I, who had written by my hand... Thanks be to Thee, O Lord! For Thou are the Giver of all good things! In this way the exam which was supposed to be the most difficult became for me the easiest of all. I had the distinct impression that Professor Korinfsky was satisfied with my work. Finally, I got the top pass into the St. Petersburg Academy. But as the Apostle writes: ‘Not I, but the grace of God which is with me’ (I Corinthians 15.10).”

Many years later, when Basil was now Bishop Theophan and the Rector of the Academy, he had to pacify the warring factions among the professors during the revolutionary years 1905-06. After one of these debates, without himself taking part, Professor Korinfsky came up to the Rector, who had just calmed the tempest, and said, smiling sweetly:

“Yes... I well remember your essay!”

At the Theological Academy

Archbishop Theophan had fond memories of several of the professors of the Academy when he was there, including V.V. Bolotov, A.P. Lopukhin and N.N. Glubokovsky. Professor Lopukhin even bequeathed him his very large theological library (which he later gave to the Academy). With their help and support, he passed all four years of his study as the first student.

Having finished his theological education at the age of 21, he was given a professorial scholarship to continue to study at the Academy.

In 1896, Basil Dmitrievich was appointed lecturer at the St. Petersburg Academy in the faculty of Biblical history. In 1898 he received the monastic tonsure with the name Theophan in honour of St. Theophan the Confessor, Bishop of Sigriane, and in respectful memory of Bishop Theophan the Recluse. In the same year he was ordained to the diaconate and the priesthood.

In 1901, he was raised to the rank of archimandrite with the duties of inspector of the Academy in the Academy's house church by Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg.

The Academy's ustav said that the inspector had to have a master's degree and so was obliged to write a composition to obtain the degree. But Archimandrite Theophan did not hand in a composition, although he had written it. The reason was that as a monk he had given vows of poverty and humility, and could not seek or desire academic glory. It contradicted the monastic vows. And so the work lay in his desk for several years until another professor in his absence took it and gave it to the Academic Council. The subject of the composition was: “The Tetragram, or the Old Testament Name of God (Jehovah or Yahweh)”. This work became his master's dissertation at the faculty of the Biblical history of the Old Testament. It was published in 1905 and was very highly esteemed by critics both inside and outside Russia. It was called “the famous Tetragram”! However, when the book appeared in the shops, Archbishop Theophan himself went round all the bookshops in a cab, and bought and burned all the copies of the work! In this way he fought against the love of glory in himself.

In this case, as in others, he sought the advice of the elders, especially Hieroschemamonks Alexis of Valaam, and Barnabas and Isidore of Gethsemane skete.

Fr. Theophan would often take the steamer to Valaam. Once he left the monastery church and went into the woods to practise the Jesus prayer. He soon noticed a large

silent mass of people with Fr. Alexis, upon whom the abbot had given the obedience to teach the people outside the church. On seeing him, Fr. Theophan went in a different direction, thinking that he would not meet the crowd again. But it turned out that the elder led the pilgrims in the same direction. Then he decided to let the procession pass him while he went off in the opposite direction. He stopped in a thicket from where he could observe the pilgrims. In front strode the elder a large distance from the people, while behind him came the pilgrims, most of them women. The hieroschemamonk had his head bowed to the ground, and was praying. Suddenly the thought occurred to Fr. Theophan: "Ach, in vain does Hieroschemamonk Alexis surround himself with these women – and all of them are young. There could be reprimands..."

"But I hadn't managed to think this before the elder raised his head and, turning in my direction, loudly said, almost shouting:

"They followed Christ, too!"

These words were so unexpected and short that none of the people could understand their meaning and to whom they referred. Although the whole crowd heard these words and looked in the direction of Fr. Theophan, they could not see him because of the thicket. But the elder again lowered his head and immersed himself in prayer...

"Truly, Elder Alexis was a great saint and wonderful clairvoyant," witnessed Vladyka Theophan. "He was as beautiful as an angel of God. It was sometimes difficult to look at him, he was as it were in flames, especially when standing at the altar in prayer. At the time he was completely transfigured, his face became different in an indescribable way, extremely concentrated and severe. He was truly all in fire."

But if the elder felt that those present in the altar were involuntarily observing him and his prayer, he tried to hide his condition by a kind of foolery. He usually went up to the wall and, pretending that he was an absent-minded worshipper, in his shadow on the wall he corrected and combed the hair on his head.

Once Fr. Theophan set off for Valaam, troubled by the following thought: the ascetic rules of the Holy Fathers said that a monk should pay as little attention to his external appearance as possible. But the Church had blessed him to be an academic monk and live and be saved in the world. But, living in the world, it was impossible to forget his flesh and not care for his appearance...

He went to Fr. Alexis' cell convinced that he would get the solution to his problem. And his faith was rewarded. The elder, as always, received Fr. Theophan very joyfully. He sat him down and asked him to wait for a moment. Then he took a mirror, put it on the table at which Fr. Theophan was sitting, and began carefully to

comb his hair. After this he cleared everything from the table and, turning to Fr. Theophan, said:

“Well, now we can talk.”

And so, without any words, the elder had resolved Fr. Theophan’s problem...

Another holy man to whom Fr. Theophan was close was the great wonderworking priest Fr. John of Kronstadt.

Once Fr. Theophan was preparing to celebrate the Divine Liturgy the next day in one of the capital’s churches whose altar feastday it was. But suddenly he was given urgent work that could not be postponed: he had to prepare a written report for the metropolitan. “From the evening and throughout the night I wrote the urgent report, and so I was not able to rest. When I had finished my work it was already morning, I had to go to the church. And there, together with the other clergy, Fr. John was serving with me. The Liturgy was coming to an end and the servers were communing in the altar. At a suitable moment, when the communion hymn was being sung, Fr. John came up to me and congratulated me on receiving the Holy Mysteries. And then he looked at me with particular attention and, shaking his head, said:

““Oh, how difficult it is to write the whole night and then, having had no rest at all, to go straight to the church and celebrate the Divine Liturgy... May the Lord help and strengthen you!”

“You can imagine how joyful it was for me to hear such words from such a person. I suddenly felt that all my tiredness had suddenly disappeared at his words... Yes, great was the righteous one Fr. John of Kronstadt!”

After pausing for a little, Vladyka continued: “But how many people there were, blind and deaf ones, who did not accept Fr. John and treated him very crudely. And there were such people even among the priests. Thus for example Fr. John once came to the altar feast in one of the churches of St. Petersburg. But the superior of the church, on seeing him, began to shout at him:

““Who invited you here? Why did you appear? I didn’t invite you. Oh, you’re such a ‘saint’. We know saints of your kind!”

“Fr. John was embarrassed and said:

““Calm down, batyushka, I’m leaving now...”

“But he shouted at him:

“‘Oh what a ‘wonderworker’ you are. Get out of here! I didn’t invite you...’

“Fr. John meekly and humbly asked forgiveness and left the church...

“Another time there was a service in the St. Andrew cathedral in Kronstadt, where Fr. John was rector. One of the servers began to get disturbed:

“‘Why do you give away money to everyone, but to me, who serve you, you have never given anything? What does this mean?’

“Batyushka was silent, and was apparently praying within himself. But the other continued to be disturbed and reviled him, not sparing his language.

“A reader who happened to be there stood up for batyushka:

“‘What are you doing? Are you in your right mind? Is this possible? It is shameful and terrible to think of what you are saying to batyushka.’

“And then he listed the merits of Fr. John, mentioning, among other things, that he was a rector.

“‘That’s right,’ said Fr. John. ‘After all, I’m a superior. Is it possible to speak with a superior in such a way? No, no, no... It’s wrong, it’s wrong...’”

Vladyka Theophan noted: “What humility Fr. John had! Neither the gift of clairvoyance, nor the gift of healings, nor of wonderworking – none of this did he attribute to himself. But only that it was wrong to speak to a superior in such a way!”

Fr. John had great influence with the royal family, and the tsar visited him secretly. Rasputin feared this influence.

As Archbishop Theophan witnessed to the Extraordinary Commission: “Rasputin indicated with unusual skill that he had reservations [about Fr. John]... Rasputin... said of Fr. John of Kronstadt... that he was a saint but, like a child, lacked experience and judgement... As a result Fr. John’s influence at court began to wane...”

Fr. John reposed on December 20, 1908. Fr. Theophan served at his funeral.

Rasputin

In 1905, after the publication of his master’s thesis, Fr. Theophan was raised to the rank of extraordinary professor and confirmed in his post as inspector of the Academy.

Perhaps the greatest mistake of Archbishop Theophan's life was his initial trust of the great pseudo-elder Gregory Rasputin. According to his own witness before the Extraordinary Commission established by the Provisional Government in 1917, he first met Rasputin, significantly, in the house of Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky), the future traitor of the Russian Church and first Soviet "patriarch" of Moscow. "Once he [Bishop Sergius] invited us to his lodgings for tea, and introduced for the first time to me and several monks and seminarians a recently arrived man of God, Brother Gregory as we called him then. He amazed us all with his psychological perspicacity. His face was pale and his eyes unusually piercing - the look of someone who observed the fasts. And he made a strong impression."

Archbishop Theophan was especially impressed by Rasputin's apparent prophetic gift. "At that time Admiral Rozhdestvensky's squadron had already set sail [to fight the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War]. We therefore asked Rasputin, 'Will its engagement with the Japanese be successful?' Rasputin answered, 'I feel in my heart that it will be sunk.' And his prediction subsequently came to pass in the battle of Tsushima Strait."

Again, "Rasputin correctly told the students of the seminary whom he was seeing for the first time that one would be a writer and that another was ill, and then explained to a third that he was a simple soul whose simplicity was being taken advantage of by his friends... In conversation Rasputin revealed not book learning but a subtle grasp of spiritual experience obtained through personal knowledge. And a perspicacity that verged on second sight."

Fr. Theophan invited Rasputin to move in with him, to stay in his apartment. It was through Fr. Theophan that Rasputin gained entry into the house of Grand Duke Peter Nikolaevich, the Tsar's cousin, and his wife, the Montenegrin Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaevna, whose confessor Fr. Theophan had become. (According to another source the Grand Duchess first met Rasputin in the podvorye of the Mikhailov monastery in Kiev.) "Visiting the home of Militsa Nikolaevna, I let slip that a man of God named Gregory Rasputin had appeared among us. Militsa Nikolaevna became very interested in my communication, and Rasputin received an invitation to present himself to her." After that, Rasputin was invited to the Grand Duchess' house on his own...

It was through the Grand Duchess that Fr. Theophan was introduced to the Tsar: "I was invited to the home of the former emperor for the first time by Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaevna." In his diary for November 13/26, the Tsar noted: "I received Theophan, inspector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy."

Soon after, Fr. Theophan was offered the extremely responsible post of spiritual father of the Royal Family. So he became, as it were, the "conscience of the Tsar" at a

critical moment in the nation's history.

Fr. Theophan gave the Tsarina and her children books of the Holy Fathers to read. In a note to her daughter, the Tsarina reminded them "to read the book that batyushka brought you before communion".

In view of Fr. Theophan's closeness both to the Royal Family and to Rasputin, it is often asserted that it was he who introduced them to each other, and that his later self-imposed exile in France was in order to expiate this sin. This is untrue. According to the words of Archbishop Theophan before the Extraordinary Commission: "How Rasputin came to know the family of the former emperor, I have absolutely no idea. And I definitely state that I took no part in that. My guess is that Rasputin penetrated the royal family by indirect means... Rasputin himself never talked about it, despite the fact that he was a rather garrulous person... I noticed that Rasputin had a strong desire to get into the house of the former emperor, and that he did so against the will of Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaevna. Rasputin himself acknowledged to me that he was hiding his acquaintance with the royal family from Militsa Nikolaevna."

The first meeting between the Royal Family and Rasputin, as recorded in the Tsar's diary, took place on November 1, 1905. Archbishop Theophan testified: "I personally heard from Rasputin that he produced an impression on the former empress at their first meeting. The sovereign, however, fell under his influence only after Rasputin had given him something to ponder." According to the Monk Iliodor, Rasputin told him: "I talked to them for a long time, persuading them to spit on all their fears, and rule."

On hearing that Rasputin had impressed the empress, Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaevna said to him, as Archbishop Theophan testified: "'You, Grigory, are an underhand person.' Militsa Nikolaevna told me personally of her dissatisfaction with Rasputin's having penetrated the royal family on his own, and mentioned her warning that if he did, it would be the end of him. My explanation of her warning," said Archbishop Theophan, "... was that there were many temptations at court and much envy and intrigue, and that Rasputin, as a simple, undemanding wandering pilgrim, would perish spiritually under such circumstances."

It was at about this time that Rasputin left Fr. Theophan's lodgings and moved in with the woman who was to become one of his most fanatical admirers, Olga Lokhtina. Archbishop Theophan writes: "He only stayed with me a little while, since I would be off at the Academy for days on end. And it got boring for him... and he moved somewhere else, and then took up residence in Petrograd at the home of the government official Vladimir Lokhtin," who was in charge of the paved roads in Tsarskoe Selo, and so close to the royal family...

Rasputin returned to his family in Pokrovskoe, Siberia, in autumn, 1907, only to find that Bishop Anthony of Tobolsk and the Tobolsk Consistory - as was suspected, at the instigation of Grand Duchess Militsa Nikolaevna - had opened an investigation to see whether he was spreading the doctrines of the khlysty. Olga Lokhtina hurried back to St. Petersburg and managed to get the investigation suspended. Soon afterwards, testifies Fr. Theophan, "the good relations between the royal family and Militsa and Anastasia Nikolaevna [the sister of Militsa], and Peter and Nikolai Nikolaevich [the husbands of the sisters] became strained. Rasputin himself mentioned it in passing. From a few sentences of his I concluded that he had very likely instilled in the former emperor the idea that they had too much influence on state affairs and were encroaching on the emperor's independence."

The place that the Montenegrin Grand Duchesses had played in the royal family was now taken by the young Anya Vyubova, who was a fanatical admirer of Rasputin. Another of Rasputin's admirers was the royal children's nurse, Maria Vishnyakova. And so Rasputin came closer and closer to the centre of power... His influence on the political decisions of the Tsar has been much exaggerated. But he undoubtedly had a great influence on the Tsarina through his ability, probably through some kind of hypnosis, to relieve the Tsarevich's haemophilia, a tragedy that caused much suffering to the Tsar and Tsarina, and which they carefully hid from the general public...

Bishop of Yamburg

On February 1, 1909 Archimandrite Theophan was appointed Rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy. And on Sunday, February 22, the second Sunday of the Great Fast, which is dedicated to the memory of St. Gregory Palamas, he was consecrated Bishop of Yamburg, a vicariate of the St. Petersburg diocese, in the Holy Trinity cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra. The consecration was performed by Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg together with other members of the Holy Synod and other hierarchs who came to the service - 13 in all.

Vladyka's acceptance speech was as follows: "Your Holiness, Archpastors Wise in God! The word of God, which summons men to the pastures of God's Church to perform the duties of pastors, of whom the Church has had such great need throughout its history in the world - this summons has finally reached even unto me.

"With what feelings do I receive this summons from God? Personally, I have never desired this service, have not sought after it and, insofar as I was able to, I have even avoided it. If, however, in spite of my own intentions, I am summoned to this service, I believe that it is indeed God's will and that by means of visible circumstances the Lord Himself is invisibly summoning me; by His authority He is ordering me to undertake the burden of this new service.

“If such is God's will for me, then may it be blessed! I accept it. I accept it with fear and trembling, yet without sorrow or dread. This should not surprise anyone. I know better than anyone else my own spiritual and physical infirmities and my own wretchedness. Only a few years separate me from the abyss of non-being, from which I was summoned into being by an omnipotent gesture of the Divine Will. Since my introduction to being, I have observed in myself a constant existential life-and-death battle which takes place on both the physical and the spiritual planes. O, how difficult this battle in me is at times, but may I give thanks to the Lord for it! It has rooted deeply in my heart the saving truth that I myself am nothing and that the Lord is all things to me. He is my life, He is my strength, He is my joy. The Father, son, and Holy Spirit, the Trinity which is Holy, Supernatural, and Divine, and which sanctifies every being which is endowed with reason and which tirelessly searches for It with love and beholds it. On this momentous day I direct my spiritual gaze with faith and love to this Supernatural Trinity. From It I expect help, comfort, cheer, fortification, and enlightenment for the great and laborious service which awaits me. I sincerely believe that as the Holy Spirit once descended on the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire, proceeding from the Father through the Son, and invisibly abided in them and transformed their infirmity into strength, so will He descend on my wretchedness and fortify my infirmity.

“I sincerely and humbly beg you, archpastors wise in God, on this momentous day of my consecration as bishop in the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity [of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg], together with the entire congregation of prayerful and faithful children of God's Church, to offer up to the Holy Trinity a sacred prayer for me, that It might abundantly clothe me with all the gifts needed for my new service: that It might open my mind to understanding the Divine Mysteries, that It might fortify my will to serve God, that It might kindle in my heart the fire of life-giving Divine Love, which is so indispensable for a pastor of human souls in this human life filled with suffering!

“May all of my service and all of my life bring glory to the Triunitary Lord, to Whom is due all honor and worship unto the ages of ages! Amen.”

In answer to the accusation that he had gained his see through the influence of Rasputin, Bishop Theophan testified: “My candidacy for the bishopric was put forward by church hierarchs led by Bishop Hermogen [of Saratov, the future hieromartyr]. I would never have permitted myself to take advantage of Rasputin's influence... I was known personally to the royal family and had four times or so heard confession from the empress and once from the sovereign... and I was already the Rector of the Petersburg Theological Academy.”

It was a difficult time, with liberal ideas gaining ground even among the professors of the Academy. Bishop Theophan more than once came into conflict with

these liberal professors, and they complained about him to Metropolitan Anthony. After one such complaint, the metropolitan summoned the bishop and said:

“The professors are complaining that you are restricting their freedom of scientific research.”

Instead of a reply, Vladyka Theophan showed the metropolitan a paragraph from the regulations of the Theological Academies that said: “The Rector of the Academy is responsible for the direction and spirit of the Academy”. Then he explained how certain professors during their lectures to students were permitting themselves to express freethinking ideas contrary to Orthodoxy. And the metropolitan had to agree that the Rector had the right to oppose this.

As Rector of the Academy, Vladyka Theophan enlivened the religio-moral atmosphere in it and created a whole direction among the students, a kind of school of “Theophanites”, as they were called. He tried to instill in the students a respect for the lofty authority of the Holy Fathers of the Church in everything that pertained to Church faith and piety. When replying to a question of a theological or moral character he tried to avoid speaking “from himself”, but immediately went to the bookcase and found a precise answer to the question from the Holy Fathers, which allowed his visitor to depart profoundly satisfied. He himself was a walking encyclopaedia of theological knowledge.

And yet this was by no means merely book knowledge: because of his ascetic life, he knew the truth of the teachings of the Fathers from his own experience. He would go to all the services, and often spend whole nights in prayer standing in his cell in front of the anoly and the icons. He would even take service books with him on his travels, and read all the daily services.

His very look inspired respect, and soon cases of amazing spiritual perspicacity revealed themselves. Never familiar, always correct and restrained in manner, but at the same time warm and attentive, he was a fierce enemy of all modernism and falsehood. If the conversation took a vulgar turn, he would immediately turn away, however distinguished his interlocutor. This caused him to have many enemies, but people also involuntarily respected him. Once the famous writer V.V. Rozanov spoke at length to him against monasticism. Vladyka Theophan did not reply with a single word. But his silence was effective, for at the end the writer simply said:

“But perhaps you are right!”

Bishop Theophan began to have doubts about Rasputin. “Rumours began reaching us,” testified Vladyka, “that Rasputin was unrestrained in his treatment of the female sex, that he stroked them with his hand during conversation. All this gave rise to a certain temptation to sin, the more so since in conversation Rasputin would

allude to his acquaintance with me and, as it were, hide behind my name.”

At first Vladyka and his monastic confidants sought excuses for him in the fact that “we were monks, whereas he was a married man, and that was the reason why his behaviour has been distinguished by a great lack of restraint and seemed peculiar to us... However, the rumours about Rasputin started to increase, and it was beginning to be said that he went to the bathhouses with women... It is very distressing... to suspect [a man] of a bad thing...”

Rasputin now came to meet Vladyka and “himself mentioned that he had gone to bathhouses with women. We immediately declared to him that, from the point of view of the holy fathers, that was unacceptable, and he promised us to avoid doing it. We decided not to condemn him for debauchery, for we knew that he was a simple peasant, and we had read that in the Olonets and Novgorod provinces men bathed in the bathhouses together with women, which testified not to immorality but to their patriarchal way of life... and to its particular purity, for... nothing was allowed. Moreover, it was clear from the *Lives* of the ancient Byzantine holy fools Saints Simeon and John [of Edessa] that both had gone to bathhouses with women on purpose, and had been abused and reviled for it, although they were nonetheless great saints.”

The example of Saints Simeon and John was to prove very useful for Rasputin, who now, “as his own justification, announced that he too wanted to test himself – to see if he had extinguished passion in himself.” But Theophan warned him against this, “for it is only the great saints who are able to do it, and he, by acting in this way, was engaging in self-deception and was on a dangerous path.”

To the rumours about bathhouses were now added rumours that Rasputin had been a khlyst sectarian in Siberia, and had taken his co-religionists to bathhouses there. Apparently the Tsar heard these rumours, for he told the Tsarina not to receive Rasputin for a time. For the khlysts, a sect that indulged in orgies in order to stimulate repentance thereafter, were very influential among the intelligentsia, especially the literary intelligentsia, of the time.

It was at that point that the former spiritual father of Rasputin in Siberia, Fr. Makary, was summoned to Tsarskoe Selo, perhaps on the initiative of the Tsarina. On June 23, 1909 the Tsar recorded that Fr. Makary, Rasputin and Bishop Theophan came to tea. There it was decided that Bishop Theophan, who was beginning to have doubts about Rasputin, and Fr. Makary, who had a good opinion of him, should go to Rasputin’s house in Pokrovskoe and investigate.

Bishop Theophan was unwell and did not want to go. But “I took myself in hand and in the second half of June 1909 set off with Rasputin and Monk Makary of the Verkhoturysk Monastery, whom Rasputin called and acknowledged to be his ‘elder’”.

The trip, far from placating Vladyka's suspicions, only confirmed them, so that he concluded that Rasputin did not "occupy the highest level of spiritual life".

On the way back from Siberia, as he himself testified, he "stopped at the Sarov monastery and asked God's help in correctly answering the question of who and what Rasputin was. I returned to Petersburg convinced that Rasputin... was on a false path." While in Sarov, Vladyka had asked to stay alone in the cell in which St. Seraphim had reposed. He was there for a long time praying, and when he did not come out, the brothers finally decided to enter. They found Vladyka in a deep swoon. He did not explain what had happened to him there...

However, he did relate his meeting with Blessed Pasha of Sarov the next year, in 1911. The eldress and fool-for-Christ jumped onto a bench and snatched the portraits of the Tsar and Tsarina that were hanging on the wall, cast them to the ground and trampled on them. Then she ordered her cell-attendant to put them into the attic.

This was clearly a prophecy of the revolution of 1917. And when Vladyka told it to the Tsar, he stood with head bowed and without saying a word. Evidently he had heard similar prophecies...

Blessed Pasha then gave Vladyka a prophecy for himself personally. She hurled a ball of some kind of white matter onto his knees, which, on unwinding, he found to be the shroud of a dead man. "That means death!" he thought. But then she ran up and seized the shroud from his hands, muttering:

"The Mother of God will deliver... Our All-Holy Lady will save!"

This was a prophecy of Vladyka's near-mortal illness in Serbia several years later, when he was saved from death by the Mother of God...

On returning from Sarov, Vladyka conferred with Archimandrite Benjamin and together with him summoned Rasputin. "When Rasputin came to see us, we, to his surprise, denounced him for his arrogant pride, for holding himself in higher regard than was seemly, and for being in a state of spiritual deception. He was completely taken aback and started crying, and instead of trying to justify himself admitted that he had made mistakes. And he agreed to our demand that he withdraw from the world and place himself under my guidance." Rasputin then promised "to tell no one about our meeting with him." "Rejoicing in our success, we conducted a prayer service... But, as it turned out, he then went to Tsarskoe Selo and recounted everything there in a light that was favourable to him but not to us."

In 1910, for the sake of his health, Vladyka was transferred to the see of Tauris and Simferopol in the Crimea. Far from separating him from the royal family, this enabled him to see more of them during their summer vacation in Livadia. He was

able to use the tsar's automobile, so as to go on drives into the mountains, enjoy the wonderful scenery and breathe in the pure air.

He often recalled how he celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the palace. And how the Tsarina and her daughters chanted on the kliros. This chanting was always prayerful and concentrated.

Vladyka said: "During this service they chanted and read with such exalted, holy veneration! In all this there was a genuine, lofty, purely monastic spirit. And with what trembling, with what radiant tears they approached the Holy Chalice!"

"The sovereign would always begin every day with prayer in church. Exactly at eight o'clock he would enter the palace church. By that time the serving priest had already finished the proskomedia and read the hours. With the entry of the Tsar the priest intoned: 'Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.' And exactly at nine o'clock the Liturgy ended. There were no abbreviations or omissions. And the priest did not give the impression of being in a hurry. The secret lay in the fact that there were no pauses at all. This enabled the Liturgy to be completed within one hour. For the priest this was an obligatory condition. The sovereign always prayed very ardently. Each petition in the litany, each prayer found a lively response in his soul.

"After the Divine service the working day of the sovereign began."

However, the issue of Rasputin was destined to bring an end to this idyllic phase in the relations between Vladyka Theophan and the Royal Family. "After a while," testifies Vladyka, "rumours reached me that Rasputin had resumed his former way of life and was undertaking something against us... I decided to resort to a final measure - to denounce him openly and to communicate everything to the former emperor. It was not, however, the emperor who received me but his wife in the presence of the maid of honour Vyubova.

"I spoke for about an hour and demonstrated that Rasputin was in a state of spiritual deception... The former empress grew agitated and objected, citing theological works... I destroyed all her arguments, but she... reiterated them: 'It is all falsehood and slander'... I concluded the conversation by saying that I could no longer have anything to do with Rasputin... I think Rasputin, as a cunning person, explained to the royal family that my speaking against him was because I envied his closeness to the Family... that I wanted to push him out of the way.

"After my conversation with the empress, Rasputin came to see me as if nothing had happened, having apparently decided that the empress's displeasure had intimidated me... However, I told him in no uncertain terms, 'Go away, you are a fraud.' Rasputin fell on his knees before me and asked my forgiveness... But again I

told him, 'Go away, you have violated a promise given before God.' Rasputin left, and I did not see him again."

At this point Vladyka received a "Confession" from a former devotee of Rasputin's. On reading this, he understood that Rasputin was "a wolf in sheep's clothing" and "a sectarian of the Khlyst type" who "taught his followers not to reveal his secrets even to their confessors. For if there is allegedly no sin in what these sectarians do, then their confessors need not be made aware of it."

"Availing myself of that written confession, I wrote the former emperor a second letter... in which I declared that Rasputin not only was in a state of spiritual deception but was also a criminal in the religious and moral sense... In the moral sense because, as it followed from the 'confession', Father Gregory had seduced his victims."

There was no reply to this letter. "I sensed that they did not want to hear me out and understand... It all depressed me so much that I became quite ill - it turned out I had palsy of the facial nerve."

In fact, Vladyka's letter had reached the Tsar, and the scandal surrounding the rape of the children's nurse, Vishnyakova, whose confessor was Vladyka, could no longer be concealed. Vishnyakova herself testified to the Extraordinary Commission that she had been raped by Rasputin during a visit to Verkhoturye Monastery in Tobolsk province, a journey undertaken at the empress's suggestion.

"Upon our return to Petrograd, I reported everything to the empress, and I also told Bishop Theophan in a private meeting with him. The empress did not give any heed to my words and said that everything Rasputin does is holy. From that time forth I did not see Rasputin, and in 1913 I was dismissed from my duties as nurse. I was also reprimanded for frequenting the Right Reverend Theophan."

Another person in on the secret was the maid of honour Sophia Tyutcheva. As she witnessed to the Commission, she was summoned to the Tsar.

"You have guessed why I summoned you. What is going on in the nursery?"

She told him.

"So you too do not believe in Rasputin's holiness?"

She replied that she did not.

"But what will you say if I tell you that I have lived all these years only thanks to his prayers?"

Then he “began saying that he did not believe any of the stories, that the impure always sticks to the pure, and that he did not understand what had suddenly happened to Theophan, who had always been so fond of Rasputin. During this time he pointed to a letter from Theophan on his desk.”

“‘You, your majesty, are too pure of heart and do not see what filth surrounds you.’ I said that it filled me with fear that such a person could be near the grand duchesses.

“‘Am I then the enemy of my own children?’ the sovereign objected.

“He asked me never to mention Rasputin’s name in conversation. In order for that to take place, I asked the sovereign to arrange things so that Rasputin would never appear in the children’s wing.”

But her wish was not granted, and both Vishnyakova and Tyutcheva would not long remain in the tsar’s service...

It was at about this time that the newspapers began to write against Rasputin. And a member of the circle of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, the future bishop and hieromartyr of the Catacomb Church, published a series of articles condemning Rasputin.

"Why do the bishops," he wrote, "who are well acquainted with the activities of this blatant deceiver and corrupter, keep silent?... Where is their grace, if through laziness or lack of courage they do not keep watch over the purity of the faith of the Church of God and allow the lascivious khlyst to do the works of darkness under the mask of light?"

The brochure was forbidden and confiscated while it was still at the printer's, and the newspaper *The Voice of Moscow* was heavily fined for publishing excerpts from it.

In November, 1910, Bishop Theophan went to the Crimea to recover from this illness. But he did not give up, and inundated his friend Bishop Hermogen with letters. It was his aim to enlist this courageous fighter against freethinking in his fight against Rasputin. But this was difficult because it had been none other than Vladyka Theophan who had at some time introduced Rasputin to Bishop Hermogen, speaking of him, as Bishop Hermogen himself said, “in the most laudatory terms.” Indeed, for a time Bishop Hermogen and Rasputin had become allies in the struggle against freethinking and modernism.

Unfortunately, a far less reliable person then joined himself to Rasputin’s circle – Sergius Trophanov, in monasticism Iliodor, one of Bishop Theophan’s students at the academy, who later became a Baptist, married and had seven children. Fr. Iliodor

built a large church in Tsaritsyn on the Volga, and began to draw thousands to it with his fiery sermons against the Jews and the intellectuals and the capitalists. He invited Rasputin to join him in Tsaritsyn and become the elder of a convent there. Rasputin agreed.

However, Iliodor's inflammatory sermons were not pleasing to the authorities, and in January, 1911 he was transferred to a monastery in Tula diocese. But he refused to go, locked himself in his church in Tsaritsyn and declared a hunger-strike. Bishop Hermogen supported him, but the tsar did not, and ordered him to be removed from Tsaritsyn. However, at this point Rasputin, who had taken a great liking to Iliodor, intervened, and as Anya Vyubova testified, "Iliodor remained in Tsaritsyn thanks to Rasputin's personal entreaties". From now on, Olga Lokhtina would bow down to Rasputin as "Lord of hosts" and to Iliodor as "Christ"...

When Rasputin's bad actions began to come to light, Hermogen vacillated for a long time. However, having made up his mind that Vladyka Theophan was right, and having Iliodor on his side now too, he decided to bring the matter up before the Holy Synod, of which he was a member, at its next session. Before that, however, he determined to denounce Rasputin to his face. This took place on December 16, 1911. According to Iliodor's account, Hermogen, clothed in hierarchical vestments and holding a cross in his hand, "took hold of the head of the 'elder' with his left hand, and with his right started beating him on the head with the cross and shouting in a terrifying voice, 'Devil! I forbid you in God's name to touch the female sex. Brigand! I forbid you to enter the royal household and to have anything to do with the tsarina! As a mother brings forth the child in the cradle, so the holy Church through her prayers, blessings, and heroic feats has nursed that great and sacred thing of the people, the autocratic rule of the tsars. And now you, scum, are destroying it, you are smashing our holy vessels, the bearers of autocratic power... Fear God, fear His life-giving cross!'"

Then they forced Rasputin to swear that he would leave the palace. According to one version of events, Rasputin swore, but immediately told the empress what had happened. According to another, he refused, after which Vladyka Hermogen cursed him. In any case, on the same day, December 16, five years later, he was killed...

Then Bishop Hermogen went to the Holy Synod. First he gave a speech against the khlysty. Then he charged Rasputin with khlyst tendencies. Unfortunately, only a minority of the bishops supported the courageous bishop. The majority followed the over-procurator in expressing dissatisfaction with his interference "in things that were not his concern".

Vladyka Hermogen was then ordered to return to his diocese. As the director of the chancery of the over-procurator witnessed, "he did not obey the order and, as I heard, asked by telegram for an audience with the tsar, indicating that he had an

important matter to discuss, but was turned down.”

The telegram read as follows: “Tsar Father! I have devoted my whole life to the service of the Church and the Throne. I have served zealously, sparing no effort. The sun of my life has long passed midday and my hair has turned white. And now in my declining years, like a criminal, I am being driven out of the capital in disgrace by you, the Sovereign. I am ready to go wherever it may please you, but before I do, grant me an audience, and I will reveal a secret to you.”

But the Tsar rejected his plea. On receiving this rejection, Bishop Hermogen began to weep. And then he suddenly said:

“They will kill the tsar, they will kill the tsar, they will surely kill him.”

Bishop of Astrakhan

The opponents of Rasputin now felt the fury of the Tsar. Bishop Hermogen and Iliodor were exiled to remote monasteries. And Vladyka Theophan was transferred to the see of Astrakhan.

Before departing from the Crimea, Vladyka called on Rasputin’s friend, the deputy over-procurator Damansky. He told him: “Rasputin is a vessel of the devil, and the time will come when the Lord will chastise him and those who protect him.”

Later, in October, 1913, Rasputin tried to take his revenge on Vladyka by bribing the widow of a Yalta priest who knew Vladyka, Olga Apollonovna Popova, to say that Vladyka had said that he had had relations with the empress. The righteous widow rejected his money and even spat in his face.

Vladyka’s health, which was in general not good because of his very ascetic way of life since his youth, was made worse by the climate in Astrakhan. He contracted malaria and a lung disease. Grand Duchess Elizabeth pleaded with her sister not to forbid him to receive treatment in the Crimea, but the request was turned down. Later, however, the grand duchess did manage to get Vladyka transferred to the see of Poltava.

In spite of the Tsarina’s hostility to Bishop Theophan with regard to Rasputin, Vladyka always had the highest opinion of the Tsarina and always defended her against those who would slander her.

Although suffering from ill health and deeply grieving over his break with the royal family and Rasputin’s continuing hold over them, Vladyka Theophan quickly won the respect and love of his flock in Astrakhan.

Once, on the namesday of the Tsar, Vladyka went out with his clergy to serve a

prayer service for the health of his Majesty in the middle of the cathedral. But in front of him, nearer the altar, stood what seemed to be, judging from his clothes, a Muslim. It turned out later that this was the Persian consul dressed in extravagant finery, with orders and a sabre, and a turban on his head. Vladyka, pale, weak and ill, asked the consul through a deacon to step to one side or stand with the other official persons, with the generals behind the bishop's throne. The consul remained in his place and made no reply to Vladyka's request. After waiting for several minutes, Vladyka sent the superior of the church to request the consul not to stand between the altar and Vladyka and clergy, but to stand to one side. The consul did not move. Vladyka waited, without beginning the official prayer service. And yet the whole leadership of the province and the city, together with the military in parade uniform, were gathered in the church. On the square in front of the church were soldiers drawn up for parade.

Again they went up to the consul and asked him to go to one side and not to stand between the clergy and the altar, the more so as he was dressed in such demonstrative attire. Instead of replying, the consul pointed at the clock, and then angrily said:

"Convey to your Hierarch that the prayer service should have been started long ago as indicated in the official timetable, a prayer service for the prosperity of his Majesty the Emperor. For this delay, he - your Hierarch - will answer for his stubbornness. He has delayed the prayer service for a whole half-hour!"

When Bishop Theophan was informed of the consul's reply, he asked them to convey to him the message:

"It is not I, but you, who are delaying the prayer service. And until you go to one side, the prayer service will not begin."

When he heard that, the consul demonstratively left the church casting furious looks and mumbling threats. Immediately Vladyka began the service and the choir intoned the Te Deum.

As was to be expected, the consul made a protest to the Tsar, accusing the "audacious hierarch who had stopped the Te Deum for the health of the Tsar from proceeding normally", and who, being a "hierarch in disgrace", had attempted to make a political act out of the incident. But then the opposite of what was expected happened. The Tsar and Tsarina approved of Bishop Theophan's act...

Before that good news arrived, however, Vladyka had been comforted in another way, during Vespers in the church: "I had so much pain because of the Persian consul and I felt so ill... One evening, when I was serving in the cathedral, I saw St. Theodore the General in a coat of mail... Lord, what joy! How that comforted me!"

All my sadness and tiredness vanished in an instant. I understood that the Lord approved of my firmness and that He was sending me his martyr to support me... “

Another comfort came in a letter to him from the paralysed Schema-Nun Eugenia, who had the gift of clairvoyance: “I’m having a dream. Some black, threatening clouds have covered the sky. Suddenly the holy Bishop Joasaph of Belgorod appeared. He read a long manuscript, then tore it up, and at that moment the sun reappeared behind the clouds. Soon it was shining clearly and tenderly... Glory to Thee, O Lord!”

On March 8/21, 1913 Vladyka was transferred from Astrakhan to Poltava. As he was leaving Astrakhan, writes someone who knew him well, “there took place an unusually vivid incident, which in itself witnessed to the loftiness and spirituality of his soul, and his truly pastoral relationship to his flock. Before, the people in Astrakhan had protested decisively against his transfer to Poltava. But he nevertheless had to go, a huge crowd assembled at the station, and several hundred people lay on the rails in front of the train to stop it from going. This continued for several hours until they finally managed to free the railway line. I personally think that this is the most vivid event in the story of his life. The people, the flock felt, understood the loftiness of his soul, the soul of their archpastor, and witnessed this love of theirs and understanding, perhaps in too primitive a way, but truly with all their soul, mind and heart. Nobody ever heard of a similar incident with anybody else!”

Archbishop of Poltava

Church life was at a low level when Vladyka came to his new diocese, and hardly anyone attended the services. And so “I prayed to the Guardian Angels of my flock to make to be born in them a zeal for God, to excite in their souls a thirst for prayer and penitence. That is so important. Without penitence, there is no true prayer. Only he who feels himself to be infinitely guilty before God truly prays.”

And his prayers were answered. The church began to fill up. And the people began to pray with fervour; the zeal of the archbishop communicated itself to all the clergy.

Vladyka also paid attention to the chanting in church. He looked for someone who knew church chant since childhood to direct the choir. And he founded a “chanting school” for the chanters. The pupils were entirely looked after by the diocese and lived near the episcopal palace. They had to know the words of the chants by heart and understand their meaning perfectly. The child voices of Poltava were soon recognized to be among the best in Russia.

Vladyka also attended rehearsals and chose the chants. He saw it that the choir became well-known not only through the technical perfection of its chanting, but

also through its truly liturgical spirit. The people understood this immediately, and the church services were from then on very well attended.

Instead of the pagan celebrations of the New Year, Vladyka instituted a solemn Te Deum at midnight, during which the choir sang marvelously and the cathedral was full to bursting...

So popular did Vladyka become that when he arrived at the cathedral on feast days he found his path covered with flowers...

In 1913 the Russian Church celebrated the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Romanov dynasty. Patriarch Gregory of Antioch came to the celebrations, and during the solemn service in his honour in the Pochaev Lavra the litanies were pronounced in Greek by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, the host, in Latin by Archbishop Theophan and in other languages by the other priests.

In Poltava a whole series of incidents took place which testified to the loftiness of Vladyka Theophan, who had visions and revelations from God.

In Poltava there lived an exceptionally pious married couple, who were devoted to Vladyka Theophan. When the husband died, the widow, being in indescribable sorrow, asked Vladyka whether he could tell her what was the fate of her dead spouse in the other life. Vladyka replied that perhaps after a period of time he would be in a condition to give a reply to her question. Vladyka prayed that this should be revealed to him, and after a certain time he consoled the widow, saying that God had had mercy on her husband.

Prince Zhevakhov, who later became Bishop Ioasaph, asked Vladyka about the fate beyond the grave of the Bishop of Belgorod who had been found hanged in the lavatory of the archiepiscopal podvorye. Had his soul perished? Vladyka Theophan replied that the bishop had not perished, since he had not laid hands on himself, but this had been done by the demons. It turned out that this house was being reconstructed, and there had been a house church in it before. But the atheist-minded builders had blasphemously built a lavatory in the place where there had been the altar. When holy places are defiled or where a murder or suicide is committed, the grace of God leaves, and demons settle there. It is difficult to say whether this bishop was guilty of this blasphemy, but he became the victim of the demons.

Once a married couple came to the archbishop complaining about the behaviour of their beloved son, who, though pious in his childhood, no longer went to church, but returned home late at night in a drunken state. Weeping, they asked him to pray for their son.

The son came home late again one night and began to curse and swear. The next morning he could not get out of bed. He did not eat or speak, was feverish and gradually wasted away. His parents were beginning to lose all hope of a cure when they turned to the archbishop again. The sick boy was already unconscious, and was groaning and crying. Then he came to himself and said that a monk had come to him in his delirium and had said:

“If you don’t correct yourself, and turn from the path of sin, you will die and perish without fail!”

The sick boy wept and swore that he would correct himself. Gradually he began to eat again, and the illness left him. As soon as he could walk, he went to the cathedral to pray and shed tears of penitence. After the service he approached the server to kiss the cross and was amazed to recognize in the archbishop the monk who had appeared to him in his illness! From then on, the young man visited the archbishop frequently, thanked him for praying for him, asked him to forgive him and reiterated his promise to reform his life.

Another rich couple came to the archbishop, complaining about their son, too. Under the influence of bad companions, he was living a debauched life and paid no heed to their pleas. They sought help from the archbishop, but at the same time continued to indulge their son, giving him money. The archbishop advised them to stop giving him money, to be severe with him. But they replied that in their opinion this was not Christian.

“No,” they said, “we want to raise him with love in a Christian spirit. When he gets bigger he will understand and will appreciate our kindness.”

The archbishop could only keep silent. The boy got bigger and became more and more disobedient. Not content with asking for money, he demanded it and even robbed his parents of it. They turned to the archbishop asking him what to do. He gave them the same advice. They again rejected it. Finally the boy left his parents’ house and gave himself up completely to debauchery. The parents cursed him and when they came back weeping to the archbishop, they recognized their error. But it was already too late.

“Certain parents,” concluded the archbishop while telling this story, “before beginning to educate their children should educate themselves, or rather re-educate themselves in the spirit of Christianity. Then what happened in this family would not happen with them.”

A private correspondent writes: “This is a story related by the wife of Professor L.V. of Poltava theological seminary on what happened in their family.

“In 1915 her son, an officer, whose bride was in Poltava, returned on leave from the front. This officer’s leave ended in Paschal week. The young people wanted to be crowned before the departure of the bridegroom. L.V. knew Vladyka Theophan well and he loved the whole of their family. And L.V. came to Vladyka and asked for his blessing on the marriage on one of the days of Paschal week. Vladyka, who was always attentive and ready to help anyone who asked, this time fell into sad thought and said that he wanted first to look at the canons, and then he would give his answer.

“A few days later the mother of the bridegroom again came to Vladyka. Vladyka said firmly: ‘I cannot bless the marriage of your children on these Paschal days, since the Church does not allow it and for the young people there will be great unhappiness if they do not obey the Church.’

“The mother was terribly upset and threatened the Archbishop with many unpleasantnesses. She thought that Vladyka, as a strict ascetic, did not understand life and for that reason was not allowing the marriage in completely exceptional circumstances.

“In spite of the Archbishop’s ban, they found a priest who agreed to carry out their marriage. After the marriage, the officer departed, having left his young wife in Poltava. But from this moment all trace of him was lost. In spite of all the inquiries of the mother and young wife, nobody could tell them where he was or what had happened to him.

“In relating this, L.V. wept bitterly. She used to say that the wife was in a terrible condition. There was one man whom she wanted to marry. L.V. herself wanted this, for she was convinced that her son was no longer among the living, but at the same time there were no facts, and the wife, not knowing for certain about the death of her husband, could not marry for a second time. This lack of knowledge tormented both the mother and the young woman. L.V. wept and said: ‘How great Vladyka Archbishop Theophan was! And we valued him so little, we did not understand and did not obey...’

“The inhabitants of Poltava always remembered how the prayers of Vladyka Theophan healed the sick, and how by his prayers he turned many from sin.”

There was a well-off family with two maid servants. One of them died, and it was discovered after her death that a large sum of money had disappeared. Suspicion fell upon the surviving maid servant. She wept and implored the Mother of God to show where the money was hidden. The Mother of God answered her prayer: one day, the dead woman appeared to Archbishop Theophan and showed him the place where the money was buried...

A similar incident had taken place a few years before, when Vladyka was Bishop of Simferopol. A young man whom Vladyka had known died, and then appeared to him and asked him for his holy prayers to help him pass through the “toll-houses”. Vladyka prayed, and the young man appeared to him again, thanking him for his prayers and asking him to celebrate a thanksgiving service.

“But you are dead! It is a pannikhida that we must celebrate for you, and not a Te Deum!”

“They told it me over there, they’ve allowed it for me... The point is that over there we are all alive, there are no dead amongst us!”

Then he explained how he had died and passed into the next life, but the person who passed on this story did not understand Archbishop Theophan’s words.

Once the administration of the diocese received a letter from one of the parishes complaining that their priest had given himself to black magic and sorcery. He was naturally red-haired, but one night he had become brown, then violet and now he was green! The priest was summoned.

Weeping, he explained:

“My wife reproached me for always being red-haired. ‘You should at least dye your beard!’ And I dyed it black. And then during the night the dye disappeared, and it became violet, and now it is becoming green... Forgive me, for Christ’s sake! There’s no sorcery here, just cowardice!”

“Your fault,” replied the archbishop, “consists in having led these little ones into error. They didn’t understand what was happening and basically they have not acted wrongly. One cannot accuse them of anything. It’s you who should ask their forgiveness and be more prudent in the future. I am not going to impose a penance on you: you are a priest and can impose it on yourself.”

And he added, after telling this story:

“We had to send someone to the parish to explain matters to the parishioners and reassure them.”

On another occasion, as Archbishop Averky tells the story, “one of the priests of the Poltava diocese related that when Vladyka was touring his diocese the priests who had modernist tendencies were afraid to appear before him. If Vladyka saw that a priest’s beard and hair were obviously trimmed short or that there was some other irregularity he would say very gently and tactfully:

“And you, Batyushka, would you be so kind as to go and spend a month in such-and-such a monastery?”

Vladyka's typical day in Poltava was ordered as follows. He would rise from sleep in the second half of the night and carry out his prayer rule. In the morning, when the bell sounded, he would go into the house church, where the hieromonk on duty was performing the morning service and the Divine Liturgy. After the Liturgy Vladyka would drink some coffee and withdraw to his study, where he occupied himself with diocesan affairs, and then went over to the reading of his beloved Holy Fathers. He wrote much. In the afternoon would come lunch. Weather permitting, he would go into the garden for a time and walk around praying the Jesus prayer. Then he would again withdraw to his study. When the bell sounded for Vespers, he would go to the church. After Compline he would receive visitors. After supper there would be free time for conversation with his clergy and work in his study.

His study was furnished in the simplest way possible. In the corner stood an iron bed with planks instead of a mattress, on which Vladyka took a little sleep. There were many icons, Vladyka prayed in front of them for a long time with a candle in his hand in spite of the lighted lampadas. His food was the simplest, and he ate very little. When he was very tired from meeting people, he would withdraw for a few days to the Lubny Holy Transfiguration monastery.

The Revolution

The abdication of the Tsar, whom Archbishop Theophan greatly loved and admired, was a terrible shock for him as for all the true believers. Soon the Provisional Government set up an Extraordinary Commission to investigate the truth about the relationship between the Tsarina and Rasputin. Vladyka was summoned and testified that he had never had any doubt about the complete purity of these relations. As former confessor of the Tsarina, he declared officially that on her side the relationship was motivated only by her care for the Tsarevich, and the undoubted success that Rasputin had in saving the Tsarevich's life while the doctors had shown themselves to be completely helpless. As for the other rumours, these were lies and slanders... With regard to Rasputin himself, Vladyka considered that he was not a hypocrite, but was a simple man who had suffered a terrible spiritual catastrophe and had fallen, a fall that had been willed by those around him and which they had treated as just a joke...

As Archbishop of Poltava, Vladyka was sent as a delegate to the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in Moscow in 1917-18. The novice who served him at the time said:

“The archbishop and I left Poltava and arrived in Moscow. Nobody greeted us and we did not know what to do. We went to a monastery, but felt that we were not welcome. They had nothing to eat. They gave only a bowl of soup with some thin

cabbage which his Eminence Theophan was not able to swallow because of the weakness of his stomach. We had to leave. A student gave his room for some days... I wrote an urgent letter to Poltava requesting that someone bring some food, for there they had everything. An archimandrite arrived with food. Finally, he obtained for us some lodgings in the Kremlin, in which some other hierarchs were already living. They were starving: the archbishop had to nourish them. I did not attend the Council sessions, I didn't hear the speeches, I could only observe things from the outside... I remember some attacks against Metropolitan Macarius [of Moscow], a holy man. He left the assembly room, but with a smile..."

During the Council, some modernist clergy, future renovationist heretics, came up to Vladyka and said:

"We respect you and venerate you, Vladyko. We know your principled firmness, your faithfulness to the Church, your wisdom. But you yourself see how fast the waves of time are rolling; they are changing everything, and changing us also... There was a monarchy, there was an autocratic Tsar, and now there is nothing of all that. We must, whether we like it or not, make concessions to the changes. As the great teacher of the Church, St. John Chrysostom said so well, we must sometimes, so as to guide the vessel of the Church up to the harbour, give in to the waves and currents so as to await the favourable moment and bring the ship into the haven... That's how it is now, the Church must yield a little..."

"Yes," replied the Archbishop, "but yield what?"

"You must be with the majority! Otherwise with whom will you remain? You must yield, the wisdom of the Church demands it. Otherwise you will consign yourself to complete solitude."

Vladyka replied: "'The majority can frighten me,' said St. Basil the Great, 'but it can never convince me...' To continue the thought of the holy bishop, let us say that it is not solitude that is frightening, but the renunciation of the truth. And that means that it is necessary to stand without weakening in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is on Him that the whole of the Church stands as on her foundation. 'For other foundation can no man lay than that which has been laid, Jesus Christ' (I Corinthians 3.11). And that is why we must not be, as the Apostle says, like 'children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive' (Ephesians 4.14). We must firmly hold on to what we have received from the Fathers of the Church. As is so well said in the kontakion of the Feast of the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council: 'The preaching of the Apostles and the doctrines of the Fathers confirmed the one Faith of the Church. And wearing the garment of truth woven from the theology on high...' This 'garment' is the clothing of the Church, the teaching received from the Fathers of the ancient Church, which they themselves received from the preaching of the

Apostles. And the holy Apostles received it from the very Source of Truth, our Lord Jesus Christ....

“As for the question with whom we shall remain if we do not join those who are ready to make a revolution in the Church, the reply is perfectly clear: we shall remain without moving with those who for the last two thousand years have formed the body of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church on earth, although this is the Church of the Heavens. We also in a certain sense have entered this Heavenly Church, through the saints and first of all through him who baptised Russia, St. Vladimir, and through all the saints, known and unknown, beginning with Saints Anthony and Theodosius of the Kiev Caves, via Saints Sergius of Radonezh and Seraphim of Sarov, and all the saints and martyrs of our Russian land, which is protected by the Heavenly Queen, who intercedes for us... And with whom will you, brothers, remain, if with all your numbers you give yourselves up to the will of the waves of contemporary life? They have already swept you into the flabbiness of Kerensky’s regime, and soon they will push you under the yoke of the cruel Lenin, into the claws of the red beast...”

The church modernists silently left him...

Vladyka Theophan recounted the witticism that went the rounds in the Council: “Archbishop Anthony Khrapovitsky is the most intelligent. Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow is the gentlest. And Archbishop Anastasy Gribanovsky is the wisest in a special sense...”

During the Council, Archbishop Theophan was appointed head of a commission entrusted with investigating the heresy of the name-worshippers, a heresy that had broken out among the Russian monks of Mount Athos five years earlier and which had been supported by Vladyka’s old enemy, Rasputin. This was a natural appointment, since Vladyka’s master’s thesis had been on the Name of God.

He prepared a report on the subject, but unfortunately the red terror cut short the proceedings of the Council. The commission (whose deputy president was the heretic Fr. Sergius Bulgakov) did not meet, and it is not now known where this report is. All we have is Vladyka’s succinct but precise formula: “The Divinity rests *in* the Name of God”, which is an implicit rejection of the name-worshippers’ thesis that the Name of God *is* God.

The October revolution, writes Vladyka’s disciple, the future Archbishop Joasaph of Canada, “found Archbishop Theophan in Poltava. The Ukrainians arrested him because he did not agree to pray for their self-called ‘directory’. The Bolsheviks also tried to arrest him, but God preserved him. They went into his study, but did not notice him, although he was sitting at his writing desk: ‘seeing, they did not see’...”

Vladyka Theophan had to suffer much from the Ukrainian autocephalists who, on seizing power, demanded that he serve a triumphant requiem liturgy for Ivan Mazepa in Poltava cathedral. Mazepa was the favourite of Peter the Great who had betrayed him at the battle of Poltava in 1712 and had then been anathematised by the Church. But Vladyka said:

“I cannot do this. I do not have the right to do what you ask me because the Church has anathematised Ivan Mazepa for his treachery. I am not entitled to lift the anathema, which was hurled by the highest representatives of the Church at that time.”

“But it was the Muscovites who did it!”

“No, you are mistaken. There was no patriarchate at that time. The Church was ruled by the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Stephen Yavorsky, who was from the Western Ukraine. Besides, Tsar Peter surrounded himself precisely with Ukrainians, who were more educated...”

For his principled refusal, Vladyka was put in prison, and was released only when the government of Petlyura was overthrown and the White Army liberated Poltava. After Vladyka’s exile to Serbia, the struggle against the autocephalists and renovationists was continued by his close disciple, the future hieromartyr Bishop Basil of Priluki.

Exile

Civil war erupted between the Reds and the Whites, and by the beginning of 1920 it was clear that the Reds, who had already carried out unparalleled atrocities against church property and church servers, were going to win. In the same year Archbishop Theophan became a member of the Higher Church Administration of the South of Russia, formed in accordance with the decree of Patriarch Tikhon and the Holy Synod, ukaz № 362 of November 7/20, 1920. Almost immediately, at the suggestion of the White army commanders, who said that their departure would be merely provisional, the HCA prepared to flee southwards from the invasion of the barbarians. Archbishop Theophan was evacuated with the Volunteer Army to Taganrog.

The first stage of the journey took them to Stavropol, and then to Yekaterinodar in the Northern Caucasus. Coming out of Yekaterinodar cathedral, the president of the HCA, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, asked the thousands of worshippers whether they should stay in Russia or leave. The people shouted that they should leave and pray for them in the lands beyond the sea. A Te Deum was celebrated, and the immense crowd prayed and wept. The Cossacks came to bid farewell to their hierarchs.

Then the hierarchs set off with the remnants of the White Army for the Crimea,

the last refuge of Free and Orthodox Russia. They settled in the monastery of St. George in Sevastopol. Three months later, they left for Constantinople.

Helena Yurievna Kontzevich writes: “[Vladyka Theophan] departed from Russia on a steamship along with Metropolitans Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Platon and Bishop Benjamin (Fedchenko). They discussed the situation of the Church the whole way. Bishop Theophan’s position differed from the united opinion of the other bishops, who stood for the path of church politics, and they parted ways.”

However, these differences did not seem to be serious at that time, and in 1921 Vladyka, together with the whole Higher Church Administration, moved to Yugoslavia at the invitation of Patriarch Demetrius of Serbia, and took part in November of the same year in the First Russian All-Emigration Council in Sremsky-Karlovtsy.

Nicholas Zernov, a participant in this Council, describes Vladyka Theophan at this time as “a learned man and an ascetic, withdrawn from the world. His head bowed, his voice scarcely audible, he sometimes celebrated in the Athonite podvoryes. He seemed completely immersed in prayer and indifferent to the world around him, but there came out from him a power that was his own and which fixed people’s attention on this fragile old man.”

The most important decision of this Council was the call for the restoration of the Romanov dynasty to the throne of Russia. In this connection, it is interesting to note the letter which Archbishop Theophan wrote to Helena Yurievna Kontzevich in 1930 on the subject of the coming Tsar: “You ask me about the near future and about the approaching last times. I do not speak on my own, but am saying that which was revealed to me by the Elders, The coming of the Antichrist draws nigh and is very near. The time separating us from him can be counted a matter of years, and at the most a matter of some decades. But before the coming of the Antichrist Russia must yet be restored - to be sure, for a short time. And in Russia there must be a Tsar forechosen by the Lord Himself. He will be a man of burning faith, great mind and iron will. This much has been revealed about him. We shall await the fulfilment of what has been revealed. Judging by many signs it is drawing nigh, unless because of our sins the Lord God shall revoke it, and change what has been promised. According to the witness of the word of God, this also might happen.”

And to another visitor he wrote: "O Russia, Russia! How terribly she has sinned before the goodness of the Lord. The Lord God deigned to give Russia that which He gave to no other people on earth. And this people has turned out to be so ungrateful. It has left Him, renounced Him, and for that reason the Lord has given it over to be tormented by demons. The demons have entered into the souls of men and the people of Russia has become possessed, literally demon-possessed. And all the terrible things that we hear have been done and are being done in Russia: all the

blasphemies, the militant atheism and the fighting against God – all this is taking place because of the demon-possession. But the possession will pass through the ineffable mercy of God, and the people will be healed. The people will turn to repentance, to faith. This will take place when nobody expects it. Orthodoxy will be regenerated in her and will triumph. But that Orthodoxy which was before will no longer exist. The great elders said that Russia would be regenerated, that the people itself would re-establish the Orthodox Monarchy. A powerful Tsar will be placed by God Himself on the Throne. He will be a great reformer and he will have a strong Orthodox faith. He will depose the unfaithful hierarchs of the Church, and will himself be an outstanding personality, with a pure, holy soul. He will have a strong will. He will come from the dynasty of the Romanovs according to the maternal line. He will be a chosen one of God, obedient to Him in all things. He will transfigure Siberia. But this Russia will not continue to exist for long. Soon that will take place which the Apostle John speaks of in the Apocalypse.”

And again he said, as witnessed by Archbishop Averky: “In Russia, the elders said, in accordance with the will of the people, the Monarchy, Autocratic power, will be re-established. The Lord has forechosen the future Tsar. He will be a man of fiery faith, having the mind of a genius and a will of iron. First of all he will introduce order in the Orthodox Church, removing all the untrue, heretical and lukewarm hierarchs. And many, very many - with few exceptions, all - will be deposed, and new, true, unshakeable hierarchs will take their place. He will be of the family of the Romanovs according to the female line [according to Schema-Monk Epiphanius he said: “He will *not* be of the family of the Romanovs, but will be related to them through women”]. Russia will be a powerful state, but only for 'a short time'... And then the Antichrist will come into the world, with all the horrors of the end as described in the Apocalypse.”

Vladyka Theophan was appointed abbot of the monastery of Petkovitsa in the diocese of Shabats. However, because of his poor health, the new abbot was not able to spend much time with the brethren, and, as Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco recounts, “the older brethren began to complain, while the younger brethren were on the side of Vladyka. Fr. Ambrose [Kurganov] was especially grieved when he encountered the complaining. He always honoured the holiness of the authority of the abbacy.

“Realizing his weakness to calm the ferment, and longing for another form of life,... Archbishop Theophan decided to leave Petkovitsa.

“Before his departure, on the feast day of the Petkovitsa church, October 1, 1923, he ordained Deacon Ambrose to the priesthood during the Divine Liturgy.

“It is said that on that day, St. Paraskeva was seen standing in the sanctuary near the holy table...”

The archbishop was taken away, sick, to another monastery on the Adriatic coast. It was meant to be a place of recuperation, but his health only worsened.

“I could scarcely move, I was so weak; my sick throat deprived me of my last strength, and every day I became weaker. There were so few monks in the monastery that there were no services. There was a Serbian Orthodox monastery not far away. One day, as the bells were ringing for the beginning of Vespers, I decided to go for the last time to pray in a church: I dressed and left, to respond to the call of the bells.

“I dragged myself painfully to the monastery, and on arriving I saw a hieromonk occupied in playing cards in the courtyard of the monastery, his stole hanging on a tree beside the church, which was locked. I went up to the monk and asked him:

“‘What’s happening, is Vespers already finished?’

“‘We rang the bells so that the faithful should know that tomorrow is a feast day.’

“‘But the Vespers service?’

“‘We don’t have services! We only have the bells!’”

The archbishop bowed his head, and returned to his cell, immersed in sad thoughts...

In the following days, his last strength left him. He was suffering terribly in his throat. He could not swallow anything; in any case, he had no appetite. He felt the end approaching...

The feast of the Protection of the Mother of God was drawing near. He addressed a last tearful prayer to the Mother of God and delivered himself into the hands of the Lord:

“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, into Thy hands I commit my spirit!”

The brothers were panic-stricken. The archbishop was lying like a corpse, hardly breathing... He remained in this state for forty-eight hours.

On the third day, he recovered consciousness and felt that an important change had taken place in him. Tears of joy came to the eyes of the sick man, tears of gratitude to God and the Holy Virgin...

Then he remembered the prophetic words of the fool for Christ, Pasha of Sarov:

“The Mother of God will deliver you! The Holy Virgin will save you!”

Just at that moment a parcel arrived from the Soviet Union from an unknown person – at a time when no letters were arriving from the Soviet Union! Inside was a beautiful icon of St. Seraphim of Sarov. He was convinced that he had been saved through the Mother of God and the prayers of St. Seraphim.

Pascha arrived, and the priest of the Russian church in the town near the monastery was going round the homes of his parishioners to wish them the joy of the feast. But in his heart he was sad, because he had left his family in the Soviet Union and had received no news of them. His sadness combined with the effects of drinking too much in the houses of his parishioners, and suddenly he awoke from his stupor to realize that the money collected in church which he carried with him had disappeared. Terrible thoughts assailed him, he was convinced that nobody would believe that he had not stolen the money, and he determined to kill himself.

Exhausted, he fell asleep. And then in a dream he saw Archbishop Theophan, who approached him and said:

“Go to the temple of the Lord and you will find what you have lost.”

Dawn was breaking as he rushed to the church. Lighting a candle and making the sign of the cross, he began to search. There was the money, on one of the side benches!

Joyfully he began to chant the Paschal hymn: “Christ is risen from the dead!” He felt that he himself had been truly resurrected from the dead!

Then he rushed to the archbishop and thanked him fervently for saving him from perdition. But the archbishop said that he knew nothing about this, and told him to ascribe the glory to God alone, and said:

“Always remember what God told you: ‘Go to the temple of the Lord and you will find what you have lost.’”

In 1925 the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church invited Archbishop Theophan to live in Sofia, in two rooms on the first floor of the Synodal House overlooking St. Alexander Nevsky Square. The reason for this was that several members of the Bulgarian Synod had been students of Vladyka at the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, including the president of the Synod, Metropolitan Clement. Also instrumental in the invitation was another former student of Vladyka’s, Bishop Seraphim (Sobolev) of Lubny, a vicariate of the Poltava diocese, who was now in charge of the Russian parishes in Bulgaria.

Archbishop Averky writes: "It was touching to see the attention and profound reverence which our brothers the Bulgarians showed Archbishop Theophan. He frequently served in the majestic Church of St. Alexander Nevsky which was erected in memory of the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turkish yoke. It stood on the enormous square adjacent to the Synodal house and could accommodate 7000 faithful. Occasionally, and especially during Great Lent, he served even in the Synod 'paraklis' - the small house church in the Synodal House. Those who participated in his spiritually fulfilling and profoundly prayerful services even today remember them with compunction..."

"Indeed, Vladyka Theophan made a deep impression as a man of genuinely spiritual life on all foreigners who came in contact with him. The enemy, however, takes up arms against such saintly people and makes a special effort to pour out on them all his diabolical malice with the help of malevolent and depraved individuals who are devoted to his service. Thus in Sofia, due to various unfortunate events in the local Russian Church, Vladyka Theophan had to suffer much grief simply because he was a strict ascetic and an uncompromising Archpastor. Consequently, he withdrew more and more from the world and its raging passions and began to retire into himself, leading what was already virtually the life of a recluse. For some time, however, he continued to participate in the sessions of the Synod, periodically travelling to Yugoslavia for this purpose..."

"Vladyka grieved over all the unnecessary events which took place in the Russian émigré community. Most detrimental were all the arguments and disputes which, as he put it, were not befitting of Orthodox Russians who, because of their sins, had lost their homeland and were sentenced to live in exile, in some cases in extremely difficult material and moral circumstances. He altogether disapproved of the idea of proclaiming a Russian Emperor outside of Russia, or a 'Patriarch of Russia' or even a 'patriarchal locum tenens', notions which were widely circulated by certain individuals. He believed that Russia would soon be resurrected, but only on the condition that the whole nation *repented* of its grave sin of apostasy before God. He considered our life in exile as nothing other than an opportunity for fervent *repentance* and prayer for God's forgiveness. This is why many of the events that occurred during our life in exile gave him pain and sorrow and forced him to avoid close contact with people. Neither would he engage in any kind of social interaction in which he did not observe the repentance which should be evident in our people, to whom God had given the penance of banishment. Vladyka Theophan never went out of his cell in the Synodal House except to go to church, nor did he receive anyone there except a few individuals who were deeply devoted to him and sought his instructions and spiritual guidance.

"Every summer he moved from Sofia to the coastal city of Varna, where a group of his admirers rented him a modest cottage about five kilometres from town. The

cottage was located in a very isolated and relatively uninhabited spot. There Vladyka lived alone with his cell-attendant as in a skete, daily performing the whole cycle of services and readers services in place of the Liturgy. Only on certain Sundays and on major holy days did he ride to church in a carriage. Usually he went to the Russian church of Athanasius of Alexandria, an ancient Greek church that had been put at the disposal of the Russians by the Bulgarian Metropolitan Symeon of Varna and Preslav.

“Here Vladyka worked especially hard on his dogmatic, exegetical and ascetic spiritual writings. Himself a profound and refined expert in Patristics, he compiled a new edition of the *Philokalia*, organized according to a system which he had worked out, which was very practical and handy to use. He also compiled a *Philokalia of Russian Saints*, wrote a very interesting and original interpretation of Revelation, and many other things as well. In addition he conducted extensive correspondence with his spiritual children. His letters contained penetrating spiritual advice and instructions which were always accompanied by citations from the Holy Scriptures and numerous quotations from the Holy Fathers. They were reminiscent of the correspondence of Bishop Theophan the Recluse, and constitute a precious guide on all matters of morality and spirituality...

“Most astonishing of all were Vladyka’s labours of prayer, to which he devoted himself literally day and night. It was obvious that he never gave up the prayer of ‘the mind in the heart’, following the legacy of the Holy Fathers. He was often so deep in contemplation that it seemed to him that the whole visible world around him had ceased to exist. Prayer without ceasing was indeed vital to his spirit, which dwelt on high...

“When he performed the Liturgy in the church of St. Athanasius in Varna, the congregation of the church, righteous and patriarchal Greeks who lived in the environs, told us: ‘When your Vladyka sits on the high place in the church, it seems as if the Blessed Athanasius himself has come to his church and is performing the services through him. One Greek woman, in whose house Vladyka spent the night, was surprised that when she came in to clean up in the morning the bed appeared to be untouched. Obviously, Vladyka had spent the whole night before the Liturgy in prayer and had not gone to bed.

“It is not surprising that, given Vladyka Theophan’ strict ascetic life, as happens with many genuine ascetics, he experienced frightening episodes of the sort that the enemy of mankind uses to try to force people who lead an ascetic life to give up their labours. These were the same sort of episodes that we know from the Russian ascetics Saints Sergius of Radonezh and Seraphim of Sarov. Vladyka Theophan’ frightening episodes were reported by those who served as his cell-attendants, and even by the Right Reverend Seraphim who rode with him in a sleeping-car on the Sofia-Varna express, and who was at that time in charge of the Russian ecclesiastical

communities in Bulgaria. Once, when they were riding together in the same compartment, something woke Vladyka Seraphim in the night and he saw in the middle of the compartment a big black cat [according to Archbishop Theophan, it was more like a tigress with a huge udder] with eyes of burning flames. Then the loud voice of Vladyka Theophan resounded: 'In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, I adjure you: be gone from me, unclean one!' The cat snorted, spraying fiery sparks in all directions, and disappeared. Since that time, as Vladyka Seraphim stated, he tried to avoid spending the night in the same place as Vladyka Theophan because he was so shaken by this experience.

"In the cottage in Varna, there were only two rooms and a kitchen. Vladyka lived in the front room which opened onto the veranda; the second room was empty, and beyond it was the kitchen where Vladyka's cell-attendants stayed. They took this duty upon themselves voluntarily and served all Vladyka's needs. One of them was an elderly merchant from Moscow, Kh., another was a middle-aged but by no means old Cossack from the Urals, S., and the third was the young student, T. At first they took turns spending the night in the kitchen, but later they began to go home late at night after doing all that Vladyka asked of them. The reason for this was certain mysterious phenomena which frightened them. In the empty room between the kitchen and Vladyka's cell somebody's footsteps would suddenly resound, clearly audible, although there was nobody there. Then it seemed as if some unseen person were throwing whole handfuls of sand or dirt in through the windows of the cottage, and there were other unexplained noises of this kind. When this happened, Vladyka's loud voice, which was usually soft, could be heard very loud and strong, clearly articulating, 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, I adjure you: be gone from me, unclean one!' Then everything grew quiet and calm.

"According to the cell-attendant S., at midnight the sound of various falling objects could be heard, and this also ceased after Vladyka pronounced in a loud and threatening voice his adjuration, apparently against the demonic forces which menaced him. At first Vladyka used to ask his cell-attendant,

"'Did you hear what happened in the night?'

"'I did,' he would answer.

"'And were you frightened?'

"'No.'

But once that cell-attendant himself experienced an attack of demons. When he was half-asleep he suddenly felt some terrible hairy monster pressing on him and choking him. He awoke and saw somebody squeezing his throat. At first he thought that it was a robber and took it into his head to grab him with his hand, but his arms

went numb... Then he began to pray and he saw a grey cloud that twisted up in the shape of a horn and gradually disappeared. Vladyka came in and made the sign of the cross on his forehead, sprinkled the room with holy water, and such occurrences were not repeated.

“After Vladyka had left for Sofia, his cell-attendants came to the cottage to pack up and move out the things he had left behind. The neighbouring Bulgarian villagers surrounded them and asked in astonishment,

““What was going on last night in your Vladyka’s cottage?”

““Nothing could have happened,’ they replied. ‘Vladyka left the day before and nobody was in the cottage.’

““What do you mean?’ the Bulgarians countered, bewildered. ‘All night long the windows of the cottage were brightly lit, and it was evident that many people had gathered and there seemed to be a party and some kind of dancing going on.’

“Some time later, one of his cell-attendants attempted to ask Vladyka in a most cautious and tactful way what all these mysterious phenomena meant. Vladyka smiled somewhat enigmatically and humbly said,

““Well, this is what happens with monks!”

We, however, understood him thus: yes! This is what happens with monks, but not with all of them, only *real* monks such as you!

“Vladyka was extraordinarily fond of his cell attendants. Sometimes when he came to see them in the kitchen he was very gentle, loving and cheerful. He could appreciate a good polite joke and laugh at it. Only once did his cell-attendants have occasion to see Vladyka actually get angry: a certain priest once wanted to exclude an individual who had offended him from Holy Communion. Vladyka told him that he had no right to do so, and that one must forgive personal offences.”

Once, during the Cherubic hymn of the Liturgy that was being celebrated in the small chapel in the cottage, noises and groaning were heard coming from under the roof. One of the cell-attendants asked the blessing of the archbishop to investigate, but he said it would not happen again. And it didn’t. Instead, however, snakes appeared all round the house, which Vladyka attributed to demonic forces. As a result, they had to move into another house a bit further down the coast in place called “Roumi” ...

Dr. Abbatti was working as a doctor in Bulgarian Macedonia when a malaria epidemic broke out. And his wife Anna Vassilievna came down with the illness.

Now the doctor and his wife had sworn to each other that they would not conceal from each other when one of them was dying. So the doctor, who had to leave to see a patient, turned to his wife and said:

“Annette, you have no more than two hours to live!”

She was already in the throes of convulsions, and she asked her husband to send a telegram to Archbishop Theophan immediately and ask him to pray for her. He agreed, sent the telegram and left for his work. The telegram read as follows:

“Anna Vassilievna Abatti is dying. Two hours to live. Asking for your holy prayers to save her from death. Doctor Abatti.”

Then he left. The region where he was working was mountainous and the communications poor. On his way back, he received a telegram. Too preoccupied and sad to read it, he stuffed it in his pocket. He was expecting to find his wife dead... But as he entered his house he could not believe his eyes: his wife was sitting, pale and weak, but with no traces of the illness... The telegram he hadn't read was from the archbishop and said:

“I am praying. By God's mercy, the sick one will recover.”

He noted that the time when the telegram was sent and the time when his wife felt the illness depart coincided. But when Anna Vassilievna came to thank the archbishop, he did not let her open her mouth, telling her to tell nobody about the miraculous healing and threatening her that if she did tell something worse would happen to her. And it was only after the archbishop's death in 1940 that she said:

“He was not a simple archbishop. He was a great man, a holy man of God, ignored by men... Listen how, thanks to his holy prayers, I am alive now, although I was in agony.”

And she told the story...

There lived in Varna a Russian by the name of Pelichkin, a former colonel, who had converted from Orthodoxy to the Baptist faith. He knew how to conduct conversations on religious matters, and was able to disturb someone who was not trained in theology. And he decided to display his talents in a debate with Archbishop Theophan.

When Pelichkin arrived at the house, Vladyka told his cell-attendants to stay close to the room in which the interview was to take place.

“The interview will be short. You will wait in the corridor and will be witnesses,

is such are needed.”

Pelichkin was ushered in. He wanted to close the door, but the archbishop opened it again, which disturbed him. Moreover, Vladyka did not offer him a seat and remained standing himself. Then the archbishop began:

“When there are differences of opinion, and so as to avoid interminable disputes, one makes appeal to the judgement of a third party. These arbiters decide which of the two confess the true faith. Not long ago you and I confessed the same faith, the Orthodox faith. The best judges that we could find are the three holy ecumenical bishops, St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom. Their authority is indisputable for us.”

To this Pelichkin objected: “But they are men like you and I! Why should I be obliged to consider them as indisputable authorities?”

The archbishop replied: “If you consider yourself the equal of the holy bishops St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom, we have nothing more to say to each other. I ask you to leave the room!”

Pelichkin had nothing to answer to this. Disconcerted, he left the room. Later Vladyka explained his tactics:

“If I had refused to speak with him, he would have told the world that ‘the archbishop is frightened’. Whereas here, he had nothing to say in reply... In his heart he well understands that to consider oneself the equal of Saints Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom is a great impudence and spiritual delusion.”

In 1928 Vladyka came to Varna for Holy Week and Pascha. During the Liturgy for Holy Thursday an earthquake suddenly hit the city. Tens of chandeliers suspended on chains from the ceiling began to tinkle, the walls seemed to come to life, the bells began to ring.

The people, too, were disturbed and began to flee from the church. The superior of the church asked the archbishop to allow him to go and calm the people.

“Stay here and pray!” he replied.

And he immersed himself in prayer.

Again the superior, thinking the archbishop had misunderstood him, insisted:

“Allow me to go and say a word to the people!”

“You must not go and say anything... Stay here and pray!”

When the panic-stricken parishioners saw that everyone in the sanctuary was staying and praying, they calmed down.

On Holy Saturday, there was another earthquake during the chanting of the cherubic hymn: “Let all mortal flesh keep silence...” This time many of the faithful, their fears reinforced by what they had read in the press, rushed out into the street. Once again the superior asked:

“Your Eminence, bless me and allow me go and pacify the people!”

“Father Igumen, stay here and pray!”

This time the priest did not insist. And the people who had fled, seeing the calmness of the clergy in the sanctuary, returned to the church.

But there were many victims in the city. People who should have been in church praying... Vladyka saw the earthquake as a call to repentance....

Dogmatic Disputes

The 1920s were a period of great turmoil in the Russian Church both inside and outside of Russia. Schisms and heresies, excited and exploited by political and extra-ecclesiastical forces, threatened to tear apart the Body of Christ. In this chaos many looked to the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia for guidance, and in particular to its president and vice-president, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev and Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, who had respectively been rectors of the Moscow and St. Petersburg Theological Academies. On many issues the two hierarchs agreed. But unfortunately on one or two issues Archbishop Theophan considered the metropolitan to be in error; and, for all his love and respect for the older hierarch, he considered it his duty to point out these errors.

In 1926 there was published in Sremski Karlovtsy in Serbia the second edition of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky)'s *Dogma of Redemption*, an attempt to conceptualise the mystery of Christ's redemption of mankind by means of a sharp contrast between redemption understood as an act of supremely compassionate love and redemption understood as the satisfaction of God's justice, the so-called “juridical theory”. The juridical theory was rejected by Metropolitan Anthony as “scholastic”, and he sharply criticised several Fathers of the Russian Church for teaching it. In particular, he criticised the *Catechism* of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, which he proposed to replace with his own *Catechism* containing his own “monistic” theory of redemption. According to Metropolitan Anthony, our salvation was not accomplished by a restoration of justice between God and man, but by an

outpouring of Christ's compassionate love for man onto the whole of mankind. In accordance with this theory, the central point in the redemption of mankind was located by the metropolitan in the Garden of Gethsemane, rather than on the Cross.

Archbishop Theophan, supported by his vicar in the Poltava diocese in Russia, Bishop Seraphim (Sobolev) of Boguchar, profoundly disagreed with the metropolitan. He considered the so-called "juridical theory" to be Orthodox, and Metropolitan Philaret's *Catechism* in no need of replacing. And he considered Metropolitan Anthony's *Catechism* to contain serious dogmatical errors.

The issue came to a head in a session of the Synod held in Yugoslavia in April, 1926. On the one hand, the Synod expressed its approval of Metropolitan Anthony's *Catechism*. On the other hand, no decision was made to replace Metropolitan Philaret's *Catechism* with that of Metropolitan Anthony.

However, the dispute rumbled on "underground". Thus in letters to Hieroschemamonk Theodosius of Mount Athos, who took the side of Archbishop Theophan, Metropolitan Anthony expressed the suspicion that Archbishop Theophan was in "spiritual delusion" and continued to show himself in fundamental disagreement "with the juridical theory of Anselm and Aquinas, completely accepted by P[eter] Moghila and Metropolitan Philaret". And again he wrote: "We must not quickly return to Peter Moghila, Philaret and Macarius: they will remain subjects for historians".

Archbishop Theophan was unhappy that Metropolitan Anthony did not abandon his incorrect views on redemption, but only refrained from pressing for their official acceptance by the Synod. As he wrote on February 16/29, 1932: "Under the influence of the objections made [against his work], Metropolitan Anthony was about to take back his *Catechism*, which had been introduced by him into use in the schools in place of Metropolitan Philaret's *Catechism*. But, as became clear later, he did this insincerely, and with exceptional persistence continued to spread his incorrect teaching *On Redemption* and many other incorrect teachings contained in his *Catechism*".

Another dogmatic issue on which Archbishop Theophan and Bishop Seraphim cooperated fruitfully was the Sophianist heresy of Fr. Sergius Bulgakov. (Another theologian who worked on this issue was Hieromonk John Maximovich, the future holy hierarch.) This heresy was based, according to Vladyka in a letter he wrote in 1930, "on the book of Fr. [Paul] Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*. But Florensky borrowed the idea of Sophia from V.S. Soloviev. And V.S. Soloviev borrowed it from the medieval mystics.

"In V.S. Soloviev Sophia is the feminine principle of God, His 'other'. Florensky tries to prove that Sophia, as the feminine principle of God, is a special substance. He

tries to find this teaching in St. Athanasius the Great and in Russian iconography. Protopriest Bulgakov accepts on faith the basic conclusions of Florensky, but partly changes the form of this teaching, and partly gives it a new foundation. In Bulgakov this teaching has two variants: a) originally it is a special Hypostasis, although not of one essence with the Holy Trinity (in the book *The Unwaning Light*), b) later it is not a Hypostasis but 'hypostasisness'. In this latter form it is an energy of God coming from the essence of God through the Hypostases of the Divinity into the world and finding for itself its highest 'created union' in the Mother of God. Consequently, according to this variant, Sophia is not a special substance, but the Mother of God.

"According to the Church teaching, which is especially clearly revealed in St. Athanasius the Great, the Sophia-Wisdom of God is the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Here, in the most general terms, is the essence of Protopriest Bulgakov's teaching on Sophia! To expound any philosophical teaching shortly is very difficult, and so it is difficult to expound shortly the teaching of the 'sophianists' on Sophia. This teaching of theirs becomes clear only in connection the whole of their philosophical system. But to expound the latter shortly is also impossible. One can say only: their philosophy is the philosophy of 'panentheism', that is, a moderate form of 'pantheism'. The originator of this 'panentheism' in Russia is V.S. Soloviev."

Bulgakov was only one of a series of heretical teachers who were teaching in the 1920s and 30s in the Theological Institute of St. Sergius in Paris, such as Nicholas Berdyaev, Lev Zander and Nicholas Zernov. By no means all the Paris theologians supported him. Fr. Georges Florovsky, for example, strongly criticized him. However, Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris supported them, and was in turn supported by them, which, combined with the intrigues of the communists, laid the basis for the schism of the "Paris exarchate" from the Russian Church Abroad that took place in 1927. The sticking point was Eulogius's refusal to allow Synodal supervision of the St. Sergius Institute; and his refusal to break links with the masonically inspired and financed YMCA, proved the sticking point on which hopes of a permanent reconciliation foundered.

Archbishop Averky writes: "Archbishop Theophan was the first to expose and document the anti-Christian nature of certain so-called Christian organizations, some of which were eager to extend their influence to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, and even to subjugate it to themselves somewhat by rendering financial assistance much needed by our refugees who had no stable sources of their own to draw from in exile. Vladyka Theophan himself categorically refused to accept the monthly allowance offered to him by these organizations, and did not approve of those who did, for he believed that this caused them to lose their spiritual freedom, and that in one way or another they would consequently be forced to do the will of their sponsors. Vladyka Theophan guarded his independence and spiritual freedom, preferring a beggarly existence to a secure situation. This discloses

the most characteristic trait of our great pastor, a trait which he shared with the great Fathers of Christian antiquity: any compromise of conscience, no matter how small, was for him altogether inconceivable. In all of his actions and conduct, in his private life as well as in his service to the Church and society, he was utterly constant, never departing in any way from what his convictions dictated. Absolute incorruptibility, uncompromising honesty and straightforwardness, demand for unconditional loyalty to the true Church, to the Word of God, and to Patristic tradition – these were his hallmarks, ideals which guided his life and which he liked to see in other servants of the Church as well.”

In August, 1926, Archbishop Theophan wrote: “The real causes of the division are deeper than it seems at first glance. Two of them are especially significant. ‘They’ consider the Soviet authorities as ‘ordained by God’, but we consider them antichristian. On the basis of overwhelming documentary evidence, we recognized that the YMCA is a masonic organization. They consider it a Christian organization.”

And he predicted: “Metropolitan Eulogius will not give in. Those around him are pushing him toward schism. We could let him have his way, but we cannot entrust the fate of Orthodoxy to him. He is ensnared in the nets of the [masonic] YMCA. The YMCA in turn is having a demoralizing effect on student groups. In the magazine *The Way* № 5, Professor Berdyaev stated openly that the schism in the church is unavoidable and necessary. Metropolitan Eulogius is the only hierarch who ‘has raised his consciousness to the realization that it is necessary to reform Orthodoxy’, and he is therefore ‘a tool of God’s Providence’ in our days!”

Vladyka took a very strict attitude towards the Paris exarchate. As Helen Kontzevich relates, “in Paris, Archpriest Sergius Chetverikov asked to come and see Archbishop Theophan, to converse with him on the theme of the Jesus Prayer. But he was presented with the condition that he cease all contact with the YMCA. The Archpriest did not agree to it.”

Archbishop Averky says that Vladyka Theophan foresaw both the schism of Metropolitan Eulogius of Paris and that of Metropolitan Platon in America. “He warned and admonished, but his warnings were not heeded in time and the subsequent reproach of those who broke away not only had no positive results, but even deepened the division, as Vladyka had also foreseen. Such ecclesiastical schisms and divisions caused Vladyka to sorrow in his heart, to suffer in his soul and to grieve. Although he had at the very beginning identified the root of the problem, he did not always approve of the measures taken to stop the schisms and establish unity in the Church, and he indicated the errors sometimes made in so doing.”

Although Eulogius at times sought, and obtained, reconciliation with Metropolitan Anthony and the other hierarchs, his heretical entourage was stronger,

as Vladyka had predicted. First he joined the Moscow Patriarchate under Metropolitan Sergius. But then, when Sergius demanded political loyalty to the Soviet Union, he turned to Constantinople.

However, by 1927-28, both the Moscow and the Constantinople patriarchates had fallen away from the truth of Orthodoxy, and Vladyka Theophan was prominent in defending that truth against their innovations.

One of the last Hierarchical Councils that Vladyka attended condemned the notorious declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, which recognized the Soviet power as established by God and placed the Russian Church in more or less complete dependence on it. As he wrote on September 1, 1927: "It is impossible to recognize the epistle of Metropolitan Sergius as obligatory for ourselves. The just-completed Council of Bishops rejected this epistle. It was necessary to act in this way on the basis of the teaching of the Holy Fathers on what should be recognized as a canonical power to which Christians must submit. St. Isidore of Pelusium, having pointed to the presence of the God-established order of the submission of some to others everywhere in the life of rational and irrational beings, draws the conclusion:

"Therefore we are right to say that the thing in itself, I mean power, that is, authority and royal power, have been established by God. But if a lawless evildoer seizes this power, we do not affirm that he has been sent by God, but we say that he, like Pharaoh, has been *permitted* to spew out this cunning and thereby inflict extreme punishment on and bring to their senses those for whom cruelty was necessary, just as the King of Babylon brought the Jews to their senses.' (*Works*, part II, letter 6).

"Bolshevik power in its essence is an antichristian power and there is no way that it can be recognized as God-established."

In relation to the Patriarchate of Constantinople and the introduction of the new calendar into that patriarchate and other churches, Vladyka Theophan was similarly uncompromising. Thus "only an Ecumenical Council", he wrote, "can introduce a new Church calendar, as the First Ecumenical Council introduced the one which we now use. Any other unauthorized introduction cannot be recognized as canonical." Unlike Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who, though opposed to the new calendar innovation, argued in favour of remaining in communion with the new calendarists, and served with the new calendarist Romanian patriarch Miron on more than one occasion, Archbishop Theophan adopted the "zealot" line of the Greek and Romanian Old Calendarists.

He wrote two extended works on the subject. In one of them, composed in 1926, he wrote:

"Question. Have the pastors of the Orthodox Church not made special

judgements concerning the calendar?

“Answer. They have, many times – with regard to the introduction of the new Roman calendar – both in private assemblies and in councils.

“A proof of this is the following. First of all, the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II, who lived at the same time as the Roman calendar reform, immediately, in 1582, together with his Synod condemned the new Roman system of chronology as being not in agreement with the Tradition of the Church. In the next year (1583), with the participation of Patriarchs Sylvester of Alexandria and Sophronius VI of Jerusalem, he convened a Church Council. This Council recognised the Gregorian calendar to be not in agreement with the canons of the Universal Church and with the decree of the First Ecumenical Council on the method of calculating the day of Holy Pascha.

“Through the labours of this Council there appeared: a Conciliar tome, which denounced the wrongness and unacceptability for the Orthodox Church of the Roman calendar, and a canonical conciliar Decree – the Sigillion of November 20, 1583. In this Sigillion all three of the above-mentioned Patriarchs with their Synods called on the Orthodox firmly and unbendingly, even to the shedding of their blood, to hold the Orthodox Menaion and Julian Paschalion, threatening the transgressors of this with anathema, cutting them off from the Church of Christ and the gathering of the faithful...

“In the course of the following three centuries: the 17th, 18th and 19th, a whole series of Ecumenical Patriarchs decisively expressed themselves against the Gregorian calendar and, evaluating it in the spirit of the conciliar decree of Patriarch Jeremiah II, counselled the Orthodox to avoid it...

“Question. Is the introduction of the new calendar important or of little importance?

“Answer. Very important, especially in connection with the Paschalion, and it is an extreme disorder and ecclesiastical schism, which draws people away from communion and unity with the whole Church of Christ, deprives them of the grace of the Holy Spirit, shakes the dogma of the unity of the Church, and, like Arius, tears the seamless robe of Christ, that is, everywhere divides the Orthodox, depriving them of oneness of mind; breaks the bond with Ecclesiastical Holy Tradition and makes them fall under conciliar condemnation for despising Tradition...

“Question. How must the Orthodox relate to the new calendarist schismatics, according to the canons?

“Answer. They must have no communion in prayer with them, even before their conciliar condemnation...

“Question. What punishment is fitting, according to the Church canons, for those who pray with the new calendarist schismatics?

“Answer. The same condemnation with them...”

Reclusion: Final Years and Repose

As early as 1928 Archbishop Theophan wrote to one of his spiritual children: “I would like to retreat in silence from all things and from henceforth, but I do not yet know whether this is God’s will.” On April 16/29, 1931 he left Bulgaria and moved in with a couple known to him from St. Petersburg, Theodore and Lydia Porokhov, who were living in Clamart, near Paris.

It is not known for certain why Vladyka left Bulgaria for reclusion in France. A desire for deep inner prayer, which is easier in reclusion, was probably one factor. Another, according to his cell-attendant, the future Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov), was the deteriorating state of his relations with his vicar, Bishop Seraphim. A third, according to the same source, was a desire to check out a report that the Tsar was alive and living in France!

Certainly Vladyka was depressed about the state of the Churches, and perhaps felt that he with his uncompromising views could make no further contribution to public Church life. Thus on September 12, 1931 he wrote from Clamart: “You complain about developments in ecclesiastical affairs in your country. I do not know the details of your situation, but I think that the religious and moral state of other Orthodox countries is no better, perhaps even worse. I can at least state with assurance that this is true both of Russia under the yoke and of Russia in the Diaspora. Regarding ecclesiastical matters there, I have an enormous amount of material at my disposal: approximately 700 pages in all. I have at my disposal materials about ecclesiastical affairs here as well which are no less important nor less voluminous. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from these materials is horrifying. Yet there is, of course, amid this general darkness a ‘grace-filled remnant’ that still perpetuates the Orthodox faith both here and there. Our times seem to be apocalyptic. *The salt is losing its savour.* Among the Church’s highest pastors there remains a weak, dim, contradictory and incorrect understanding of the written word. This is subverting spiritual life in Christian society and destroying Christianity, which consists of *actions, not words.* *It grieves me to see to whom Christ’s sheep have been entrusted, to see who it is that oversees their guidance and salvation.* But this is tolerated by God. ‘Let those in Judaea flee to the mountains!’ With these words the great Russian hierarchs Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow and Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov characterized the state of ecclesiastical affairs in their own times, sixty years ago. Do we not have even greater reason to repeat these threatening words at the present time?”

One contributing factor to Vladyka's decision almost certainly was his strained relations with Metropolitan Anthony over the Dogma of Redemption and other matters. According to Helena Kontzevich, Metropolitan Anthony wrote to Vladyka after their disagreement over the dogma, and refused him permission to come to any more sessions of the Synod. Whether this is true or not, the relations between the two hierarchs were definitely strained. However, this did not lead to Vladyka formally breaking relations with the Church Abroad, for the newspapers reported that he concelebrated with Archbishop Seraphim (Lukianov) of Paris, and gave sermons.

Vladyka's letters became increasingly apocalyptic in tone. Already in 1931 he predicted a new war in Europe. And "Czechoslovakia will be the first to succumb to this threat!", he added...

On April 31, 1936 he wrote: "Have you noticed what is happening in the world today? The leaders of the world's governments are all doing the same thing: they all speak about world *peace*. The leaders of France and of states friendly to her are also very insistent in speaking about ways to guarantee *security*, as if this were the essential precondition of this 'peace'. One cannot help but recall the words of the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Thessalonians: 'The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and security, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape' (I Thessalonians 5.3). Everybody who loves the Truth must not only take note of the signs of the times, but also follow these observations to their logical conclusion.

"Regarding the affairs of the Church, in the words of the Saviour, one of the most awesome phenomena of the last days is that at that time 'the *stars* shall fall from heaven' (Matthew 24.29). According to the Saviour's own explanation, these 'stars' are *the Angels of the Churches*, in other words, *the Bishops* (Revelation 1.20). The religious and moral fall of the Bishops is, therefore, one of the most characteristic signs of the last days. The fall of the Bishops is particularly horrifying when they deviate from the doctrines of the faith, or, as the Apostle put it, when they 'would pervert the Gospel of Christ' (Galatians 1.7). The Apostle orders that such people be pronounced '*anathema*'. He said, '*If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed (anathema)*' (Galatians 1.9). And one must not be slow about this, for he continues, '*A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, being condemned of himself*' (Titus 3.10-11). Moreover, you may be subject to God's judgement if you are indifferent to deviation from the truth: 'So them because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth' (Revelation 3.6).

"Clouds are gathering on the world's horizon. God's judgement of its peoples and of hypocritical Christians, beginning with heretics and lukewarm hierarchs, is

approaching.”

Soon after moving to France, Vladyka discovered that he was being followed. He had to stop going to church in the Rue Odessa in Paris, and told one of his people in Bulgaria that life in Clamart was “not peaceful”. Later he explained that there had been a night-time descent on the house where he lived. It appears that the Soviets were trying to kidnap Vladyka as they had kidnapped General Kutepov in 1931 and General Miller in 1937. And although they did not succeed, after his death his papers were all sent to Moscow...

Seeking a safer refuge, in 1936 Vladyka moved with the Porokhovs to Mosne, near Amboise on the Loire. Soon after this Theodore Vassilievich Porokhov was murdered. In 1939 Lydia Nikolaevna Porokhova, in monasticism Maria, also died. Six months later, on September 1, 1939, Vladyka and the Porokhovs’ niece, Anastasia Vassilievna, were taken by a former landowner of Poltava, Maria Vassilievna Fedchenko, to a little property which she rented at Limeray, in the same region. Here there were three caves suitable for living in. In the first lived Vladyka. In the second was a church. In the third lived Anastasia Vassilievna. And Maria Vassilievna lived in a house next to the caves. There was also a place for some domestic animals, and for twelve Doberman-pinchers, who were chained up during the day but were released into the park during the night, probably so as to protect Vladyka from his enemies. After his death, they were all sold.

Archbishop Theophan reposed peacefully at three o’clock in the morning on February 6/19, 1940, the feast of St. Photius the Great. According to one of those present, there were no more than four people present at the funeral of the great and holy hierarch, who was vested in his hierarchical vestments with the mitre and panagia that the Tsar had presented him with at his consecration.

Vladyka was buried in plot № 432 in the municipal cemetery of Limeray.

On the fortieth day after his repose he appeared to his spiritual son and the future Archbishop of Canada Joasaph, who witnessed: “After the death of my marvelous instructor, I was terribly afflicted... It was very difficult for me and I prayed much for him. And then, on the night of the fortieth day after his repose, I dreamed that I was standing in front of a magnificent church from which there proceeded a multitude of hierarchs after the service. I recognized the great hierarchs: Saints Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian and many others. Suddenly, in the middle of them I saw his Eminence Theophan! I ran up to him:

“Your Eminence, where are you coming from? ’

“Well, as you can see, we have just celebrated the Liturgy together. Come with us.’

“I followed him. All this took place in a spacious automobile – or was it a boat? – which began to sail in the air, so to speak. We passed by mountains, forests and valleys of an indescribable beauty. My elder began to show me these dwellings and revealed to me their destiny:

“‘That one will be saved, but that one over there at the bottom of the valley will perish.’

“It was terrible to see! And all around us there were beautiful gardens and a sweet perfume. I contemplated them with delight and without being sated. For a long time we were carried about in this way in the air, in the middle of this magnificence. Finally I could not restrain myself and asked:

“‘But where are we?’

“His Eminence Theophan answered me: ‘And why do you not understand...? In Paradise!’

“From that moment I was reassured, having understood that my dear instructor had been found worthy of eternal blessedness.”

Miracles of healing have been attributed to Archbishop Theophan since his repose.

Thus when he died in 1940 Helena Yurievna Kontzevich had had a terrible toothache; she prayed to him and the pain disappeared instantly.

Towards the end of her life she had a vision of him, after which she wrote a troparion to him in tone 3:

*Defender of the right belief in Christ's redemption,
thou didst endure afflictions and death in exile,
O holy father, Hierarch Theophan,
pray to Christ God to save our souls.*

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II. ARCHBISHOP JOASAPH OF CANADA AND ARGENTINA

In Russia

Our holy Father Joasaph was born Ioann Skorodumov on January 14, 1888 in the village of Rebovichi, Tikhvin uyezd, Novgorod province. His father was the priest of this village, Fr. Basil. His mother, Theodosia Mikhailovna, née Kachalova, died when he was six years old. He had a twin sister, Maria, who was born three hours after him, an older brother who died in the blockade of Petrograd in 1942, and a younger brother who died at the age of twelve.

When their mother died, his sister Maria gradually took all the household chores into her hands. Little Vanya was lively and obedient, and loved by everybody. The boy was much influenced by the Church-centred life of Imperial Russia with its abundance of monasteries, hermitages and sketes in towns, lakes and forests, the wonder-working icons, the hermits unknown to the world, the wanderers and pilgrims, the religious processions with many choruses singing and the bell ringing – all this left a deep impression on the young ascetic.

In summer, Vanya and his elder brother would go fishing and stay outdoors overnight, talking and reading about the great ascetics of old and the lives of the saints. On the way back they would perform the “podvig” of carrying a pail of fish on one shoulder without changing for miles, all the way home. At times their shoulders would be bleeding, and their sister would have to take the pail off their shoulders, while their father would simply smile and shake his head... They also walked some distance barefoot in the snow, unseen by anyone...

At the age of ten his father brought him to Tikhvin, which housed the famous wonder-working icon of the Mother of God. There, in 1902, he completed the seminary preparatory school, after which he entered Novgorod theological seminary.

In 1908, having brilliantly completed his seminary studies, Vanya entered the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, where he became the director of the Academy student choir already in his first year. He also became the devoted disciple of the Rector, Bishop Theophan (Bystrov). Vladyka Theophan was a deeply learned theologian and a great expert on the Jesus Prayer. Under his influence the young Vanya Skorodumov was introduced into the art of arts, which he practised so well that for the rest of his life he was always seen to be in a joyful state. Vanya’s academy thesis was called “Monasticism according to St. John Chrysostom”, and this saint had a deep and permanent influence on the spiritual life of the future archpastor. It was on the feast of St. John Chrysostom that he was tonsured into monasticism, and it was on the same day that he died.

The revolutionary ferment of the years 1905 to 1908 also penetrated the Academy. "Once," Vladyka recalled, "because of some 'revolutionary date', the students thought of going on strike and did not go to classes. But I, as always, set off for class. Several students blocked my way.

"Where are you going? Today is a "labour day". Don't you dare go to class.'

"You said "labour day". Well, I'm going to labour,' I objected and went towards the exit. They tried to stop me by force. Then I could take no more of this and, rolling up my sleeves, challenged them:

"Who's first? Come on!'

"Seeing that I was not joking, and knowing my physical strength, my opponents gave way. I alone appeared in class."

Not long before Vanya's graduation, Archbishop Theophan was transferred to Astrakhan, at the mouth of the Volga river, and after graduating Vanya gathered his few earthly goods and undertook the journey down the river to his Abba in order to receive monastic tonsure. On lying down to sleep for the last night on the steamer, he counted up his "capital" and found that he had only a few tens of kopecks. That night his sleep was troubled, but in a dream he saw that he had just enough money, and that he had to go on a long journey in a cab to the Hierarchical podvorye, where he had to cross a courtyard and go along long, dim corridors... On arriving at Astrakhan the next morning, he hired a cab. The driver asked him for the exact sum that was in his pocket. And then he went along exactly the same streets, courtyard and corridor as he had seen in his dream the previous night...

Vanya was tonsured into monasticism on November 13/26, 1912, the feast of St. John Chrysostom, and was given the name the name Joasaph after the recently canonized St. Joasaph of Belgorod. On November 18 / December 1, he was ordained to the diaconate, and three days later - to the priesthood. Soon he was appointed by the Educational Committee of the Most Holy Synod to the post of assistant supervisor of the Theological school in Yaransk, Vyatka province, but on December 17/30, 1913 he was transferred to the Theological school in Archbishop Theophan's see of Poltava, where he served as an army chaplain.

At one point Fr. Joasaph was living with the future priest V.Z. in the hospital building of the Theological school. The Bolsheviks were all round and occupied the whole building except for their room. But the two men walked in and out without being seen by the Bolsheviks and without being asked any questions. Later, Fr. Joasaph settled in the Hierarchical House with other hieromonks, while V.Z. lived among the carriages. There he was brought food.

This continued until the Volunteer Army occupied Poltava. They found the body of the murdered Hieromonk Nilus, steward of the Lubensk monastery, and had it brought to the monastery, Fr. Joasaph, at the command of Archbishop Theophan, met the body and, after burying it, gave a sermon. It was so powerful that it shook all those present.

In 1920 Fr. Joasaph, now an archimandrite, fled with Archbishop Theophan and other members of the Higher Church Administration to the last stronghold of the Volunteer Army in the Crimea. He now joined a group of twelve missionaries for the White soldiers under the direction of Bishop Benjamin, who was superior of the Kherson monastery and administrator of the military and naval clergy. With the above-mentioned V.Z. as his reader, he went round the front line positions of the army. He would come into a town, serve a moleben in the square and then give a powerful sermon in his melodious, strong voice.

He was also strong in body. During the evacuation, Fr. Joasaph was left alone on the quayside to guard the hierarchs' baggage. Suddenly the order came to get on the steamer immediately. But how was he to get all the suitcases – eight of them, together with books and vestments – on the steamer? It would be dangerous to take some while leaving others on the quay. So he took them all at once!

In Serbia

In 1920 Fr. Joasaph was evacuated to Constantinople together with Archbishop Theophan, and from December 1, 1920 to the end of February, 1921 served in the military hospitals in the city under the direction of Bishop Benjamin. He lived with Archimandrite Simon and V.A. Konovalov, the future Archimandrite Ambrose, in hostel no. 8, where V.A. was assistant commandant.

When the Higher Church Administration moved to Serbia, Fr. Joasaph went with them. From 1921 to 1922 he lived with two other archimandrites – Archimandrite Simon and the future Archbishop Theodosius of Brazil – in the monastery of Vratna. It was deserted apart from the three Russians, so they had to do everything, as well as look after a Romanian-speaking parish sixteen kilometres away.

On February 13, 1922 Fr. Joasaph was appointed superior of the Orthodox community, and teacher of the Law of God in the gymnasium, of Herzegovi on the Dalmatian coast. One teacher in the school recalled: “We were without a priest, and sorrowed... But the Lord did not abandon us – Vladyka Theophan arrived with Archimandrite Joasaph, who became teacher of the Law of God in our school, which later developed into an eight-class gymnasium. Thus one truly beautiful day there arrived a humble quiet priest and immediately encompassed us with the light of his unusual, light blue eyes. You encounter such eyes only rarely, there is no glint or tenderness in them, but only light – the “quiet light” of Vespers. With this light Fr. Joasaph overshadowed us during his sojourn amongst us. If the children were

naughty, or we the teachers quarrelled a bit, Fr. Joasaph would come, give his blessing, and everything would pass, and again peace and quietness would arrive. Fr. Joasaph was not tall, thin, with an amazingly beautiful, iconographic face... Like all of us, Fr. Joasaph was not rich. But we soon learned that he was poorer than us all. Once I saw that his ryasa was old and past its first freshness. Tanya B. and I dared to ask Fr. Joasaph to give it to us for cleaning, saying that it would dry out during the night. He replied in his lilting northern accent:

“And then how will I cover myself at night? After all, the nights are cold.”

“Our faces must have expressed astonishment, because he added with such a kind smile:

“After all, I have no blanket.’

“And nobody knew about it! It was already autumn, and although there was no winter in Herzegovi, the nights could be very cold. Of course, we immediately got him a blanket, and he, evidently because of his youth, was somewhat embarrassed.”

When Bishop Benjamin moved to Paris, Fr. Joasaph took his place at the Don Cadet Corps in the name of Emperor Alexander III in Goražde. Soon he gathered a group of cadets, called the “Churchmen”, around him. Every day he served Vespers and Mattins, a practice that he continued for the rest of his life, and his “Churchmen” read and chanted on the kliros. He had some minor quarrels with the choir director, who had a tendency to produce theatrical effects. But more serious were his differences with the director, who ordered the shortening of already shortened services. When he was not teaching the cadets or conducting services, Fr. Joasaph read the works of the Holy Fathers, painted icons (under the influence of the teacher of drawing, M.M. Khrisagonov) or went fishing in the River Drina. Sometimes batiushka, who was a great lover of nature, would go on excursions with paints and easel and a group of cadets for two or three days, stopping at the almost-deserted monasteries along the way.

M.M. Khrisagonov witnesses that batiushka carried out many miracles. One they brought a Muslim woman into the church on crutches. He asked her whether she believed in Christ and in his prayers. She replied that she did. Then batiushka prayed, and the woman got up and went home without the need for crutches.

[In Canada](#)

A friend of his, a former pilgrim who had roamed through many places of Old Holy Russia, was now in Canada. He wrote from there to Fr. Joasaph that the schism of Metropolitan Platon in 1926 left no legitimate Orthodox clergy in Canada, yet the land was so reminiscent of Russia and was fertile ground for the seed of the Word of God. “Do you want to move?” he concluded.

"I do!" was the reply, although Fr. Joasaph was quite aware of the hardships that awaited him. A parish was being formed in Montreal, and Bishop Apollinarius invited him to be the superior. However, he succeeded in getting a visa only two years later, and in 1929 he arrived in New York, whence he set off for Montreal in December. However, not all his documents were in order, so he had to go back to New York and stay there for more than two months. Having arrived in Canada for the second time on February 6/19, 1930, in September he was summoned by the Synod to Yugoslavia for his consecration to the episcopate.

On October 12, 1930 Fr. Joasaph was consecrated Bishop of Montreal in the Russian church in Belgrade by Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and two other bishops. On handing him his archpastoral staff, Metropolitan Anthony reminded him of the nature of the world-view he would meet in Canada: "You are going to people who have long lived with an understanding of things that has nothing whatsoever to do with Christianity. Bring them the teaching of humility; accept this staff as a staff of benevolence and, as you bless the people who now stand before you, think of the flock there, who already love you."

"In my life," replied Bishop Joasaph, "two questions have especially occupied my attention. First, the exploration of the ways of God's mercy." He found this first in nature. "Then I began to observe human life; and even where free will was leaning towards evil, I always found God's mercy. Then I decided to turn to that which is most sinful, most evil, and I turned to my inner life. It seemed that here there was no place for God's mercy because there was nothing good in it. But even here I discovered God's mercy, and I remembered the words of the Psalmist: 'Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, Thou art there...' Then I finally became convinced that the mercy of God towards man is limitless and boundless. The second question that I sought to answer was: will the Last Judgement be soon? Judging by signs in nature, by the moral state of humanity, and finally by myself, I felt that the time was close, that one had to hasten to do the work of God and accomplish the preaching of His Kingdom..."

At the quayside in Montreal Vladyka was met by one hundred parishioners. From there he went to the church, where the priest Fr. A. Tsuglevich and many worshippers greeted him. Vladyka Joasaph's new diocese presented many difficulties: jurisdictional conflicts, slanders from communist-inclined people, and an almost complete absence of material resources. Vladyka was an unmercenary, and came to Canada almost penniless. He lived and travelled entirely on the donations of his poor compatriots. At times, while going round his diocese, he would have hardly enough to pay the fare to the next village parish. But he remained peaceful and joyful amidst all his difficulties.

There were not enough priests, so Vladyka had to travel alone the length and breadth of Canada on all kinds of transport, carrying out all kinds of Church needs, preaching sometimes several times a day. Once he was invited to a parish in Saskatchewan. There was nobody to meet him at the railway station, and the parish was forty miles away. So, heaving his suitcases onto his shoulders, he started walking... Often there were very few people in the church. So he had to do everything: light the candles and the incense, read the hours, etc. Usually Vladyka baked his own prosphoras.

And soon his labours were bearing fruit: in the course of the first ten years of his episcopate, he founded about forty parishes and communities.

On arriving in Canada and discovering that there were very few Russians in the East, Vladyka decided to move to the West, where there were more, as well as many Ukrainians, Galicians, Carpatho-Russians and Bukovinians. So in 1936 he moved his see to Edmonton, where he soon acquired a church, a hall and living quarters for five people. Further north he built a skete at Bluffton that could accommodate 10-12 monks and dedicated it in the name of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God. Here his friend V. Konovalov, who had called him to Canada and given up his house and all that he had to pay for the trip, became the abbot under the name of Archimandrite Ambrose. In 1939 he bought 120 acres of land next to Whitefish Lake, where he built a men's skete in the name of St. Seraphim of Sarov.

Much of the labour of building these communities, including clearing the land around them, was carried out by Vladyka himself. He built churches and painted icons for them. His work was a mammoth spiritual and physical achievement.

One summer there was a severe drought that threatened the harvest. The clergy of the American Metropolia served several molebens and cross processions - but the rain did not come. Then, at the request of his parishioners, Vladyka Joasaph also carried out a moleben. The worshippers had scarcely managed to arrive at the house of a rich farmer when the rain came down in buckets. "Well, Orthodox," said Vladyka during the trapeza. "Our side has won! Now you see on whose side is truth and justice!" But he ascribed the miracle, not to himself, but to the faith and prayers of his flock...

Vladyka's childlike faith in men was often disappointed. Thus he once ordained a man of whom his flock had a low opinion. But he believed in this man's possible correction and ordained him. About a week later the man joined the American Metropolia...

Until May, 1936 Vladyka was Bishop of Montreal and vicar of Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) in administering the North American and Canadian dioceses. On May 16/29 he was appointed Diocesan Bishop of Western Canada. And on October

16/29, 1945, at the insistence of the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Church Abroad, he was raised to the rank of archbishop.

Since Vladyka had always fled honour and glory, he was not altogether pleased with this promotion. "Why do that to me?" he asked, half-jokingly, half seriously. "Even without this I will not join another jurisdiction..."

In 1947 the ROCOR Synod decided to divide the Canadian diocese into two. The western half remained, as before, under Bishop Joasaph, while the eastern half was transferred to the jurisdiction of Bishop Gregory. By the end of his episcopate in Canada, Vladyka had founded about sixty parishes.

[In Argentina and Paraguay](#)

On November 25 / December 8, 1950, Vladyka was transferred to the widowed diocese of Argentina. Shortly before this, he had been struck down by a serious, seemingly incurable illness and had had an operation. However, accustomed as he was to unflinching monastic obedience, Vladyka did not refuse his new appointment. While still not fully recovered from his illness, he flew to Buenos Aires. On July 10/23, 1951 he was appointed ruling Hierarch of Buenos Aires and Argentina.

Vladyka performed his first Divine service on Forgiveness Sunday in the cathedral accommodated at that time in a rented basement, which Vladyka called "the catacombs". He knew about the sorrowful events that had taken place before his arrival in the diocese, which had remained widowed for some time. He began to speak about this after the service in his first sermon: "So you have all experienced great sorrow..." Then he stopped and sighed, as if experiencing with all them this recent sorrow. And then, completely unexpectedly, his face lit up with a smile of sincere joy. "So glory to God! Since the Lord has allowed you to experience sorrows, that means He has not forgotten us. It means that from now on He will give us strength to bear sorrows without complaining. Glory to God!"

Vladyka soon became deeply loved by all. There were twenty-one parishes in his diocese, including four in Buenos Aires and its suburbs that had their own churches, while six were situated temporarily in ordinary houses or rented accommodation. In the provinces were two parishes with their own churches and four without. In Uruguay and Paraguay were five parishes. All these parishes were served by nineteen priests and six deacon – three of the priests were in Uruguay and Paraguay.

Vladyka did much to calm the passions and quarrels that divided the Christians of his diocese. He rarely used administrative measures, but worked through love and humility. "In order to demand or order, there are police and other powers... But it is enough for a Hierarch to suggest or counsel, this is equivalent to an order..."

In April, 1951 a Hierarchical podvorye was built with a hall and rooms for monks and cell-attendants. Room was also made for his large collection of spiritual books. On June 25, 1952 an Orthodox Congregation was created into which the property of all the parishes was transferred. This congregation was then registered with the Ministry of Cults in August, 1953, making the diocese a legal entity in Argentina.

During his first visitation of his diocese, which included Paraguay, he visited a sick woman who had lain paralyzed in a hospital for a long time. She asked for his prayers, to which he at once agreed, but he asked her whether she had faith in God and His ability to heal her. She said "yes". Whereupon he prayed and gave his panagia to her to kiss. She was immediately healed. Again, the mother of Fr. V. Drobov had a severe headache when Vladyka visited them. As he was about to leave, he hit her with his fist right on the place of the aching teeth, and said: "That's nothing, it will go away." And at once the pain stopped...

Once Vladyka told the following story about his twelve-year-old niece Natasha, who was living with her parents in the Soviet Union. She fell seriously ill with typhus, but displayed great patience in her sufferings. Once, being extremely weak, she expressed the desire to receive Holy Communion, knowing that she would soon die. Her parents tried to dissuade her, but she insisted, saying that the Mother of God and St. Seraphim had warned her about this. They set off to find a priest, but it was not so easy to find a "Tikhonite" priest, who was not an officially recognized "livingchurchman". But they found one who communed the girl. Then she asked to be washed and dressed in clean clothes. She sat up and asked to eat a little (although for a long time she had not been able to receive food), and even got up. Her parents were encouraged, but she kept looking at the time, and half an hour before the time indicated to her in her vision she lay down and began to say goodbye to all those close to her. They again tried to convince her that she was wrong, that look she was getting better after Communion, but she confirmed her desire and said that they were coming for her now. Suddenly she trembled and joyfully cried: 'Look, they're coming!' 'Who's coming?' they asked her. 'The Mother of God and St. Seraphim!' With these words her radiant soul flew away... "And then I wrote to my brother," said Vladyka, "that now they have their intercessor before the Lord!"

Repose and Miracles

Vladyka's frail health and the hot climate of Argentina, especially after Canadian winters, drained his last strength. He had cancer... "The Canadian doctors," he said, "told me that I had no more than two or three months to live, but I deceived them, look, I've lived already several more years!" After his second operation, he could no longer serve, which upset him much more than his physical sufferings. "You know," he said, "serving is the main thing for me, the most precious thing..." He lived for another two years after the operation, and occupied himself with all the affairs of his diocese, especially with church-building. In the middle of March, 1955 he had his first stroke, which was repeated after a week, and his condition became critical. The

believers flocked to the church, and by a miracle Vladyka's health improved. On Palm Sunday he tonsured Fr. Anastasy, his cell-attendant. And at Pascha, ignoring the advice of the doctors, he served the liturgy.

Before his first stroke, Vladyka had bought a plot of land in the village of La Bols, in the Cordoba mountains, where there were many Russians. He built a small house there and confirmed the plan for a miniature church. He very much wanted to retire and create a monastic community there. In June he laid the foundation for a church in the Orthodox Russian Ochag. During the Dormition he looked over the building and said sadly: "I will not see this church." And it was precisely there, two days later, that he had his third stroke. He no longer went out, but received visitors gladly, and continue to teach and exhort. Although he was in great pain, he never grumbled. Only once, to his reposed abba, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, he once, as he recounted, complained: "I say to him: 'Vladyka, it's difficult for me, pray for me, it's a long time since I saw you last, let me just have a look at you, if only in a dream!' And my instructor fulfilled my request. When I was particularly suffering, I saw him in a dream coming to my bed. He stood over me and looked at me for a long time with love, but said nothing. And beside him stood a new metropolitan, whom I do now know. After this dream things got easier for me!"

Vladyka often said: "It's not important what happens here, the main thing is what happens there! If one could only know that one would inherit the tiniest corner of the Heavenly Kingdom, then one could die today. What is our earthly life? Nothing!"

Once Vladyka told the starosta that as a Canadian citizen he had the right to be buried in the English cemetery, which was the only place that one could buy for 99 years.

In his last days the young people, Vladyka's beloved subdeacons, kept watch during the night around his bed. Not long before his death he said to a priest who visited him, congratulating him on his namesday: "But I won't spoil your namesday - I will already be dead." That's how it turned out - he died five days later.

During his last three months Vladyka often received Holy Unction and Holy Communion. Various services were carried out in his house. He would get better, then worse. It was particularly difficult for him on hot, humid days. Five days before his death he had a fourth stroke. On November 22, hardly able to speak, he did confession and received the Holy Mysteries. His last clearly spoken words were: "May Christ save you all." Then he lost consciousness and his breathing became gradually quieter. He died a righteous death at 6.40 on November 13/26, 1955, the feast of his beloved St. John Chrysostom and was buried in the English cemetery in Buenos Aires.

After his repose he appeared to many people in their dreams. Archbishop Theodosius said that he had several visions of Archbishop Joasaph soon after his repose. Also, Fr. Ambrose told Fr. Macarius that Vladyka Joasaph had appeared to him in full daylight: the first time when he was reading his cell rule, and the second time during a service in the altar, as if he were alive, but in transparent vestments, when he thanked him for commemorating his parents. There were also cases of Vladyka giving help from the other world. But one of the most striking testimonies of his holiness comes from the lips of the gardener-gatekeeper of the English cemetery in Buenos Aires, D. Carlos. "Once when it was already dusk, I noticed that in the chapel they had forgotten to turn off the electric light, and I went there. Before I had reached it, my attention was attracted by a powerful light at the left side of the chapel. But when I came closer, I saw that on the grave of your archpastor there was such an enormous light. At first I was frightened, but then I thought: what can the dead one do to me? And I decided to come closer. There was not chance that it could be a reflection from the vigil light on the grave, since the light was blue like moonlight. It was something enormous (fue algo enorme). Although I am an atheist, I was terrified..."

Holy Father Joasaph, pray to God for us!

(Sources: Count A.A. Sollogub, *Ruskaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' Zagranitsej*, 1918-1968, New York, 1968, volume 2, pp. 806-807, 1187; *The Orthodox Word*, March-April, 1968); "Archiepiskop Ioasaf (Skorodumov, 1888-1955)", http://www.fatheralexander.org/booklets/russian/archbishop_ioasaf_skorodumov.htm (in Russian))

III. ARCHBISHOP JOHN OF SAN FRANCISCO

Early Years

Our holy Father John was born on 4 June 1896 in the village of Adamovka in the province of Kharkov in Southern Russia. His father Boris Ivanovich was a marshal of the nobility in a region of Kharkov, and his uncle - rector of the University of Kiev. His paternal ancestors were of Serbian extraction. One of them, Saint John, Metropolitan of Tobolsk, was an ascetic of holy life, a missionary, and a spiritual writer. Saint John of Tobolsk lived in the first half of the 18th century and was glorified in 1916. His glorification was the last celebrated during the reign of the Tsar Martyr Nicholas. His mother was called Glaphira Mikhailovna. His relationship with his parents was always excellent.

Throughout his youth, Michael was sickly and ate very little. He was a quiet child, very polite and deeply religious. His sister recalls that it was very easy for his parents to raise him. Ruminating about his future during his youth, he could not make a definite decision as to a career, being unsure as to whether he should dedicate himself to military or civil service. He only knew that his future life would be guided by an insuperable desire to stand up for the Truth, which was nurtured in him by his parents. He was inspired by the examples of those people who gave their lives for the Truth. As he later wrote: "From the first days when I began to become aware of myself, I wished to serve righteousness and truth. My parents kindled in me a striving to stand unwaveringly for the truth, and my soul was captivated by the example of those who had given their lives for it." When he played he would dress his play soldiers as monks, collect icons and religious books and enjoyed reading about the lives of the Saints. At night he would stand praying for long periods. Because he was the eldest of five siblings, it was he who knew the lives of the Saints very well and became their first teacher of the Faith. So much did he impress his teacher, who was a Frenchwoman and Catholic, that she was baptized into the Orthodox Church.

At the age of 11 Michael's parents sent him to the Military Academy in Poltava. There he met the Bishop of Poltava, Theophan, a much loved hierarch, who influenced him greatly. Michael was an exemplary student, but he disliked two subjects: gymnastics and dancing. He was well liked at the academy, but nevertheless felt he should choose a different path. This idea was especially furthered by contact with the well known religious instructor at the academy, Archpriest Sergei Chetverikov, author of books about Saint Paisius Velichkovsky and the Holy Optina Elders, and with the rector of the local seminary, Archimandrite Varlaam.

Once, while marching with the other cadets in a military parade past the cathedral, Michael (who was 13 at the time) turned and made the sign of the cross.

His classmates mocked him, and the officers decided to punish him. However Prince Constantine, who was a benefactor of the school, told them not to punish him, for by his action he had demonstrated profound and healthy religious feelings.

Michael's holiness so impressed his French Catholic governess, even at the age of fifteen, that she was converted to Holy Orthodoxy. He helped her to prepare for Baptism and taught her how to pray.

In 1914, he graduated from the military academy and wished to continue his studies at the Theological School of Kiev. However, his parents insisted that he go to law school and Michael obeyed them. Following the desire of his parents, he entered law school in Kharkov. He was a naturally gifted student but spent more time reading Lives of Saints than attending academic lectures. "While studying the worldly sciences," he wrote, "I went all the more deeply into the study of the science of sciences, into the study of the spiritual life."

The day of Michael Maximovitch's graduation from the military academy coincided with that of Archbishop Anthony's (Khrapovitsky) investiture to the cathedra of the See of Kharkov. This renowned hierarch and theologian was the main advocate of the restoration of the patriarchate in Russia, subsequently the Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich, and finally the First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. Throughout his life this Archpastor inspired the church-oriented academic youth in all matters spiritual, thanks to his principal attribute - his sincere love for them. Having heard about young Michael Maximovitch, of whom many spoke in church circles, Archbishop Anthony desired to meet him. It was in Kharkov that Archbishop Anthony became Saint John's spiritual guide. This relationship continued throughout Archbishop Anthony's life.

A great impression was made upon Michael by Bishop Barnabas (subsequently the Patriarch of Serbia) during his visit to Kharkov. The young Serbian bishop, who was warmly greeted by Archbishop Anthony, related to him the suffering of the Serbian people under the Turkish Yoke. This was in January 1917, before the revolution, when the Serbs, who were battling against Germany, Austria and Turkey, had almost no territory that was free of enemy occupation. Through the inspiration of Archbishop Anthony the response of the Russian people in support of the Serbs was unanimous. In this example, Michael recognized the universal significance of the Church and the duty of a bishop to respond to the needs of all Orthodox people. In turn, Bishop Barnabas, upon becoming Patriarch, was particularly hospitable and helpful to the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

When not studying, he spent all of his free time reading spiritual literature, especially favoring the lives of the saints. "While studying the worldly sciences," said the Saint, "I delved all the more into the study of the Science of sciences, into the study of the spiritual life." Visiting the monastery in which Archbishop Anthony

lived, Michael had the opportunity to pray at the tomb of an ascetic of the first half of the 18th century, Archbishop Meletius Leontievich, a deeply revered but not yet glorified righteous one. The soul of the young saint was pierced by a thirst to obtain the true goal and path of life in Christ.

Michael graduated from Kharkov Law School in 1918. The revolution had begun, and under its influence the Kharkov diocesan council was decided to take down the silver bell of the church and melt it. However, Michael, together with a few others, was opposed, and arrests began. His parents told him to leave and hide but Michael told them: "There does not exist a place where one can hide from the will of God and without the will of God nothing happens, not even one strand of hair can fall from our heads". So he was imprisoned. A month later he was set free. Then he was re-arrested. Finally, after determining that he did not care whether he was in freedom or in prison, they discharged him.

Emigration

In 1921, during the Civil War, his whole family emigrated to Yugoslavia, where Michael studied at the theological school in Belgrade University. To pay for his upkeep, he sold newspapers. He graduated in 1925. During his last year, Michael was tonsured a reader in Belgrade by Metropolitan Anthony, who also in 1926 tonsured him a monk in the Milkovo Monastery giving him the name John in honor of his distant relative, the recently glorified Saint John of Tobolsk. Shortly thereafter he was ordained hierodeacon. On the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, the young monastic became a hieromonk.

He became a religious instructor at the Serbian State High School, and in 1929 - an instructor in the Serbian Seminary of the Holy Apostle John the Theologian in the city of Bitol - part of the Ochrid Diocese. There he lived a truly ascetic life. He never slept in a bed and after praying long hours at night, he would fall asleep sitting or kneeling on the ground in front of his icons. This ascetic feat he continued for the rest of his life, bringing his body "into subjection" according to the holy Apostle Paul, "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (I Corinthians 9:27). He fasted strictly, and celebrated the liturgy every day, a practice he continued for the rest of his life. He even celebrated the liturgy for the Greeks in the region, who loved him very much.

The local bishop, the famous Nicholas Velimirovich, valued and loved the young hieromonk John. Upon leaving the seminary once, he turned to a small group of seminarians and said, "Children, listen to Fr. John. He is an Angel of God in the image of a man." And he would say: "If you wish to see a living saint, go to Father John." The seminarians themselves were convinced that Saint John truly lived an angelic life.

His patience and humility were similar to the patience and humility of the great ascetic and desert dwellers. He relived the events of the Holy Gospel as if they were taking place before his eyes. He always knew the chapter where to find an event and, when needed, could always quote a given verse. He knew the character and details of every student, so that at any moment he could assess what a student knew or did not know. Saint John had a special gift of God: an unusually good memory. Consequently, such assessments of his students could be made without referring to any previous records or notes. Mutual love bound Saint John and the seminarians together. For them he was the incarnation of all of the Christian virtues. They did not see any shortcomings in him, not even in his speech (Saint John had a slight stammer). There was no problem, personal or social, which he could not solve quickly. There was not a question for which he could not find an answer. His answer was always concise, clear, complete, and exhaustive because he was truly an educated man. His education, his wisdom, was based on the most stable foundation, the Fear of God. The Saint prayed zealously for his seminarians. Each night he would make his rounds, checking everyone; adjusting one's pillow, another's blanket. Upon leaving the room he blessed the slumberer with the sign of the cross.

During the first week of Great Lent, Saint John ate nothing more than one prosphora a day, the same during Passion Week. When Great Saturday came his body was completely exhausted. But on the Day of the Holy Resurrection of the Lord he was revived, his strength returned. At Paschal Matins he triumphantly exclaimed, Christ is Risen! as if Christ resurrected specifically on that holy night. His face shone. The Paschal joy which the Saint radiated was imparted to everyone in the church. Anyone who was ever in church with Saint John at Pascha experienced this.

In 1934 Fr. John was elected to the episcopate. A woman who knew him recounts that she met him on a tram and asked him what had brought him to Belgrade. He answered that he came to Belgrade because he had mistakenly received a notice in place of another hieromonk John, who was to be made a bishop. When she saw him again the next day, he told her that the mistake was worse than he had expected, because it turned out that they had decided to consecrate him a bishop. When he objected, pointing out his stammer, he was told that the Prophet Moses had the same difficulty.

Bishop of Shanghai

The consecration took place on May 28, 1934. Saint John was the last bishop to be consecrated by Metropolitan Anthony. "This man," said the metropolitan, "who appears weak is, in fact, a miracle of ascetic steadfastness and determination in our time of universal spiritual weakening."

On November 21, 1934, the feast of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple, he arrived in Shanghai. Many people gathered on the dockside to meet their

new archpastor. The completion of a large cathedral, as well as the resolution of an existing jurisdictional conflict awaited him. Saint John quickly quelled this conflict and, in time, established relations with the Serbs, Greeks, and Ukrainians in his diocese. The Saint completed the construction of the huge cathedral in honor of the Icon of the Mother of God "The Surety of Sinners" and a three-storey house with a bell tower.

He took an active interest in the religious education of youth. He personally taught the Law of God to the upper classes of the Commercial Institute and always attended the examinations for the religious courses in all of the schools of Shanghai. He was the inspirer and leader in the construction of churches, a hospital, an asylum for the mentally ill, an orphanage, a home for the elderly, a community dining hall - in short, all of the social undertakings of Russian Shanghai. The Saint was one with his flock. He participated directly in the work of virtually all the emigre organizations.

However, while participating actively in such an array of worldly affairs, he was foreign to the world. From the first day of his arrival in Shanghai, the Saint, as before, served Divine Liturgy daily. No matter where he was, he was always present at Divine Services. Once, as a result of his continual standing, the Saint's foot was severely swollen and a group of physicians, fearing gangrene, prescribed immediate hospitalization. The Saint refused. Upon this, the Russian doctors informed the Parish Council, that they could not take any responsibility for the health and even the life of the patient. The members of the Parish Council, after extended requests and even threats to forcefully hospitalize him, compelled the Saint to agree, and he was sent to the hospital. That evening however, he left the hospital on his own and at six o'clock was serving the All Night Vigil as usual.

He performed all of the daily services completely and unabridged, so that, at Compline, five or more canons would be read, so as to honor all of the Saints. The Saint did not allow unnecessary conversations in the sanctuary and personally made sure that the servers behaved as they should, compiling for them a rule of conduct, to which he strictly, yet affectionately, constrained adherence. After the Liturgy Saint John remained in the sanctuary for two or three hours, concerning which he once commented: "How difficult it is to tear oneself from prayer and return to worldly affairs".

Vladyka always wore clothing of the cheapest Chinese fabric and often went barefoot, sometimes having given his sandals away to some poor man. He would eat once a day at eleven o'clock at night. During the first and last week of Great Lent he would eat nothing, and for the rest of the fast (as well as during the Christmas fast) he would only eat prosphoras.

Vladyka had an extraordinary memory. He never forgot prayer requests, or names, faces and family circumstances. He always sent his spiritual children cards on their namesdays.

He never went visiting rich people. Instead, he would appear unexpectedly to those in need, in any weather and at the most unusual hours. Daily he visited the sick with the Holy Gifts. Often he was seen, at some late hour, in inclement weather, walking on the streets of Shanghai with his bishop's staff in hand and his rassa blowing in the wind.

Once in Shanghai Vladyka John was asked to the bed of a dying child, whose case had been called hopeless by the physicians. Entering the apartment, Vladyka John went straight to the room in which the sick boy lay, although no one had managed yet to show him where this was. Without examining the child, Vladyka immediately 'fell down' in front of the icon in the corner, which was very characteristic of him, and prayed for a long time. Then, assuring the relatives that the child would recover, he quickly left. And in fact the child became better towards morning and he soon recovered, so that a physician was no longer needed.

Vladyka John loved to visit the sick and if the condition of a patient would become critical, he would go to him at any hour of the day or night to pray at his bedside. There were cases when patients would cry out to Vladyka in the middle of the night from the hospital beds, and from the end of the city Vladyka John would come without even being called by phone.

Vladyka visited the prison also, and celebrated the Divine Liturgy for the convicts on a primitive little table. But the most difficult task for a pastor is to visit the mentally ill and the possessed - and Vladyka sharply distinguished between the two. Outside Shanghai there was a mental hospital, and Vladyka alone had the spiritual power to visit these terribly sick people. He gave them Holy Communion, and they, surprisingly, received it peacefully and listened to him. They always looked forward to his visits and met him with joy.

The miracle-working power and clairvoyance of Saint John were well known in Shanghai. Once, during Bright Week, Saint John came to the Jewish hospital to visit the Orthodox patients there. Passing through one ward, he stopped in front of a screen, concealing the bed upon which an elderly Jewish woman lay dying. Her family members were awaiting her death nearby. The Saint raised a cross above the screen and loudly proclaimed: "Christ is Risen!" upon which the dying woman regained consciousness and asked for water. The Saint approached the nurse and said, "The patient wants to drink". The medical staff was stunned by the change which had taken place in one who only moments earlier was dying. Soon the woman recovered and was discharged from the hospital. Such incidents were numerous.

It so happened that Saint John was urgently called to administer Holy Communion to a dying man in the hospital. Having taken the Holy Gifts, the Saint headed there with another clergyman. When they arrived they saw a young man, about 20 years of age, playing on a harmonica. He had already recovered and was to leave the hospital shortly. The Saint called him over saying, "I want to give you Holy Communion right now". The young man immediately came up to him, confessed, and received Holy Communion. The amazed clergyman asked Saint John why he did not go to the one dying, but detained himself with an obviously healthy young man. The Saint answered simply, "He will die tonight, but the other, who is seriously ill, will live yet many years." That is precisely what came to pass. The Lord manifested similar miracles in Europe and America through His Saint.

Once Vladyka was called to the bedside of a man who had rabies. He was foaming at the mouth, but Vladyka determined to try and give him Communion. "If he receives It," he said, "he will live; if not, he will die." Carefully, he placed the Holy Gifts on the tongue of the sick man. However, he spat them out... Immediately Vladyka reverently caught the Gifts mixed with the man's spittle and swallowed them. The doctors and those standing around were horrified. "Now you will get rabies," they said. But Vladyka, turning to the Orthodox among them, said: "Shame on you! Have you forgotten that this is the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ?" He remained completely healthy...

A speech therapist called Anna was teaching the saint to pronounce the vowels correctly, because he had a problem with his lower jaw and could not correctly pronounce words. Due to his strict fasting, his constitution was exhausted and his lower jaw hung a lot. He always gave her \$20 after each visit. When he would start the fast, his defect would start again and she would visit him more often.

In 1945, she was seriously wounded during the war and she would ask him to come to the hospital to commune her. However, the weather was bad and stormy. It was between 10 and 11 p.m. and the doctors told her that he could not come because due to the war the hospital closed after sunset. They would inform the bishop in the morning.

"I was screaming, 'Come, Vladyka!' and suddenly the door of the hall opened and the Saint came in all wet from the rain. I touched him because I thought that it was his ghost. He smiled, communed me and I fell asleep. Later when I awoke, I told them that the Saint had come and communed me. They didn't believe me and told me that the hospital was closed after sunset and the door was shut." Another patient told them that the Saint had really come but they would not believe her either. And while the nurse who would not believe her was arranging her pillow, she found 20 dollars under it. When the Saint came he left her money for she had nothing during that time.

The years passed and when the saint had left for San Francisco, she went there, too, wishing the saint to chant and officiate at her funeral. And in fact, in 1968, she died on the evening of the Transfiguration from gas poisoning at her home. Another lady, Olga, dreamt that evening that the saint was inside the Church and was censing a coffin with Anna in it and chanting the funeral service very beautifully. In this way the saint fulfilled her wish. In the morning Olga learned that Anna had passed away that night.

Maria Alexandrovna Shakhmatova recorded how Vladyka founded an orphanage dedicated to St. Tikhon of Zadonsk. He called together some women and, with their help, began with eight little children and organized an orphanage which gave refuge to many hundreds of children in its fifteen-year existence in Shanghai. Vladyka himself gathered sickly and hungry children from the streets and from the dark alleys of Shanghai.

The conditions of life were terrible, and the needs of the children of those whose parents had fled from communism were oppressive. From the very beginning the young bishop summoned the merciful women of his parish and asked them to create a committee. He rented a house and opened a refuge for widows and the children of need parents. The children were often under-nourished, afflicted and terrified until the holy hierarch John came and took them into his refuge and school. Every child – and more than three thousand passed through the refuge – had a traumatic history.

For example, there was a boy there called Paul who had seen how the communists had killed his father and mother and cut them up into pieces in front of his eyes. He was like a caged animal, was frightened of everyone and trusted only his fists. He was brought to the refuge at just the moment when all the places were occupied. In view of this, Paul was so terrified that the women who were there decided that he was not normal and refused to accept him in case he frightened the other children. When Vladyka heard about him, he demanded that they accept the boy. On hearing their refusal, he immediately dropped everything and set off to see the boy. At that time they did not even know that the boy was Russian and spoke Russian – he only muttered and hissed like a beast in a cage. When Vladyka John arrived, he sat in front of the boy, who was trembling all over, and said to him: “I know that you have lost your father, but now you have found another – me,” and embraced him. This was said with such power that the boy began to sob and the gift of speech returned to him.

In the slums of Shanghai there were cases of dogs eating children who had been thrown into rubbish bins. When the newspapers reported this, Vladyka John told Shakhmatov to go and buy two bottles of Chinese vodka, which very much frightened her. But her fear was increased a hundredfold when he demanded that she accompany him to the very same slums in which everyone knew that they killed even adults. The fearless Vladyka insisted on going there, passing through dark

alleys in the worst regions. Shakhmatova remembers with horror how they went in the darkness of the night and met only drunkards, suspicious characters and howling cats and dogs. Holding the bottles in her hands, she anxiously followed Vladyka, and suddenly they heard the muttering of a drunkard and the weak squeak of a child coming from the nearby rubbish bin. When Vladyka hurriedly set off for the source of the squeak, the drunkard began to roar in a threatening manner. Then Vladyka said to Shakhmatova: "Give me a bottle." Lifting the bottle in one hand, and with the other pointing to the rubbish bin, Blessed John wordlessly suggested a swap. The bottle turned up in the hands of the drunkard, and in the hands of Shakhmatova – a saved girl. That night Vladyka returned to the refuge with two more children in his arms.

Once Shakhmatova had to go up into the bell-tower at night. One could get there only from the roof of the parish house. Opening the door onto the roof, she saw Blessed John standing in the wind in profound inner prayer and frozen, but blessing the house of his parishioners from above. She thought: "While the whole world sleeps, he stands on guard like Avvakum of old, guarding his flock by his zealous intercession before God, so that no evil should disperse his sheep." She withdrew, deeply shaken. In this way she learned what he was doing in the course of the long winter nights when all men had given themselves up to their usual rest in their comfortable beds. "Why is this necessary?" asked Shakhmatov. "Why is such self-sacrifice necessary when his presence is required everywhere?" And then she answered her own question: "He had an unquenchable love for God. He loved God as a Person, as his Father, as his closest Friend. All the time he thirsted to speak with Him, and the Lord heard him. This was not some kind of conscious self-sacrifice. He simply loved God so much that he never wanted to part from Him."

"Once, during the war," continues Maria Alexandrovna, "the refuge reached such a degree of poverty that strictly speaking there was nothing to feed the children with – and there was a minimum of 900 children in the refuge. The personnel were unhappy because Archbishop John continued to bring in more children, some of whom had parents. Consequently, we were therefore forced to feed yet more children. In the evening, when he came to us, exhausted, weak, frozen and silent, I could not restrain myself and told him everything that was on my soul. I said that we women could not longer put up with this, with seeing these young and hungry mouths without being in a position to give them anything to eat. I lost control over myself and in my annoyance raised my voice. I was not only complaining, I was full of anger that he was forcing us to suffer this. He sadly looked at me and asked: "What are you most in need of?" I replied immediately: 'Everything. If the worst comes to the worst – porridge. I have nothing to feed the children with in the morning.'

"Archbishop John looked sadly at me and went up to his room. Then she heard him praying and making prostrations – moreover, so fervently and loudly that the

neighbours even began to complain. Her conscience tormented her so much that night that she was not able to fall asleep. She began to nod off only towards the morning, and was woken by a knock at the door. On opening it she saw an unknown gentleman. He looked like an Englishman, and he informed her that he represented a certain grain company and they had some reserves of porridge grain left over, so he wanted to know she could find a use for it. 'After all,' he said, 'you have children here, so I have heard.' And they began to bring bags of porridge into the refuge. While this was continuing, with doors slamming, Archbishop John began slowly to go down the stairs. Maria Aleandrovna was hardly able to utter a word when she caught his glance. He didn't say a word, but with one meek look of his eyes he expressed his rebuke for her lack of faith. She wanted to fall down and kiss his feet, but he had already gone upstairs to continue praying – now already prayers of thanksgiving. The children were absolutely devoted to Vladyka in spite of his usual strictness. There were many stories of how the blessed one in some ineffable manner knew that a certain child was ill and came to comfort him and kiss him. Receiving revelations from God, he saved many people from impending woes, and sometimes appeared to those to whom he was especially necessary, even though such a physical transfer seemed impossible."

The parishioners of the Shanghai diocese had deep feelings of love and respect for their archpastor, as is evident from the following excerpts from a letter written by them to Metropolitan Meletius in 1943: "We, worldly people, laymen, cannot touch his (Saint John's) breadth of knowledge of theology, his erudition, his homilies, deeply penetrated with apostolic faith, pronounced almost daily and often printed. We, the people of Shanghai, will speak about what we see and feel in our multi-racial city from the day of arrival of our Bishop, that which we see with our sinful eyes and that which we feel with our Christian heart. From the day of his arrival the sorrowful phenomenon of the division of churches has ceased; the Orphanage of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk, which currently feeds, clothes, and educates 200 children, was built from nothing; gradually the condition of the alms house in the name of Saint Philaret the Merciful has improved; the sick in all Shanghai hospitals are visited by priests, are administered the Holy Mysteries on a timely basis and, in the event of death, even the homeless are buried with a proper funeral; the mentally ill, who are located in a hospital far from the city, are visited by him personally; those incarcerated in the prisons of the Settlement and the French Concession have the opportunity to pray in the place of their imprisonment during the Divine Liturgy and to receive Holy Communion monthly. He directs serious attention to the upbringing and education of the youth in a strictly Orthodox and patriotic spirit. In many of the non-Russian schools our children are now taught the Law of God. During all of the difficult moments in the life of our community we see him leading the way, defending us and our age-old Russian moral principles to the end. All of the sectarian organizations and heterodox confessions now understand that to combat such a pillar of the Orthodox Faith is very difficult. Our Bishop tirelessly visits the churches, hospitals, schools, prisons, civil and military organizations, always bringing with him

reassurance and faith. From the day of his arrival not one infirm person has been left without his prayer and personal visit. By the prayers of our Luminary many have received relief and health. He, like a torch, illuminates our sinfulness, like a pealing bell awakens our conscience, and calls our souls to the Christian struggle, calls to us, as the Good Pastor, so that for a minute we might be diverted from the earth, from worldly corruption, and lift up our eyes to heaven, from whence our help comes. He is the one, according to the words of Apostle Paul, who is an example: in word, in life, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity (I Timothy 4:12)."

His flock was not mistaken in giving such a great assessment of the work of its pastor. People truly felt in him a readiness to lay down his life for the flock. During the Japanese occupation, when two presidents of the Russian Emigration Committee were killed in succession and fear gripped the Russian colony, Saint John, despite the undoubted danger to himself, declared himself the temporary head of the Russian colony.

Vladyka and the Soviets

At the end of the war in 1945, increased pressure was put upon the Russian émigré clergy by the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate, with the aim of subordinating them to the new Patriarch Alexei I. In the Far East almost all of the hierarchs submitted themselves to the newly chosen Patriarch; they accepted Soviet passports and joined the patriarchate.

An eye-witness account of what took place is as follows. "The pressure on Bishop John of Shanghai from the Soviets began even before the end of the Second World War, when the hierarchs of the Church Abroad in Manchuria - Metropolitan Meletius, Archbishops Nestor and Demetrius and Bishop Juvenal sent letters to the Ruling Archbishop of Peking and China Victor and to Bishop John of Shanghai informing them that on July 26, 1945 they had recognized Patriarch Alexis of Moscow and All Russia, and suggesting that Archbishop Victor and Bishop John follow their example and submit to the new Moscow Patriarch as to the lawful head of the Russian Orthodox Church.

"Not having any communication with the Synod Abroad beyond the bounds of China because of the military actions, and not knowing the true situation of things in Europe, Bishop John wrote about the letter he had received from the hierarchs in Harbin to his superior, Archbishop Victor in Peking, advising him to do nothing with regard to recognizing the Patriarch before the re-establishment of links with the Synod Abroad, while for the sake of clarifying the question of the legality and canonical correctness or incorrectness of the choices of Patriarch Alexis Bishop John advised Archbishop Victor to send him a short greeting on the occasion of his consecration and wait to see what the result would be. In this way he aimed to clarify whether the new Patriarch was a successor in God of the reposed and always

recognized by the Church Abroad Patriarch Tikhon and the locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne Metropolitan Peter (of Krutitsa), or simply a continuer of the politics of the dead Soviet Patriarch Sergius.

“In expectation of a clarification of this question and for the sake of calming that part of the Russian colony in Shanghai that had become pro-Soviet and demanded the recognition of the Moscow Patriarch, Bishop John issued a resolution (ukaz № 650 dated September 6 / August 24, 1945) on the temporary commemoration of Patriarch Alexis during the Divine services instead of the until-then-existing commemoration of ‘the Orthodox Episcopate of the Russian Church’.”

A little earlier, on July 31, Bishop John had written to Archbishop Victor that he considered that “the raising of the name of the President of the Synod Abroad should be kept for the time being, since according to the 14th canon of the First-and-Second Canon of the Local Council [of Constantinople in 861] it is wrong willfully to cease commemorating the name of one’s metropolitan. But the raising of the name of the Patriarch... should necessarily, in accordance with your ukaz, be introduced throughout the diocese... At the given time no conditions of an ideological character have yet been imposed that would serve as a reason for any change in our ecclesiastical administration abroad. If unacceptable conditions are again imposed in the future, the preservation of the present order of ecclesiastical administration will become the task of that ecclesiastical authority which will manage to be created in dependence on external conditions.”

This form of expression indicated that Bishop John was ready to revoke his commemoration of the Moscow Patriarch if “unacceptable conditions of an ideological character” were to be imposed. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in this letter he *temporarily* recognized the canonicity of the Moscow Patriarch, declaring: “There is no canonical basis for such independence, since the *lawfulness of the recognized* – both by his own Local Church and by all the other Local Churches – *Patriarch is not in doubt*; and since communication with said ecclesiastical authority (i.e., the Patriarch) has now become possible, therefore the ukaz (of Patriarch Tikhon) of November 7, 1920 is not applicable.” In any case, in August Archbishop Victor sent a telegram to Patriarch Alexis asking for him and Bishop John to be received into his jurisdiction; and from that time Bishop John and his priests started to commemorate the patriarch.

However, Bishop John now began to be opposed by his flock. Thus when his priest, Fr. Peter tried to introduce the commemoration of the patriarch in the convent ruled by Abbess Adriana (later of San Francisco), she forbade him, and told him to go back to Bishop John and tell him that this was wrong.

At about this time, on September 28, Bishop John received a telegram from Metropolitan Anastasy in Geneva telling him that the Synod Abroad was

functioning, that the parents of Vladyka John were alive and living in Germany, and that he, the metropolitan, asked him to tell him about the situation of the Church in China. Bishop John immediately stopped commemorating the Soviet patriarch, and on September 29 he telegraphed Archbishop Victor that he had re-established contact with the Synod.

One of Bishop John's spiritual children tells how he repented of his brief commemoration of the Soviet patriarch every time he met another bishop, even down to the time he lived in the U.S.

"The next telegram came in the month of November from the United States from Archbishop Tikhon of Western America and San Francisco, in which Vladyka Tikhon informed him that Metropolitan Anastasy, Archbishops Vitaly, Joasaph, Jerome and he had come into contact with each other and asked Bishop John to be with them and not to recognize the Moscow Patriarchate.

"This was all that Bishop John had to know, and when, at the beginning of December, 1945 there arrived a letter from Archbishop Victor informing him that he recognized Patriarch Alexis, Bishop John categorically refused to accept the new Patriarch, in spite of terrible pressure, exhortations and threats."

"On the evening of January 15, 1946 Archbishop Victor flew into Shanghai on an aeroplane from Peking and declared that he not only recognized the Patriarch, but had also become a Soviet citizen, having taken a passport of the USSR."

"Archbishop Victor in vain tried to persuade Bishop John; he demanded and ordered him John to submit and recognize the Patriarch. Finally he came to the regular weekly meeting of the clergy, where he officially informed them of his move to the Soviet church, and demanded that the church servers follow his example, and, having left Bishop John to preside, left the session. After a word from Bishop John calling on the clergy to remain faithful to the Russian Church Abroad, the meeting passed a resolution suggested by him: to report to Metropolitan Anastasy on the faithfulness of the clergy to the Synod Abroad and ask for instructions.

"There was no reply from the Synod for a very long time, and in this period of about seven weeks terrible pressure was exerted on Bishop John from the Soviet authorities, Archbishop Victor, Metropolitan Nestor from Manchuria, from a large part of Russian society which had applied for Soviet passports, from clergy who had moved to that side, and from others. In writing and orally, in the press, in clubs and at meetings the Soviet side tried to prove that the election of the patriarch had been completely legal, in accordance with all the ecclesiastical canons, and suggested as proof the showing of a documentary film on the election of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

“Bishop John agreed to see this film, so as personally to see and check the whole procedure of the election, on condition that the film would be shown, not in the Soviet club, where all the Soviet pictures were being shown at the time, but in the hall of a certain theatre.

“Most of the Shanghai clergy came to the showing, including Mitre-bearing Protropriest N. Kolchev, who is now living in San Francisco, Fr. I. Wen and others.

“Before the beginning of the film, and without any warning, the orchestra began to play the Soviet hymn, and Bishop John immediately left the hall. The arrangers of the showing immediately rushed after the hierarch, and, having stopped him in the foyer, began to apologise and tried to persuade him to stay. Bishop John returned to the hall after the end of the hymn, and, having seen the film, declared that in the so-called election of the Patriarch that had been shown there was absolutely no legality, that the election had been conducted in accordance with the classic Soviet model, in which only one candidate was put forward, for whom the representative of every diocese without exception voted identically, reading out a stereotyped phrase, and in which there was nothing spiritual or canonical.

“This declaration by Bishop John still more enraged the Bolshevized circles, and the persecution of Vladyka and the clergy faithful to him intensified still more.

“On March 20, on the day of the patronal feast, Vladyka John was brought a telegram during the Liturgy. Since he never paid attention to anything extraneous whatsoever during the Divine services, Bishop John hid the telegram in his pocket without reading it, and opened it only after the service. In the telegram, which was signed by Metropolitan Anastasy, was written:

“‘I recognize the resolution of the clergy under your presidency as correct.’

“This moral support received from the head of the Russian Church Abroad gave fresh strength to the clergy that remained faithful in order to continue their defence of the Orthodox churches from the claims and encroachment of the Bolsheviks.

“In the struggle Vladyka John had no rest, he literally flew from church to church, visiting schools and social organizations and giving sermons in defence of the Synod Abroad, calling on Russian people to be faithful, driving out Soviet agitators from the Orthodox churches and White Russian organizations.

“In this period Vladyka John was subjected to especially strong pressure and threats from both Archbishop Victor and from Metropolitan Nestor, who was to be appointed Exarch of Patriarch Alexis in the Far East.

“Finally, on May 15, there arrived a telegram from Metropolitan Anastasy in

Munich raising Bishop John to the rank of Archbishop with his immediate subjection to the Hierarchical Synod. However, it was impossible to publicise this until the official decree was received from the Synod.

“On Friday, May 31, 1946, Archbishop Victor again flew into Shanghai, but this time, on his arrival, he was met by Soviet consular officials, and not by clergy and parishioners. On the same evening, Archbishop Victor proceeded in state to the cathedral surrounded by consular officials and newly enlisted komsomol members and occupied part of the cathedral residence with his suite. That evening the Soviets staged a demonstration, trying to drive Bishop John out of the cathedral and the cathedral residence.

“The next day, June 1, 1946, there arrived the long-awaited official decree [№ 108] on the raising of Bishop John to the rank of ruling Archbishop with immediate submission to the Synod.

“The new ruling archbishop told Archbishop Victor of his appointment and suggested that he leave the Cathedral House and leave the bounds of the Shanghai diocese.

“Archbishop Victor, in his turn, gave Archbishop John on June 15 a decree of the Moscow Patriarchate (№ 15 of June 13, 1946) on the appointment of Bishop Juvenal from Manchuria at the disposal of Archbishop Victor ‘to take the place of the see of Bishop John of Shanghai, who does not recognize the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate.’

“On June 16, 1946 this decree was published in the Soviet newspapers, and there came the time of open battle for the physical possession of the Cathedral, for the right to celebrate Divine services in it. Archbishop Victor banned our clergy (Fr. Hieromonk Modest, Fr. Medvedev, Fr. K. Zanevsky) from serving in the cathedral, while Vladyka John himself served daily and ordered them to serve with him, forbidding the Soviet priests from giving sermons and himself speaking for them, explaining to the worshippers why the Orthodox Church Abroad did not recognize the Moscow Patriarchate.”

On June 16 Archbishop John declared to the worshippers that he had received the ukaz removing him from administration of the Shanghai diocese, but would not be obeying it: “I will submit to this ukaz only if they prove to me from the Holy Scriptures and the law of any country that the breaking of oaths is a virtue while faithfulness to one’s oath is a serious sin.”

“Feeling that the balance was all the time shifting towards Archbishop John [four Shanghai priests join the MP, but 12 remained with Archbishop John], the Soviet side began to resort to threats, bringing in komsomol members and debauchees, and

once there was a serious threat that Archbishop John and other anti-communist leaders of the White Russian colony would be kidnapped and taken away by them onto a Soviet ship. The representatives of our youth, without the knowledge of Vladyka, organized a guard which always followed in his footsteps without him knowing it and guarded him.

“When Archbishop Victor ‘removed’ Archbishop John with his decree and banned him from serving, Vladyka John, instead of leaving the cathedral, went onto the ambon and told the worshippers that he was being removed by Archbishop Victor because he remained faithful to the oath he had given to the Synod Abroad, which they had both sworn. And he went on to serve the whole Liturgy in full!...

“In August, 1946 the Soviet clergy and Soviet citizens ceased to frequent the cathedral church, and the Chinese National Government and the city authorities recognized Archbishop John as the head of the Shanghai Diocese of the Orthodox Church Abroad.”

Jonah Seraphimovich Ma, a close disciple of Archbishop John who worked for the Chinese Nationalist government, testifies: “I advised Archbishop John to apply for Chinese citizenship; finally he agreed. After processing all of the necessary documents for the Archbishop, I personally delivered to Archbishop John the government’s approval. Only after the Archbishop acquired Chinese citizenship did the Soviets abandon their plans to capture Archbishop John and take over the cathedral in Shanghai. Our beloved Archbishop John and the cathedral were saved.”

On November 26, 1947, in defiance of the Soviets, the Chinese government in Nanking confirmed Bishop John as head of the Russian Spiritual Mission in China. However, in 1948, as the communists came closer to power, Archbishop John evacuated his flock of five thousand to the Philippines, from where he planned to take them to the United States. He himself left Shanghai on May 4, 1949.

At one time, Vladyka and his flock were living in an International Refugee Organization camp on the island of Tubabao. They lived there in tents under the most primitive circumstances. All of the children of the orphanage were brought there, as were the elderly and infirm. They lived under the continual threat of fierce hurricanes, since the island is located in the path of seasonal typhoons which pass through that part of the Pacific Ocean. During the twenty-seven-month existence of the Russian encampment, only once was the island threatened by a typhoon, which, however, changed its course and passed around the island. Every night Saint John would walk around the entire camp blessing it with the sign of the Cross on all four sides. When one Russian expressed his fear of typhoons to the local people, they replied that there was no reason to worry, because "your holy man blesses your camp from four directions every night." And indeed, while Vladyka was there, no typhoon struck the island. Later, however, when the people had departed for

various countries and the camp had been almost completely evacuated, a fierce typhoon swept over the camp and levelled it to the ground. Vladyka's refusal to join the Soviets undoubtedly saved both the physical and the spiritual lives of himself and his flock. Those ten thousand Russian Orthodox in Shanghai who accepted Soviet passports and returned to the "Fatherland" were not so fortunate...

As Vladyka was trying to resettle his flock from the Philippines to the United States, he was advised to fly to Washington D.C. to personally petition the authorities to change the immigration laws.

Bishop Constantine of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. John the Baptist told the following story about Vladyka in Washington: "Vladyka John had a meeting before the Senate, to appeal for the Russian refugees, and he had to be at that meeting at a certain hour. However, the pious Vladyka John said he would go to the meeting after he celebrated the Divine Liturgy. When the Liturgy was over, he went to the Senate on behalf of the Russian refugees, and he was late! When the little of stature holy man Vladyka John entered the Senate, they had already moved on to another agenda, since Vladyka John did not arrive on time. Everyone in the Senate stood up out of respect, for they had noticed a holy man of God had entered the room. They then wanted to hear his appeal on behalf of the Russian refugees in the Philippines. After Vladyka John gave his report before the Senate Committee, the refugees were able to come to America and live in San Francisco, California, under the supervision and direction of Vladyka John. All of the Russian refugees, through the intervention of Vladyka John, were miraculously able to come to America - including all the children in his orphanage, which he later re-established in San Francisco, and which became known as the St. Tikhon Orphanage."

[Archbishop of Western Europe](#)

In December, 195 the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Church Abroad decided: "To appoint Archbishop John of Shanghai as representative of the Synod of Bishops in Western Europe... To divide the Diocese of Western Europe into two dioceses, entrusting the principal, continental part of the previous diocese (France, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxebourg) to Arhcibhsop John, who should assume the title of Bishop of Brussels and Western Europe. The parishes in England and Holland are to be entrusted to Bishop Nathanael, who should assume the title of Bishop of Preston and The Hague."

In Western Europe Vladyka John's reputation for holiness spread - and not only among the Orthodox. In one of the Catholic churches of Paris, a priest strove to inspire his young people with these words: "You demand proofs; you say that now there are neither miracles nor saints. Why should I give you theoretical proofs, when today there walks in the streets of Paris a saint - St. John the Barefoot."

While in Europe, St. John collected information on a number of ancient Saints venerated in the West, but forgotten in the East. Upon his recommendation, their veneration was restored and their names recorded in the Church calendar. His spirituality and knowledge of languages attracted many French, Dutch and other Europeans to Orthodoxy. And in his striving to save as many people as possible, he sometimes practised great “economy” in the reception of clergy and laity from other jurisdictions of “World Orthodoxy”. These measures were controversial and not always successful; but they were always undertaken out of love for the fallen. Thus he celebrated the liturgy in French and Dutch as he had earlier in Greek, Chinese and English, and revived the use of the pre-schism Gallican Rite among French converts to Orthodoxy.

Again, he consecrated several new-calendarist bishops, all of whom left ROCOR for “World Orthodoxy” after his death: Bishop Theophilus (Ionescu) of Detroit and his Romanian new calendarists to the Romanian patriarchate (ROCOR defrocked him in 1972), Bishop John-Nectarius (Kovalevsky) of Saint-Denis and his French mission (following the Gallican rite) to the Romanian new calendar church, and Bishop Jacob (Akkerduik) of the Hague to the MP. These consecrations were not carried out because Vladyka approved of the new calendar. On the contrary, he rejected it and always used the old himself. However, for the sake of the salvation of the many, he exercised “economy” and allowed the use of the new calendar in temporarily, hoping that in time these parishioners would come to see the correctness of the old and adopt it.

One of his spiritual daughters, Zinaida Zouliem, who cared for him in France, recalls: “I met the Saint for the first time at his house in Versailles, a cell that was smaller than a small room, with small boxes with letters, a table, a sofa and a bag of dry prosphoras. He wore sandals or slippers and many times he was barefoot because he would give them to the poor. He did not wear socks no matter what the weather conditions were.” She met him in 1958 and her father had died in 1957. Before her father died he told her: “This evening a short monk in black visited me.” She wondered who this could possibly be...

Then, when she had met him, one day she was in his house thinking to herself, “What a pity! If I had known him then, when my father was sick, I would have prayed and he would have gotten well again.” Reading her thoughts, the Saint turned to her and told her, “You know, I visited your father when he was sick at the hospital.” And he opened his small notebook and found the name of her father, Basil Zouliem. “How was it possible for him to know my thoughts if he did not have the gift of foresight? Then I knew it was not the will of God for my father to live any longer.”

“Many times I wanted to ask him about many things but he was busy and at night when it would have been more convenient to ask him, I would forget the questions.

And while having his soup, he would whisper and I would hear everything I wanted to learn from the questions I had wanted to ask him. The Saint would answer them as if he had known them. When I learned that he would soon be leaving for San Francisco I became very sad, and while he was talking to us in Church, I was crying. He turned to me and told me, 'People that have the same goals and struggle for the achievement of the same thing, have unity of soul and do not feel the distance of separation, and the distance cannot become an obstacle to the spiritual union of people of a united soul.' I immediately calmed down. When he was praying at the Holy Altar the 'Uncreated Light' would engulf him and he would not step on the ground. He always sprinkled the Church with holy water, as well as the mail box where he dropped his letters himself, having crossed them first. Then he would walk barefooted in the snow or in the rain, to drop them off. When he departed to America and the letter box was changed with another new one, I was saddened and later when the Saint returned to France for a short while, I saw him take holy water and sprinkle the new mail box without me telling him anything."

One day as she was passing by the Church, she heard loud weeping. She continued towards the iconostasis, looked inside and saw the Saint in a kneeling position behind the Holy Altar crying loudly about the problems of others. Her soul could not endure his crying and she silently left the Church.

Before leaving for America, Vladyka had entrusted Zinaida with the administration of the free meals to the poor, and arranged for her to take money from the account of the Archbishop, a sum of twenty dollars every month for this purpose. One day he gave her as a gift of ten French francs. "I spent everything for that purpose," Zinaida said, "and in fact during that month I had many expenses and owed seventy dollars. I did not know what to do. I prayed to the Saint (because he was away in America) and I asked him to help me. I told him, 'I do what you asked me to, but now I have many problems, help me.'" And in the morning the mailman gave her a letter from the account of the Archbishop. She thought that it was the usual twenty dollars, but when she opened it she found seventy dollars, exactly what she owed. She thus went and paid off her debts and wrote a letter of thanks, and the following month it was the usual twenty dollars. The amount was sent by the Saint.

Before he left he placed her in charge of the care of an orphan, Vladimir. But partly due to the administration of the free meals and partly due to her aged mother and uncle, she had a nervous breakdown and she started asking the Saint to help her manage. "I'm going to give up," she would say. "I cannot take it anymore." That night she saw the Saint in her dream come to her house, but he only blessed her. In the morning the mailman brought her a parcel, a journal with the image of the Saint on it as she had seen it in her dream, and on the cover there was a note: "To Zinaida". She immediately became happy and was strengthened to continue her struggles.

Another time he saved her from certain death. One day while she was planning to go out, she looked outside her window and saw something like a small tube among some cars, and being overtaken by curiosity she got dressed to go down there to see it, to kick it. Then at that moment there was a knock at the door, she opened and it was the Saint. He came in, sat in the armchair for five minutes and left without saying anything to her. Then she went over to the window again and she saw policemen on the road carefully removing this strange thing. She quickly went down and learned that it was a bomb. She would have been killed if she had kicked it, had Saint John not delayed her.

A sick lady with a heart problem was wearing a badge with Saint John on it and one day she fainted in church. The chanter then crossed her with the badge and prayed to Saint John to make her well and she immediately recovered.

Zinaida describes how one day her mother cooked a meal, "vereniki", which is made with some sort of baked dough with cheese, and is commonly eaten in Russia and was intended for Bishop John. Her uncle saw it on the table and wanted some, but Zinaida took the vereniki to the saint. The saint ate very little of the food she brought to him but he did not touch the vereniki at all. Zinaida pressed him to eat some of it but he didn't, as he knew that her uncle had wanted it.

Once she thought of going to him to ask for a blessing to go to a monastery. That night she saw him in her dream and he would not bless her. While looking at the wall he told her, "For his sake stay" and then the wall opened and out came a baby. She started crying and woke up and in a few days the wife of her brother bore a child but within a month she got sick with tuberculosis and died and her brother gave her his son to raise him. That is why the Saint had answered her this way.

Once she was planning to go to America with her nephew but he had spent his money, since he thought that his aunt had enough money. But she did not have enough for the tickets. A certain archimandrite she knew had sent her a little money in memory of the beloved Bishop John. So they decided to go, but her nephew had spent his money, so she started praying to the Saint to help him. She said, "If you believe that this trip will be good for Philip, help us." That same day she received a note from the post office with 7,700 francs in her name, exactly the sum she needed for the tickets. She went to the post office and she was told that she could cash out the money immediately the same day. And she cashed it without even having her ID. "I thanked the Saint who always helps me," she said.

A Russian émigré family was at a railway station in Germany, preparing to board a train for Switzerland. Suddenly the mother, Maria Arsenyevna Morozova, saw Vladyka John in the distance. "We must get Vladyka John's blessing" she exclaimed. So they did. Later that day, the train was passing over a ravine in Switzerland. It came to a shuddering halt. What had happened? The first carriages had fallen off the

rails and into the ravine, but the carriage containing the émigré family was saved. The family attributed this to the prayers of St. John Maximovich...

Vladyka John, was about to begin a vigil. He saw that very few people were in church, and was agitated. Upon inquiring, he discovered that there was a gala ball that evening, and people were "keeping their vigil" there. He left the church (fully vested), and walked several blocks to the hall, walked out in the middle of the floor, and began the vigil right then and there! I am sure that nobody asked him to dance!

In Paris, a man was contemplating becoming a subdeacon. He asked Vladyka, who replied that he would ordain him in two weeks. During this time, he should pray, and be sure that he was willing to take on this obedience. The man's resolve began to weaken during the two weeks, and he had many doubts. He was a professional, and this could compromise his business. And he had many other thoughts... He finally decided, on the appointed day, to tell Vladyka that he had changed his mind. He walked in the altar. Vladyka (whose back was turned), suddenly shouted "He's here! he's here! Do you see him! There's his tail! Step on him! Step on him!" Then he turned to the erstwhile subdeacon-to-be. The man was confused. Vladyka explained to him that the devil was tempting him, then asked him what he wished to say to him. "Vladyka I want to be a subdeacon!" He later became a priest.

Vladyka was estranged from a man in his parish for some reason. This vexed him, and he grieved terribly. One day, during the liturgy, he left the altar (fully vested), sought out the man, and prostrated before him, asking forgiveness. The man was shocked and embarrassed. This was some spectacle! He begged Vladyka to get up, but he would not, until the man said that he forgave him. The man later repented, and admitted that the reason for the estrangement was entirely his fault. Vladyka's humility had melted the man's heart.

[Archbishop of San Francisco](#)

St. John arrived in his last Diocesan See once again on the Feast of the Entry of the Most Holy Theotokos into the Temple, November 21 / December 4, 1962. At first he came to assist the aging and infirm elder, Archbishop Tikhon, but after his repose on March 17/30, 1963, he became the ruling Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco. Again the Saint arrived to find an unfinished church, dedicated to the memory of the Mother of God, and once again, as in China, the Church was torn by discord.

St. John's first priority was to resume and complete the construction of the new Diocesan Cathedral of the Most-Holy Theotokos Joy of All Who Sorrow, which had been entirely halted due to a lack of funds and sharp disputes over the disappearance of over \$150,000 from the building fund. This time, the saint failed to reconcile the warring parties, and in May, 1963 he was summoned to a session of the

Synod in which his supporters among the bishops did participate. The discussions went on for four hours behind closed doors. Finally, it was decided by a majority of votes to remove him from San Francisco.

When Vladyka returned with this news to San Francisco, there was massive unrest and a petition with many signatures was sent to the Synod asking that their beloved archpastor not be removed. The opposing party also redoubled their efforts. In his report to the Synod of July 23, Vladyka John wrote: "There was a danger of massive fights, I tried to hold people back as far as I could, my presence restrained this zeal not according to reason, but to my profound sorrow everything that was done to establish peace in my flock in the course of four months was destroyed at one blow in one day." (p. 3). Metropolitan Anastasy telephoned Vladyka John and spoke with him for one hour, as a result of which conversation the temporary administration of the diocese was given back to Vladyka John for another six months.

But passions did not cool. On July 9 there was due to take place the re-election of the members of the parish council and the warden, but the members of the parish council who were against Vladyka were categorically against the elections, understanding that Vladyka John's supporters were almost twice the number of their own. The only way of keeping their places was to sue Vladyka for financial mismanagement. The court ordered that the building of the cathedral be stopped until the end of the trial.

Archbishop John was acquitted of financial mismanagement, and on August 13, the Hierarchical Council of the Russian Church Abroad decided to confirm him in the see of San Francisco. This affair, which rumbled on for years, caused the saint much pain. However, when asked who was to blame, he did not accuse any man, but simply said: the devil.

In 1964, construction of the largest church of the Russian Church Abroad in America, adorned with five golden domes, was essentially complete. The elevation of the magnificent crosses, the grandeur of which is visible when sailing in the San Francisco Bay, was preceded by a solemn procession (over a mile) with masses of people participating. The procession was almost canceled due to heavy rains, but the Saint, without any hesitation, led the procession with hymns into the drenched streets of the City. As the procession began the rain stopped. The crosses were blessed in front of the new cathedral, and when the main cross was elevated, the sun broke through and a dove lighted upon the brightly shining symbol of Christ. This visible triumph of the elevating of Orthodox crosses, symbols of Christ's victory, shining on the hills of a contemporary Babylon where satanism has been openly professed, was the crowning victory of the life of the Saint on earth.

To the end of his life, Vladyka continued visiting the sick, performing miracles, founding parishes and brotherhoods (notably the Brotherhood of St. Herman of

Alaska in Platina, California), and celebrating the Divine Liturgy daily. The Holy Disc was always full of the names of those he commemorated. For he would empty pieces of paper with names from every pocket, and every day more names would be added from the letters he received asking him to pray for them. At the Great Entrance of the Holy Gifts he would re-read the names and other new ones which they had given him in the meantime, which took a long time.

After the Divine Liturgy he would remain in the Church for hours. He would clean the Holy Chalice, the Holy Disc, the Holy Altar and the Holy Prothesis with great care. Meanwhile he would eat some prosphora and drink plenty of hot water. He would read the letters he received in the afternoon after the Divine Liturgy, having a trustworthy person open them just in case there was an urgent need in some letter. Often he would say the content of the letters before he read them, since he had the gift of foresight. His was a life full of spiritual struggle. Since he became a monk he never laid on a bed, but slept only one to two hours at night either standing or kneeling and bending down to the ground. And often while asleep for a short time, he would answer the phone normally as someone who happened to be with him in his room testified. While speaking the phone fell a little bit above his knees and he answered as if he could hear the caller while still sleeping.

Vladyka wrote many wonderful short articles and sermons, together with some longer works such as *The Origin of the Law of Succession in Russia* and *The Orthodox Veneration of the Mother of God*.

Repose and Glorification

On Saturday, June 19 / July 2, 1966, the Saint reposed in eternity. He had gone to Seattle with the miraculous Icon of the Kursk Mother of God, which he always carried in a leather pouch around his neck. When he had completed the Divine Liturgy and having prayed for three hours in the sanctuary, he went to serve a pannikhida for a parishioner. Then he went to rest in a private room provided for him. Suddenly, those accompanying the Archpastor heard the sound of someone falling to the floor. When they ran up the stairs they discovered him lying on the floor and already departing this world. They sat him up in an armchair before the Wonderworking Icon and the Saint peacefully reposed in the Lord. A noise was heard. At 3.50 Vladyka was founded dead on the floor in front of the Kursk icon.

His unembalmed body was flown to San Francisco. He was received by the clergy and an all-night vigil was performed in the cathedral which lasted for four hours, after which the Psalter was read over his body the whole night. Metropolitan Philaret wanted to be present at the funeral, but he had heart problems, so it was suggested that he go to San Francisco by train rather than by plane. As a result the funeral was delayed until the afternoon of July 7. However, this did not matter, because when Vladyka Philaret arrived at the Cathedral in San Francisco for the funeral, Vladyka John's body showed no sign of decay in spite of the hot weather. His hands were soft

and pliant. And all of this, despite the fact that nothing whatsoever was done to his body at the mortuary.

The atmosphere of the funeral was strikingly poignant and exaltedly prayerful. None of its participants shall ever forget it. Despite the deep sorrow of the countless admirers of Saint John, a kind of special joy predominated, enveloping all of the faithful. "Sleep now in peace!" cried Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Holy Trinity, who zealously loved him. "Sleep now in peace, O our dear, beloved Vladyka. Rest from your righteous works and struggles. Rest in peace until the General Resurrection."

Vladyka John was buried in the crypt of the cathedral, and it immediately became a place of pilgrimage for thousands of Orthodox Christians from around the world, and the scene of countless miracles.

One out of very many took place in London, England. A little Orthodox girl called Diamond was playing in a park. Suddenly a large metal object was moved from its place and threatened to fall on her and kill or injure her. But then a man dressed in white appeared to her and pulled her away just in time. Then he disappeared. On returning home Diamond related the incident to her mother. She took her to the icon corner, showed her all the icons and asked her to point to the person who helped her in the park. She immediately pointed to the icon of St. John Maximovich...

In the autumn of 1993, the Synod of Bishops of America with the presiding Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco, having performed a pannikhida at the tomb of the saint, decided to re-open it. When the sepulchre cover was removed, the metal coffin was found to be in a poor state of preservation due to moisture. Rust had eaten through the coffin and the cover was rusted tightly shut. Inside, the Gospel Book over the remains had virtually disintegrated, the blessing cross in the Archbishop's hand was corroded, an icon was heavily deteriorated, and the hierarchical vestments were mildewed and falling apart. However, the hierarchs immediately noticed the saint's incorrupt hands. And when they uncovered his face, they discovered that his face was also incorrupt. His skin was white and soft, and upon being lifted out his body was found to be very light due to dehydration but was totally intact. Those who came forward to venerate the relics discovered that they exuded a sweet fragrance. Exposure of a body to the amount of moisture that deteriorated metal and other objects would surely have caused rapid decomposition. There is thus no basis to argue that Archbishop John's body had undergone some sort of mummification. Everyone experienced a feeling of heavenly peace and Divine Grace in front of the saint of God. It was decided on July 2 of the following year, 1994, to officially proclaim him a Saint.

Every year on the July 2, a Divine Liturgy is performed and crowds of people come to his chapel. In the centre is the sepulchre which is covered with the saint's

mandya (cape) and around it are candelabras with lit candles. At the head of the sepulchre is the saint's mitre and his shepherd's staff is at the foot of the sepulchre. There is a lectern with the Psalter that is read by the faithful when they go to the Saint to tell him their problems. On another lectern close by is the icon of the Entrance of the Theotokos which was dedicated by a family from China to the Saint. The woman along with her mother had made a vow to donate this icon, their heirloom, to the Saint at his tomb, out of gratitude for his help. This icon had special meaning for the Saint, without them knowing about it. He had a special love for the feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos, and on that feastday he was tonsured, was consecrated to the episcopate and arrived in San Francisco as a bishop. Now this woman married she went to live in San Francisco, where she bore a son, John. Later, when he was enlisted in the army and was to be sent to the war in Vietnam, having great reverence for St. John, she went to his tomb and left a picture he had of the Saint on his bishop's mitre that is on the Sepulchre. A few days later he took it back as a blessing, put it in the pocket of his uniform on the side of his heart and went to war. From there he wrote to his mother that the Saint had protected him and no bullets had hit him. Once his unit was captured and he got away. Another time, a bomb fell close to them, the others were wounded seriously but he remained unharmed...

After his blessed repose, just as during his life, St. John continues to perform various miracles and healings for those who turn to him with faith. People, during difficult moments in their lives, when no earthly power is capable of helping, have beseeched his intercession before the Lord. Letters, as well as prayer lists, have been placed under the miter on the tomb of the Saint and many have received the help for which they had hoped. He appears to many sick people in hospitals and heals them. The holy oil from his tomb has cured many people.

The Saint wants us to continue praying and not to forget to commemorate the reposed, as testified from an occurrence when he appeared to someone in a dream, telling him, "Pray for the reposed." He also appeared to a deacon and told him that, "I am very happy that you pray for the sick, always pray and visit the sick." To a certain lady who saw him in her dream, he told her, "Tell the people that even though I have died I am still alive."

TROPARION, TONE 6 "Glorious apostle to an age of coldness and unbelief, invested with the grace-filled power of the saints of old, divinely-illuminated seer of heavenly mysteries,, feeder of orphans, hope of the hopeless, thou didst enkindle on earth the fire of love for Christ upon the dark eve of the day of judgment; pray now that this sacred flame may also rise from our hearts."

(Sources: Maria Alexandrovna Shakhmatov, *Memoirs*; Protopriest Valery Lukianov, *Man of God: Saint John of San Francisco*, Redding, Ca: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1991; Archpriest Peter Perekrestov, *Man of God - Archbishop John*

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IV. ARCHBISHOP ANDREW OF ROCKLAND

Early Years

Archbishop Andrew, in the world Adrian Rymarenko, was born in the town of Romny, Poltava province, Ukraine on March 15, 1893. As he said during his Address on the day of his ordination to the episcopate:-

“I grew up in a pious family... I was surrounded by that Orthodox way of life which for generations had been created by Holy Russia. In our family, life proceeded according to the church calendar, according to the yearly church circle. Feast days were as it were the signposts of life. At home there were constant Divine services, and not only molebens, but all-night vigils also.

“... When I remember those years there inevitably rises before me an unforgettable picture: early morning, it's still dark. I have only just woken up and I see in front of the icons, half-illuminated by a lampadka, my mother. She prays for a long time. But a still stronger impression was made on me by the early-morning Divine services, to which our mother often took us and to which we went no matter what the weather, autumn or winter! After these Divine services one always felt a kind of extraordinary inspiration, a kind of quiet joy.

“Our family was wealthy. My father was a major industrialist and factory owner. And the religious outlook with which our life was penetrated was naturally reflected in deeds also: we participated in the building of churches, set out tables with food for poor people, sent donations to prisons, hospitals, work-houses.

“Of course, there were also sorrows, and illnesses, and deaths. But they also were accepted in the light of Christ. The awareness that ‘Christ is risen, and the life of man will be in the Resurrection of Christ’ helped us to bear our misfortunes and reverses. Everything was experienced lightly and joyfully, without the strains so characteristic of many people.

“This feeling of joy, this Christian way of life, was characteristic not only of our family, but also of the society which surrounded us.

“Years passed. My childhood and adolescence flashed by. I finished my studies at the Real School.

“My life changed sharply. I entered the St. Petersburg Polytechnical Institute in the economics section and arrived in St. Petersburg.

“At first Petersburg stunned and depressed me. I fell into the company of people who were completely foreign to me in spirit and mood.

“After the revolution of 1905, in place of the hopes and agitations there came disillusionment and desolation. People became as it were closed in on themselves. They were occupied with empty things, with little egoistic interests, visits, concerts, the theatre. In human relations, dryness and formality reigned.

“And I, coming up against this cold alienation, this desolation, for the first time experienced a feeling close, if not to despair, then to despondency, and my soul cried out: ‘I cannot’. Why did my soul cry out?

“I was well provided for, I was studying in a fine institute. I had excellent professors who gave me valuable knowledge, and there opened up in front of me wide horizons of science and life.

“Why was my soul disturbed? Why did this cry burst out – ‘I cannot’? And what precisely did it refer to?

“I felt that I could not live as people around me were living. I felt that I was lacking that life, that Orthodox way of life, which had surrounded me in my childhood and youth, that lightness of heart which I felt. I had the impression that I had been deprived of the air which I had breathed.

“I had to have life. And I began to seek...

“Once I chanced on the lectures on Dostoyevsky of Professor Tugan-Baranovsky. In examining the works of Dostoyevsky, Tugan-Baranovsky revealed what takes place in the human soul. He opened up those sides of life that I had somehow not recognized earlier. He showed me that horror which seizes a man who has pushed God away from himself, those thrashings around and that torment that a man experiences in seeking *Him*.

“In his works Dostoyevsky on the one hand portrays a whole gallery of characters who consider themselves Christians but who live in paganism, by their own reason, without *God*, in the power of their own lusts. On the other hand, Dostoyevsky shows a world of people living in Christ and incarnating *Holy Rus’* in themselves. He shows the radiant face of Alyosha, who imbibes the source of his life from the Elder Zosima, from Christ. And I understood that my place was near Alyosha, near the Elder. And only with his support would I have the strength to swim across the sea of life.

“Then I began to look for faithful ways. With the help of the same Tugan-Baranovsky, I became acquainted with a Christian student group. But this group did not satisfy me. It was inter-confessional. But I, raised from childhood in the conditions of the Orthodox way of life, needed precisely the confessional way; I

needed the Sacraments, the feeling of sanctification, prayer.

“All this was given to me by Archpriest George Yegorov, who was dear to me, a teacher in the Smolny Institute and many other educational institutions in Petersburg. He became the leader of a group of students who had left the Christian student group. I spent five years in his ‘school’, where there were twenty-five of us, and for me there was opened up the elemental reality of the life of Christ’s Church, by which Holy Russia had lived. I understood that the Divine services are not merely a ritual, but that in them is revealed the dogmas of faith...

“The examination and study of the works of the Fathers of the Church and the Patristic writings revealed to me the paths of life.

“When I had gone through the whole course taught by Fr. John, I had literally come back to life. I sensed the elemental power of Orthodoxy, I sensed that air of life which it gave. I understood in what this life consisted. I came to know the freedom of conscience which we receive through the Sacrament of Repentance.”

The future archbishop married Eugenia Grigorievna, and had two sons, Seraphim and Sergius.

Optina and the Priesthood

“After this preparation,” continues Archbishop Andrew, “I came, in fact, upon an Elder, Fr. Nectarius, disciple of the great Elder Ambrose of Optina, who was portrayed by Dostoyevsky in the image of the Elder Zosima. Elder Nectarius showed me my path, the path of pastoral service, and prepared me for it with the help of his disciple, Fr. Vincent. He taught me that the confession of faith must be in godliness. The Divine must enter into every aspect of our life, personal, family and public.”

He came to Optina for the first time in 1921, and met Elder Anatolius the Younger. “Eugenia Grigorievna had gone to him earlier. She told him all about our life, he blessed our marriage [and became godfather to their elder son] and spoke about my priesthood. I also arrived in Optina from Romny on June 26, 1921 to resolve all these questions. At that time Optina was still full of life. There were masses of pilgrims in spite of the fact that it was already a revolutionary time. My journey was exceptionally difficult, I will not write about it, but I spoke about the difficulties only so as to show how I was glad to meet the Elder.

“I arrived at Optina on the day of SS. Peter and Paul at 6 o’clock in the morning, and stayed at the guest-house with the wonderful Monk Theodulus. He told Fr. Eustignius, Fr. Anatolius’ cell-attendant, that I had come. Batyushka immediately sent for me and blessed me to come to him after the Liturgy. Vladyka Micah celebrated the Liturgy. The service in the church of the Entrance was triumphant,

and after the service I immediately went to Batyushka. There was a whole crowd of people around Batyushka's house. They were mainly nuns. I was immediately let through and went to the Elder... He was friendly and affectionate. In one moment I completely forgot about what I had only just seen: through his questions the whole of my life was handed over to him. The conversation was mainly about my inner life. We talked about my pastorship. Feeling my unworthiness, I asked the Elder to forbid me to think of the priesthood, to which he, just like Elder Nectarius later, said to me: 'Accept the priesthood without fail, otherwise you will suffer.' When Batyushka asked me about my life, he suddenly said to me: 'Go to the holy things in the holy corner.' There he began to read the prayers of confession, and I thought that I would do confession, but Batyushka summarized everything that I had said, I confirmed my sinfulness, and he read the prayer of absolution. This was for me an unexpected prayer, I felt that I was reborn. Batyushka blessed me to receive Holy Unction. At first I was sent to Fr. Hieromonk Palladius, but soon a nun came to me and Elder Fr. Anatolius again called me. Several people had gathered around him, and he gave Holy Unction to us all.

"After this I went several times for talks with him, but, you know, this was fifty years ago. I can only say that Batyushka Anatolius, like Elder Dositheus and Monk Fr. Vincent, opened for me a new world, the world of the true man. I understood what the heart is, what the breath of life is. The Lord allowed me to see what I had once seen in my life."

On October 14, 1921 Adrian was ordained to the diaconate, and three days later - to the priesthood with the blessing of Elder Anatolius. He was appointed to the church of St. Alexander Nevsky in Romny.

"And so in 1921 my pastoral activity began in my native Romny. It was a terrible time. The country was turned upside down by revolution and civil war. People were lost and shaken. Many perished, many were destroyed. Many returned to their ashes poor and homeless. They came to complete despair. And everywhere one heard the cry 'help!' They had to be helped: to be given food and drink and clothing. They had to be consoled and instructed; human souls had to be saved."

"A month before his death Batyushka Fr. Anatolius (I was already a priest then, it seems this was in 1922) wrote to Eugenia Grigoryevna asking her to come quickly to Optina, otherwise she would be sorry. At that time we had no money. Eugenia Grigoryevna sold the diamond ring on her hand and went to Optina.

"It was August, and Batyushka had died on July 30. Eugenia Grigoryevna arrived on the ninth day after Batyushka's death. Thanks to the fact that she went to Optina, we passed by inheritance from Fr. Anatolius to Elder Nectarius, who until the death of Fr. Anatolius was only a monastic spiritual father."

This was when Fr. Adrian's life under the guidance of Elder Nectarius began. It lasted until the elder's repose in 1928. Shortly before his repose, the elder said to Matushka Eugenia: "Let Batiushka Fr. Adrian pray to the Lord that He incline his heart toward some Orthodox bishop and ask him about everything; now it is necessary to search for bishops." For Elder Nectarius rejected Metropolitan Sergius and his uncanonical hierarchy. Therefore he knew that Fr. Adrian would have difficulty in finding a true bishop...

"My pastoral activity was successful. And it passed under the guidance of Elder Nectarius. All this time my communion with him did not cease. This communion was in writing and in person. I often went to Optina Desert, and then to Kholmische, where batyushka was in exile. The Elder resolved all my questions and perplexities that arose in my pastoral activity. And Batyushka then died [in May, 1928] under my epitachelion. Fr. Vincent lived for three years with me in Romny. He was a close disciple of the Elder, and I constantly took counsel with him.

"After a time, however, the Bolsheviks understood the danger that my pastoral activity presented for them. I was deprived of my flock [his church had been closed in 1926] and exiled to Kiev, under surveillance.

"There it was difficult for me at first, but then I became close to a group of outstanding Kiev pastor-ascetics, and they became my instructors and friends. Now before my eyes there stand my great teachers and confidants – Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Prince Abashidze), Bishop Nicholas, the vicar of Saratov, Fr. Michael Yedlinsky, Fr. Alexander Glagolev, Fr. Eugene Kapralov, Protopresbyter Nicholas Gross, Fr. Nicholas Stepenko, Fr. Constantine Steshenko... Their activity and battle for human souls took place during the frightful time of the revelling of the atheists, against a background of demonic carnivals, in the heat of persecutions against the Church and believers, of massive arrests and executions. And all of them gave up their lives for what was already in my heart – for the *quietness* which I experienced in childhood, for inner life, for establishment in the faith, for the Orthodox way of life, for Holy Rus'.

"With these clergy there went to prison, exile and death thousands of their flocks, who wanted to live in God and with God. On my shoulders lay the heavy responsibility of continuing the work of the martyred ascetics..."

Vera

"Fr. Adrian had dedicated, selfless people who were close to him, and who helped in that Christian work of charity. They also were watched by the all-seeing system of Soviet informers.

"Among these devoted workers for God and neighbour were two spinster sisters who were always there when needed. They were indispensable, did a huge amount

of work, and were very quiet. They accomplished much in miraculous ways, for their energy came from Christ. Without these two holy souls Fr. Adrian would have been helpless – they were always reliable and long-suffering, as true handmaidens of the Lord.

“One day the older sister became seriously ill. Fr. Adrian was too busy to pay much attention to it and hoped it would pass, when suddenly she died. The younger sister, Vera, was dumbfounded. Her death was so quick and unexpected and caught her by such surprise that at first she was in a state of shock. Then the awful truth came up: what will happen? How will she survive? She rushed to her spiritual father-pastor, actually the only person the sisters lived for. All out of breath she swung his door open and cried out, ‘She’s dead! Do you hear? She’s dead!’

“Fr. Adrian was aghast. He never imagined that these pillars – who held him up and who, so to speak, were like the pastoral arms with which he was carrying out his gigantic parish work – would collapse. His heart sank. Before him was Vera who, in her grief, was in a state of shock too deep for her to handle, and he froze in silence. He went inside his heart, seeking support from God, but did not expect what was to follow.

“As he told us years later, after a brief moment she suddenly leapt on him like a tigress. The Christian Vera collapsed. He saw a giant fall! She stopped there in the open door, staring at him with glassy, hateful eyes, and blurted out a monstrous monologue that went something like this.

“‘Why would He take her away, knowing full well how she’s needed to do His work? We were selflessly working for Him all these years, our whole lives were given over to Him! We had no private existence, no peace, no comfort all these long, painful years! We actually had no life, no joy, not a minute to ourselves!’

“She paused to take a breath. Her skinny body was trembling. She was seized with wrath.

“‘Do you hear, you pious pastor of a dead and doomed group of losers? Your pitiable flock will drop dead as she did and stink so badly you won’t even be able to come close to them! He is not only unkind and unmerciful, He is evil, for He enjoys it when His devoted bugs, His self-enslaved idiots suffer and writhe in pain before Him in agony while serving Him!’

“‘Be quiet!’ cried Fr. Adrian. ‘This is blasphemy! It is sin that is coming out of your mouth!’

“‘No, my dear tovarishch [comrade] Rymarenko! Ha ha! Go on! Bring her back to life! See if He will hear you! Will He hear you??!!’

“She gave a nervous-sounding laugh and burst into tears.

“‘Why,’ she continued, ‘why couldn’t He be more human? We all are! It’s too much! I give up! The Soviets are right – there is no God! It’s all wishful thinking, all a trick to keep us going in meaningless circles until we drop dead. Besides, look whom He is helping to destroy us – His own enemies! Where is His logic? The Bolsheviks make more sense!’

“She paused and drew closer to him with her wild eyes wide open in utter despair, waiting for him to say something. But he was silent. She waited. Silence.

“Then she wiped her eyes with a hopeless gesture and said calmly, ‘And now we will have to bury her. How – in this weather, with no cart, and not even the right to bury her in our own cemetery?... Until she’ll stink... she will stink! That’s God’s gratitude to us!’

“She slowly turned around without looking at him, lowered her head and left, leaving her sorrow and despair lingering in the room.

“It was true. Burials at that time were illegal. Besides, it was too far to walk to the cemetery. It was wet – the snow was melting, as it was early spring, and slush and mud were everywhere and almost impenetrable. Yet it had to be done, and in such a way that no one would see it – and there was no one who could help them.

“But before Fr. Adrian was a bigger dilemma than how to bury the dead. For Vera, although alive, was now dead. It was all so sad, so abysmally sad.

“Before she left he said to her, ‘Bring the censer and the epitachelion.’

“Fr. Adrian told us all the details, for this was his life’s challenge. The woman actually made no sense, but she had robbed him of his faith. His pastor’s heart had suddenly become empty. After she had brought him the censer and finally obtained a sled, she placed her dead sister on it in some sort of elongated, wooden box and began to pull her up the hill through the slush and the falling snow – and he burst into tears!

“The whole picture of the bleak reality of this burial procession was so inconsolable! Only Vera, himself, and the swinging, smoking censer were alive. The dark, gray sky over them, so indifferent to their grief, only accentuated their utter unhappiness. Thus they began the burial procession up the hill. Yet the slush and muddy, thawing earth, which had given up its cold and frozen state of winter and was now in expectation of the approaching spring, felt soft and almost warm – as if welcoming the new breath of nature’s rebirth.

“Vera was still in a rage, pulling the load on the sled, and was audibly venting her wrath. He followed her, up to his knees in mud, with an open service book that was getting wet. This process, this ascent into death was the hardest experience he had ever had, for he was dead inside. He had been stripped of something warm inside and he was numb. He felt cold both outside and inside; the silky earth he was in felt warmer than he himself did.

“Yet the saddest thing was that he could not remember the words of the pannikhida’s prayers – such familiar words. His head was blank; his heart, usually so quick to move to prayer, was indifferent now, and he knew in his heart of hearts that he had not only been robbed, but defiled. Yes, he felt defiled!

“That must be so when a man is dead!

“Yet the wet prayer-book was held sturdily in one hand, and in the other hand was the censer, vigorously swinging and wafting out the fragrant clouds of warm smoke. He tried to remember the right words, but could only recall one phrase, actually half of one, that somehow stuck in the back of his mind. He mechanically kept repeating this phrase so as to keep walking.

“‘Blessed are the undefiled’ – that was all. No memory came of what followed, just that statement remained barely alive in his cold heart, as if it were an echo resounding from the better days of his warm youth, cheering him somewhat. He kept repeating it. Slowly the rest of the verse came back to him.

“‘Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the Lord’. He repeated it in his mind, then said it aloud, and then sang it quietly. However, as spring rushed about him vigorously, he sang louder and louder and kept repeating it until it began to make sense. Blessed are those who no longer feel that oppressive state of being defiled in all their way, he thought, and kept repeating it over and over again, almost to the rhythm of his heavy tread.

“Undefiled because they walk in the Law of the Lord. And really, he was walking in the Law of the Lord – to give the last good thing to that sister. He wanted her to be buried as a Christian should, so that she could go to heaven as a reward due to her for all the godly things she had done for God, for His Law. She, the dead one, was undefiled, and he himself did not want to be defiled – he wanted to walk in the Law of the Lord. He was walking for the Lord now, for his Lord, Who had given such a Law of undefilement. He knew that the Law he had given his life for did not give him defilement. It is the abandoning of this Law out of weakness and temptation that defiles the conscience. It was the Law of the Lord that he had clung to all these years. He knew that even if everything in this present life were against this Law, it was the Law of God’s righteousness that he wanted.

“He walked on and on, swinging the censer, slowly regaining composure and singing about the Law of the Lord that undefiles, that give freedom to the suffering heart, that makes man capable of taking a deep breath and living! And he wanted life, not death!

“Death was before him. But what is death, he thought, if walking in the Law of the Lord promises eternal life, if it promises Resurrection!

“He had seen too many tragic cases in his life of unbelief and defilement all around him. His beloved Holy Russia, together with all her saints and holy things, was being defiled – precisely because the new government did not want to walk in the Law of the Lord. But he did not want to be defiled, he wanted resurrection from the dead state in which his country was being immersed. And what hindered him from wishing the dead sister resurrection in the future age? Nothing!

“As he was ascending to the lonely, dark cemetery, he gradually regained his strength. Holding tightly to the censer, his concern now was what to say to Vera before the horrible moment when the loved one was lowered into the cold, damp grave. The hole had already been dug by some kind man. All was ready.

“He searched for what to say as they stopped to say the last prayer. In his mind he heard: ‘With the saints give rest...’

“There was a moment of hesitation, and as he was about to open his lips to say what was in his heart, just three little words, he glanced at Vera and saw her face turning to his. It was no longer dark and angry. She was surprisingly at peace. Standing before the yawning grave all covered with the soft earth, she searched for his eyes and loudly exclaimed:

“‘Christ is risen!’

“The very three words he had wanted to utter!

“They stood there drenched in tears, not from sorrow but from the joy of having regained their faith, for they were now blessed! They were washed from the defilement of unbelief through the suffering of wanting God. They had given their lives to Christ, and after having been tested they knew that there was a state of blessedness, even on this side of the grave, way beyond all the sorrows of this temporal state – for Christ is risen from the dead!

“This is why Fr. Adrian’s favourite book was St. Theophan the Recluse’s Commentary on Psalm 118, entitled, *Blessed are the Undefiled*.

The Catacomb Church

Matushka Eugenia recalls this period: "That was a very difficult time, especially for the family of a priest. Fr. Adrian did not have a parish in Kiev, he served together with [the catacomb priest] Fr. Michael [Yedlinsky, the future hieromartyr] in the church of Saints Boris and Gleb in Podol.

"We lived mainly on chance parcels from former parishioners from Romny. The whole time there were various unpleasantnesses. For example, a message would come from the police: the next day Fr. Adrian was to go there to clean the snow; I had to run, bustle around and get a medical certificate to say that Fr. Adrian was ill and lying in bed. Moreover, the certificate could not be from a private doctor, but had to be from the Red Cross.

"In 1929 [or 1930] Fr. Adrian was arrested. How Vladyka [Bishop Nicholas of Aktar, who was martyred for the Faith in 1939] supported me, encouraged me, prayed for me at that time! By some kind of miracle Fr. Adrian was released [he fell seriously ill in prison].

"In 1931 the story with the flat began. At that time we were not living in the basement but occupied two rooms in the house of people whom we knew. But the house in which we were living had changed into a "communal living area", so we had to find a flat from a private house-owner. But when we with great difficulty found it, it was almost taken away from us by a man who came into our flat, put a bed in one of the rooms and said that the flat was his!

"How much I went through then! Alone with two small children, and with constantly drunken people on the other side of the wall who shouted: 'She's hiding her pope somewhere or other'. I knew that the wife of this man was about to come from hospital with her just-born child. I understood our hopeless situation, our complete lack of rights in a juridical sense. Our landlady, of course, wanted to evict this man who had settled in without her knowledge and have us in her house. With her we decided that Poly (the nanny of our children, who at that time worked in a factory) could take him to court since she had the rights of a working person. I ran to Vladyka in complete despair, told him everything and said that we had to take a lawyer. But Vladyka said to me: 'What lawyer? Your lawyer is Nicholas the Wonderworker.' I left Vladyka encouraged, with a certain hope. We served a moleben to the holy Hierarch Nicholas, and the next day Polya returned from the court and said that the case had been decided in her favour and that if, in the course of the next two weeks, the man did not appeal, he would have to vacate the flat. In two weeks the flat was freed.

"Was this not the mercy of God, Who defended our rightless family according to the laws of that time through the prayers of Vladyka?! How necessary in those

difficult times were such people as Vladyka Nicholas. By their deep faith and authoritative word they were able to support us who were fainthearted and wavering in faith. Vladyka always supported me in this way. We also had to suffer material hardships at that time. Vladyka somehow understood them and knew when they came. He would come to us, and after his visit you would find two roubles on the table; you would look at them as at a blessing to escape your material difficulties.

“In 1933 passportization was declared. With great difficulty Archbishop Sergius succeeded in getting the department of cults to assign Fr. Adrian to the church of SS. Boris and Gleb, and then to the Pokrov monastery, and finally to the church of Askold’s grave. If we had not succeeded in getting this, we would have had to leave Kiev.

“I worked at first as a needle-woman, and then in various libraries, and finally as director of the Narkomzdrav library. Life was nerve-wracking: constant fears for Fr. Adrian; we had constant searches, checks of the landlady’s books and questions about the priest living there, worries for the children who were studying at school, constant nervous tension at work, worrying whether my social position would be revealed, whether I would be sacked. You would return home only to find worshippers arrived from Romny. They came to see Batyushka Adrian, but officially, as it were, to consult with doctors. Again worries, one had to think about them, too, and put them up.”

Fr. Adrian continues the story: “From 1935, being in an illegal situation, I secretly celebrated the Divine Liturgy in Kiev on an antimins given me by [the Catacomb] Bishop Micah of Optina. I received it with the blessing of Elder Nectarius. One of the Kievan hieromonks communed the sick and infirm with the Holy Mysteries from our Liturgy. What would have happened then if the war had not started - we don’t know.”

In 1937 almost all the Catacomb clergy of Kiev were arrested, and many were shot. Fr. Adrian became the unofficial leader of the Catacomb Church in Kiev.

Once Fr. Adrian’s hand was injured and gangrene set in. An amputation would have put a tragic end to his pastoral ministry, and he and his flock were very worried. But then one of the parishioners got up and went to the church of St. Barbara (whose relics repose in Kiev). She took some holy water from the church and brought it to Fr. Adrian, who sprinkled it on his hand. Glory to God! A miracle took place, and the hand was completely healed. Thereafter Fr. Adrian always expressed great love and veneration for St. Barbara, and said that all Orthodox should know that, in the event that they are dying without a priest, they should call on St. Barbara, and she will come with the chalice and the Holy Gifts, as has happened many times.

War and Emigration

“The Germans arrived in Kiev. At first the German occupation did not interfere in our church life. Churches were opened. The Lord helped us restore the Pokrov hospital women’s monastery, and I was the rector of its church. The situation in the city was difficult. Many people were starving. We again had to help people, and feed them. We succeeded in restoring a hospital and a home for the elderly and the lame. But the famine was not only bodily, but also spiritual. Starving for the Church and the Orthodox way of life, people streamed into the churches. We had to satisfy this hunger.

“After two years under German occupation we had to abandon everything and be evacuated. The Soviets came.”

It was the German commanding officer in Kiev who suggested to Fr. Adrian that he be evacuated to the West. And he asked him how many visitors he had. “More than a hundred,” said Fr. Adrian with a smile...

“I and a group of people who were close to me – Prince D.V. Myshetsky, Doctor A.P. Timofievich, P.A. Ivinsky and O.M. Kontsevich, the present Bishop Nektary of Seattle – found ourselves in Berlin. Vladyka Metropolitan Seraphim [Lyade] appointed me rector of the Berlin [Resurrection] cathedral. For almost two years, under unceasing bombardment, Divine services were performed every day in the church. [Fr. Alexander Kiselev, the spiritual father of General Vlasov of the Russian Liberation Army, concelebrated with him. And Metropolitan Anastasy came on feastdays.] The Lord helped us preserve the Divine gift of the Eucharist of Christ so as to strengthen and establish the souls of our Russian people in the faith. They had fled from communism or had been forcibly transported to Germany. The church was constantly full of “Osten” youth [Russian worker-refugees from the East], most of whom in their homeland knew neither God nor the Orthodox way of life, but now instinctively gravitated towards the Church and Christ. They had to be helped, comforted, taught, instructed.”

Always gentle and kind with people, Fr. Adrian could be unbending when necessary. Thus when they received an order for the Gestapo to stop the “Osten” from going to the cathedral, Fr. Adrian, supported by Metropolitan Seraphim, categorically refused, and the cathedral continued to be full as before, mainly with young people, because it was mainly young people that were transported to Germany. One of these young people was Nicholas Hamanovich, later Bishop Alypy of Cleveland.

During one of the bombings on Berlin the elder son of Fr. Adrian, Seraphim, was killed. This was a great loss to him and his matushka. But their faith helped them to live through this loss and continue to serve others.

In the cathedral in Berlin was a greatly revered icon of St. Seraphim, which the Royal Family had prayed in front in 1903, and which had been brought from Diveyevo to Kiev, and then from Kiev to Berlin. Once, after a severe bombardment, the Orthodox returned to the church from their bunker and saw that an explosive bomb had fallen through the cupola and into the left side-chapel. There was a Good Friday shroud there, and lying on top of that - the icon of the saint. They managed to put out the flames, but were struck by the fact that both the shroud and the icon were untouched by the flames, although everything around them, including the footstool of a cross and an icon of SS. Gurias, Amon and Abibas, were burning. The next morning, during the service, they noticed that the smell of burning was still in the air, and even getting stronger. Then they found that in the attic of the church there was a second, smouldering explosive bomb. Hardly had they touched it when a huge column of flame rushed upward. So the fire had smouldered for twelve hours, but had not exploded... From that time the cathedral did not suffer again from fire, although everything around it was burned and destroyed.

In 1945 Fr. Adrian, his matushka and his second son Sergius together with the whole of his spiritual family were re-settled to Württemberg, to the small town of Wendlingen, near Stuttgart.

Another notable miracle took place at this time... Now in 1923 the Optina Hermitage had been ravaged and everything in it subject to desecration. Icons were taken from the churches and piled up on the ground to await destruction. Among the women who stood tearfully watching was Schema-nun Eudocia, who managed to take away the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God, which, as she knew, had formerly been in the cell of the famous Optina Elder, St. Ambrose. She brought it to Kozelsk, from where, at the request of Fr. Michael Yedlinksy, it was brought to Kiev. Fr. Michael then instructed Fr. Adrian to serve an akathist to it after the early (5 a.m.) liturgy on Sundays.

Fr. Adrian brought this holy icon with him to Berlin and then to Westerheim and Wendlingen. But the house in which the Orthodox were located caught fire during a tank battle between American and German forces. Then Fr. Adrian, followed by several dozen Orthodox people with him, squeezed together between the flames, lifted the Image of the Queen of Heaven over his head, dashed forth across the field on which the tank battle was taking place, and crossed between the two opposing forces unharmed...

It was with this icon that Metropolitan Anastassy, First-Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad, blessed Father Adrian and his co-strugglers on their journey to America. Since its passage to the United States, the Holy Image has rested in the women's monastery of Novo-Diveyevo, in Spring Valley, New York.

“In the difficult period that began it after the capitulation of Germany, being in constant fear of repatriation, our small group, under my guidance, created a church and immediately established the great Sacrament of the Divine Eucharist. And we again began to create a quiet order of life, the Orthodox way of life. Divine services were celebrated daily, life proceeded in godliness from Sunday to Sunday, from feast to feast. All around passions flared, there was enmity and a bestial struggle for existence. Many at first looked on us as naïve people who did not live in accordance with the times. But we lived, we lived in God. Little by little attitudes towards us changed. Pilgrimages began. People who had come to the depths of despair acquired amongst us peace of soul and a quiet joy, and went away enlightened and in peace.”

Novo-Diveyevo

In 1949 Fr. Adrian, his family and small group of Russian émigrés, most of them invalids because of age or illness, arrived in America. In the autumn Archbishop Vitaly (Maximenko) and Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky) “entrusted me to found a women’s monastery wherein to gather nuns scattered in various countries of the Diaspora, and to establish for them the quietness of Christ and the Orthodox way of life. This assignment seemed beyond our powers in the difficult circumstances in which we lived. Especially in view of the lack of money. Some people tried to dissuade me from this work. But the idea of establishing here, in America, a little corner of the Orthodox way of life, saturated in that spirit by which I had lived and breathed since childhood, took hold of me, and I agreed, hoping on the help of the Lord. And the Lord did not abandon us.

Although they had no money, and no knowledge of the English language, they managed to found a women’s monastery. First the monastery was located in Nayack, one hour’s drive from New York. Soon, with the help of some good people, they were able to rent a more fitting place for 200 dollars a month. This was still not suitable, and every day prayers and an akathist were offered before the Optina icon of the Mother of God – and a miracle was performed. Quite unexpectedly, in the neighbouring little town of Spring Valley they found a former Catholic women’s monastery that had been empty for some years. Fr. Adrian made a great impression on the Catholic abbess, and she obtained from Cardinal Spellman permission to sell the property for the very cheap price of \$30,000 on condition that nothing would be built in the plot that would defile the holiness of the former monastery. An Orthodox women’s monastery satisfied this condition.

But where were they to get \$30,000? Again, a miracle of God’s mercy took place. K.N. Maleyev, who had already given \$5,000 from his savings to the nascent community, gave another \$15,000. The bank provided the other half of the needed sum. And so the land and buildings passed into the possession of the Orthodox, who were not required to pay taxes on it since it was a former Catholic monastery. On August 24, 1952 the cemetery was blessed – a purely Russian cemetery of the kind that the Russian émigrés had not had in the New York region before.

“Nuns were gathered together. About one thousand displaced persons were brought over from Europe, of whom a significant number settled around the monastery and formed, so to speak, a large Orthodox family. The Lord helped inspire people to build a beautiful church in which daily services were celebrated and to which Russian people flowed from all ends of America.

“And the main thing was that the Lord helped us to establish in Novo-Diveyevo that which had filled my soul since childhood. In the conditions of the emigration, when Russian people, confused in the midst of foreign conditions of life and non-Orthodoxy, were caught in a whirlpool of vanity, the Lord helped us to establish in Novo-Diveyevo the Orthodox way of life, a church atmosphere of the quietness of Christ and of godliness; to establish Holy Russia in a foreign land.

“But it is not yet enough to establish a monastic life; one must *preserve* it. For there is always the danger that life can be converted into a hothouse, a greenhouse, where it will be supported by artificial warmth, and as soon as the source of warmth ceases to operate, life will perish.

“Therefore there must be a constant source of life. Just as the earth and its vital juices constantly nourish vegetation, so our life also must be ceaselessly nourished by that elemental power which the Church of Christ gives, which is incarnated in the Orthodox way of life, in the Divine services, in fasting, in prayer, in vigils, in all that which embodies our Holy Russia. This is the elemental power which places in the mouth of the man who is leaving his earthly existence the last words, ‘Into Thy hands I commend my spirit’, and gives him the possibility to depart into eternal existence with the name of Christ.

Matushka Evgenia reposed in the Lord, and in February, 1968 Fr. Adrian received the monastic tonsure. In the same year he was consecrated to the episcopate. In 1973, at the age of 80, he was raised to the archiepiscopate as Archbishop Andrew of Rockland.

He said: “When Archbishop Nikon suggested that I accept the grace of the episcopate, I understood that the Lord was calling me to preserve – with the help of holy Grace and with the support of my Abba, Vladyka Metropolitan – *Holy Russia in the hearts of our people, who had been cast into a foreign land*. I understood that the Lord was giving me yet more strength and power to continue my labours on the field of Christ.

“Therefore the sight of an open grave does not disturb me, but forces me to new labours in the name of Christ, which I must carry out before I depart for the Lord.

“The forty-six years of my pastoral service have been sanctified by the Grace of

the Lord, from which I drew strength and power. Now a new, higher Grace – the archpastoral Grace – is being laid upon me. I *tremble*, because I know that I am unworthy of it, but I accept it as the will of God, and in my trembling I call upon the Lord for help...”

As a bishop, Vladyka Andrew continued to live in Novo Diveyevo. He was the spiritual father of Metropolitan Philaret, and counselled many other members of the Church, both Russian and English-speaking.

Once a letter came to the monastery from a certain Vasilyeva in California. Her parents had been exiled in Russia, and she did not know their fate. Then she had a dream. She saw a new cabin, and in the kitchen was sitting her mother. There was a hatch in the floor leading to a cellar. It was dark. She was led to understand, perhaps from her mother, that her father was in the cellar. Then she looked and saw that although the cabin was new, there was no glass in the windows. “Why is there no glass?” she asked her mother. “Only Bishop Andrew can do this,” she replied. The daughter woke up and began to think that things were bad with her parents. It seemed that her father had died, and it was necessary to pray for him. It was necessary to find this Bishop Andrew.

She searched for a year, in various countries, but there was no bishop with the name of Andrew. But then she heard of the monastery, and sent a letter there asking for a burial service to be served, and giving a detailed account of her dream. Vladyka performed a burial service and sent her the prayer of absolution and some earth from the grave.

Vladyka possessed the gift of eldership. As Bishop Gregory of Alaska wrote: “Vladyka was an elder in the best meaning of this word. For very many believers he was a spiritual leader who incarnated in himself all the qualities necessary for eldership: a heartfelt intuition that is unusual for our time, sincere love for his spiritual child, great tact in touching on spiritual wounds, absolute non-possessiveness, boundless Christian humility.”

Archbishop Gregory of Colorado writes: “During the Nativity a number of teenage Russian boys were travelling by bus to various churches, singing Russian Christmas carols. Novo Diveyevo was on their route and they visited Archbishop Andrew. They all sang before him, and when they had finished their performance, the Archbishop asked them to come in to his kellia separately, one by one, to receive his blessing before they departed. They did this, and the one whom he was waiting for came in. The Archbishop told the young man to take out what was in his pocket. The young man denied that there was anything in his pocket. The Archbishop demanded again: ‘Take out that which is in your pocket,’ in a strong voice. The young man slowly, with shame, gave the book which was in his pocket to Vladyka’s cell attendant. It was a pornographic book, and Vladyka told the young man to have

himself looked at by a doctor, for he was about to get sick. After he admonished him, he dismissed him. Vladyka called them in, one by one, so as not to draw attention to him by calling him alone..."

Archbishop Gregory writes again: "One time a Serbian man drove down from Massachusetts to visit and receive the blessing of Archbishop Andrew, because he heard of his reputation of being a holy person. He had no particular question to ask him, but this man inwardly complained to God that he did not have a male issue, but only had girls. When he met the Archbishop, and received his blessing, the Archbishop immediately told him the following story.

"In Russia, after the revolution, there was a man who bitterly lamented that his daughter died very young. His lament continued for years and about the time when the girl would have been twenty years old, he saw a dream. In the dream, he was looking down from the window of his apartment to the street below, where a military march was passing by. In the march, there was an open truck with Soviet soldiers inside, and they were flirting with a young, twenty-year-old girl. In the dream, he thought how shameless this woman was, being in that situation.

"When he awoke in the morning, a military parade was passing by his apartment and just as in the dream, he went to the window and beheld the Soviet soldiers marching by, and indeed, there came the truck, only this time, there was no young girl with those soldiers.

"He was shocked and understood that if his daughter had lived, she would have been a communist, thereby denying Christ. He fell on his face and wept, saying, 'I think Thee, O Lord, that Thou didst spare me this continuous death, for me to see my daughter as a communist.' He never complained again.

"When the Serbian man heard this story, he was cut to the heart, and he understood why the Archbishop had spoken this story. From that day on, he gave thanks to God for His providence, and did not complain against His judgements."

And again Archbishop Gregory writes: "We know of two separate occasions when men, on a visit with Archbishop Andrew, were told their whole life stories. One was a layman, and one was a priest. He told them details of their early life which they had completely forgotten."

Archbishop Andrew also told the whole life story of Archimandrite John Lewis, together with exactly what he would do and whom he would meet on leaving the monastery.

Archpriest Stefan Pavlenko writes: "After graduating Holy Trinity Seminary and getting married, my wife and I decided that I would go for a time to California. My

wife's grandmother and aunt were quite close to Bishop Andrei, as was her whole family, especially her mother. When my wife's parents learned that we were planning a trip to California, they suggested we got to Novo Diveyevo for a blessing from Bishop Andrei. So off we went. He greeted us and treated us to tea and cakes... He asked about my parents and relatives, blessed our trip and made some very private comments concerning our choices made. Just when we were about to make our escape, he 'remembered' some photo albums that he had wanted to show us! And for the next 40 minutes or so we were (young and restless that we were) treated to the most boring and 'useless' rehash of old houses, old people, and old pets that you could imagine. Finally we were out and off! Not five minutes into our return trip to Boston on one of the main arteries out of the New Jersey / New York border area was a giant car pile up with injuries and even a death. Only then did we realize that had we not been 'detained' by Bishop Andrei, we would surely have been in the middle of that accident, instead of just passing by it in awe and wonder!"

Vladyka also took part in the dogmatic debates of the time. Thus, following in the footsteps of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, he was an opponent of the false teaching of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) on the 'Dogma of Redemption'. When this teaching surfaced again in the Church Abroad a group of hierarchs, including Bishops Nectarius, Athanasius and Averky, not wishing to offend the first-hierarch, asked Archbishop Andrew, as the spiritual father of the metropolitan himself, to remove this subject from the agenda of the 1972 Council, so as to prevent a schism. When the danger had passed through the efforts of Archbishop Andrew, he crossed himself, thanking God that Orthodoxy had been preserved for the Americans.

On July 22, 1975 Vladyka was visited by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, the famous writer. He greeted him with the following words: "Dear, deeply respected Alexander Isayevich!

"I have thought much, and am thinking much, about you; and involuntarily, while thinking of you, there arise before me two places in Sacred Scripture. One is from the Old Testament: the image of righteous Noah. It was revealed to him by God that there would be a world-wide flood which would destroy all those who remained in ungodliness. But for the salvation of those who would remain in godliness, those who still preserved all that is God's in honour, God commanded Noah to build an ark. And Noah began to build an ark, and at the same time to call the people to repentance...

"But the sky was clear, not a cloud was in sight; the whole of nature, as if indifferent to the sins of men, remained solemnly quiet. Men listened to Noah, but shrugged their shoulders and went away. Time passed. The building of the ark was finished, but only the family of Noah entered it. They entered the ark, not yet to escape the flood, but to escape the ungodliness that was everywhere. And then, at

last, a cloud appeared in the sky; it soon grew into huge rain clouds. The whole sky was covered with them, and the rain poured down. The water began to rise and inundate everything. At this point the frightened people rushed to the ark, but the doors closed of themselves, and nobody could now enter...

“And now, thinking of you, I involuntarily thought of this magnificent figure of Noah calling the people! You, too, my dear one, are calling people from the ungodliness of Communism! They listen to you, they applaud you. And they listened to Noah, and perhaps expressed their enthusiasm. Yes, they listened... but they did not obey, and perished!

“Noah called men from something, from ungodliness. But he also called them to something: to godliness, and to a concrete godliness: to the godliness which was in the ark. And at this point I remember another passage from Holy Scripture, the Epistle of the Apostle Peter. *This they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth made out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgement and perdition of ungodly men (II Peter 3.5-7).*

“If all this is to be destroyed in this way, then what a holy life and godliness must we have! This is what the New Testament Ark is: godliness, preserving what is God’s in honour!

“In your recent address you said that you were born a slave. That means that you were born after the revolution. But I saw everything that happened before the revolution and what prepared it – it was ungodliness in all forms, and chiefly the violation of family life and the corruption of youth... With grief I see that the same thing is happening here also, and indeed in the whole world. And it seems to me that your mission also is – to call people from ungodliness to godliness!

“And the source of godliness is Christ!...”

Repose

Vladyka Andrew died on the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, June 29 / July 12, 1978 (according to another source, on the following day, July 13). The weather was hot. He received Communion reverently, as he did on all Sundays and feastdays. He was very weak, and lay down surrounded by the people most devoted to him, waiting for the long-awaited hour.

Every day he listened to three akathists: the first, to the Vladimir icon of the Mother of God, was read by Mother Nonna, the second, to St. Nicholas, was read at midday, and the third, to St. Seraphim, was read in the evening. He listened to all the services through a microphone that was connected to the church.

In the evening, towards the end of Mattins, Vladyka was praying with particular fervour to the Mother of God. He took out an icon that had been given to him by his mother and which he always carried. On this day he prayed before it with special intensity, with all his might. This was felt by everybody.

Blood started to flow. His son and Fr. Alexander were worried. Brother Michael began to read the akathist to the Vladimir icon. Then Vladyka called everyone in order to say goodbye to them and to give them his last blessing. He said that he was dying and asked everyone to pray for him. And then he began fervently to cry out: "Most Holy Mother of God, save me!" with other prayers. When a cold sweat came out on his face, he cried: "I am dead!", and became white as snow.

Fr. Alexander ran into the neighbouring room to get hold of his epitachelion – the same under which Elder Nectarius had died fifty years before. But Vladyka Andrew had already left this world.

It was 11 p.m. on the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, the same day on which Vladyka had entered Optina for the first time.

Nun Maria (Stakhovich) recalls: "I was especially upset by the death of our Vladyka, although we were expecting it. The 'heart' had left our community: such a one was no longer to be found. Forty days had already passed... Each day after the liturgy there was a litiya in the church, and in the evening after the service there was a pannihida at the grace. There were always many people present.

"This death was marked by some special signs.

"On the eve of the burial, in the evening after the service, we were all told from the ambon (the church was full of people) that on the day of the death of Vladyka the children in a summer camp, aged from 8 to 15, saw in the sky a cross made of clouds, and then it took the form of a face. The children recognized in it Vladyka Andrew. The face turned into an angel, and flew upwards.

"One of our parishioners saw him – the fifteen-year-old daughter of Doctor Zarudsky. Each of these children was separately interrogated by Fr. Alexander Kiselev. All the children confirmed one and the same story, so he was convinced that it was not a fantasy."

Holy Father Andrew, pray to God for us!

(Sources: "Batyushka o. Adrian", *Russkij Palomnik*, no. 18, 1998, pp. 92-109; "Our Living Links with the Holy Fathers: Archbishop Andrew of New-Diveyevo", *The*

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V. METROPOLITAN PHILARET OF NEW YORK

Early Years

Metropolitan Philaret, in the world George Nikolayevich Voznesensky, was born in the city of Kursk on March 22 / April 4, 1903, into the family of Protopriest Nicholas and his matushka, Lydia Vasilyevna. In Holy Baptism he was called George. In 1909 Fr. Nicholas was appointed to serve in Blagoveschensk-on-Amur in the Far East, and moved there with his whole family. There the young George served his father in church together with his elder brother Nicholas, while his three sisters sang in the church choir. And there the future hierarch finished high school.

In a sermon at his nomination as Bishop of Brisbane, the future metropolitan said: "There is hardly anything specially worthy of note in my life, in its childhood and young years, except, perhaps, a recollection from my early childhood years, when I as a small child of six or seven years in a childish naïve way loved to 'play service' – I made myself a likeness of a Church vestment and 'served'. And when my parents began to forbid me to do this, Vladyka Evgeny, the Bishop of Blagoveschensk, after watching this 'service' of mine at home, to their amazement firmly stopped them: 'Leave him, let the boy "serve" in his own way. It is good that he loves the service of God.'" In this way was the saint's future service in the Church foretold in a hidden way already in his childhood.

In 1920 the family was forced to flee from the revolution into Manchuria, to the city of Harbin, a town built by Russians to serve the railway. There, in 1921, George's mother, Lydia Vasilyevna, died, after which his father, Fr. Nicholas, took the monastic tonsure with the name Demetrius and became Archbishop of Hailar. Vladyka Demetrius was a learned theologian, the author of a series of books on the history of the Church and other subjects. From 1923 he served in the church of the Iveron Icon of the Mother of God, one of 22 churches in the city. He breathed new life into the Iveron Brotherhood that was attached to the church.

George Nikolayevich helped his father in educating the younger generation, and took part with him in the work of the House of Mercy, founded by Bishop Nestor for children of all ages, which combined in itself an orphanage and a work-house for the very old.

Living in the family of a priest, the future metropolitan naturally became accustomed, from his early years, to the church and the Divine services. But, as he himself said later, at the beginning there was in this "almost nothing deep, inwardly apprehended and consciously accepted".

"But the Lord knows how to touch the human soul!" he recalled. "And I undoubtedly see this caring touch of the Father's right hand in the way in which,

during my student years in Harbin, I was struck as if with a thunder-clap by the words of the Hierarch Ignatius Brianchaninov which I read in his works: 'My grave! Why do I forget you? You are waiting for me, waiting, and I will certainly be your inhabitant; why then do I forget you and behave as if the grave were the lot only of other men, and not of myself?' Only he who has lived through this 'spiritual blow', if I can express myself thus, will understand me now! There began to shine before the young student as it were a blinding light, the light of a true, real Christian understanding of life and death, of the meaning of life and the significance of death – and new inner life began... Everything secular, everything 'worldly' lost its interest in my eyes, it disappeared somewhere and was replaced by a different content of life. And the final result of this inner change was my acceptance of monasticism..."

George's desire to become a monk was shared by his friend Basil Lvov, son of the over-procurator of the Holy Synod Prince Vladimir Lvov, who became a monk with the name Nathanael in 1929 and later - Archbishop of Vienna. The two youths went to risky trips to the Soviet-Chinese border, where they established links with Orthodox communities on the other side. George was also very close to Hieromonk Methodius (Yogel) and Hierodeacon Nilus (Nosov), who in spite of his rank and monasticism continued to cross the border into the Soviet Union with anti-Bolshevik plans until the middle of the 1930s.

Fr. Nicholas opposed his son's desire to become a monk, saying that he should first finish his studies and acquire a profession – then they would talk about it. And so, in obedience to his father, George entered the Russo-Chinese Polytechnical Institute and received a specialist qualification as an electrical engineer and mechanic, graduating in 1927. Later, when he was already First Hierarch of the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR), he did not forget his friends at the institute. All those who had known him, both at school and in the institute, remembered him as a kind, affectionate comrade. He was distinguished by his great abilities and was always ready to help.

Having graduated from the Institute, George went to his father, gave him the diploma and said: "I have carried out your will, now I want to carry out His [God's] will."

Together with his closest friends, George now began Pastoral-Theological Courses in what was later renamed the theological faculty of the Holy Prince Vladimir Institute. His father was president of the Pedagogical Council and read lectures in Holy Scripture, Church history and apologetics. George graduated with distinction in 1930 (or 1931).

At the same time he continued to work in the House of Mercy and also got a job as a teacher. He was a good instructor, and his pupils loved and valued him. But his instructions for the young people went beyond the bounds of the school programme

and penetrated every aspect of human life. Many of his former pupils and colleagues after meeting him retained a high estimate of him for the rest of their lives.

In 1930 George again approached his father with his former request, and now Fr. Nicholas did not object. He was ordained as a celibate, and then, in 1931, to the priesthood. He served in the church dedicated to the Mother of God "The Joy of All Who Sorrow" attached to the House of Mercy.

In the same year two monks from the Holy Trinity Shmakovo monastery, which had been destroyed by the Bolsheviki, fled to Harbin. With his friend Fr. Nathanael and these two monks, Fr. George founded the monastic community of the House of Mercy. There, in 1931, he was tonsured into monasticism with the name Philaret in honour of Righteous Philaret the Merciful. Within a few years the numbers of monks had risen to nine, and many young people were attracted by the spiritual fervour of the community. It was here that Fr. Philaret lived the happiest years of his life. For eight years he and Fr. Nathanael lived "in one cell without once quarrelling". Also in the community were Fr. Innocent (Bystrov) and Hieromonk Methodius.

In this period Fr. Philaret became a teacher of the New Testament, pastoral theology and homiletics at the St. Vladimir University. In 1936 his book, *Outline of the Law of God*, was published in Harbin.

"Man thinks much, he dreams about much and he strives for much," he said in one of his sermons, "and nearly always he achieves nothing in his life. But nobody will escape the Terrible Judgement of Christ. Not in vain did the Wise man once say: 'Remember your last days, and you will not sin to the ages!' If we remember how our earthly life will end and what will be demanded of it after that, we shall always live as a Christian should live. A pupil who is faced with a difficult and critical examination will not forget about it but will remember it all the time and will try to prepare him- or herself for it. But this examination will be terrible because it will be an examination of our whole life, both inner and outer. Moreover, after this examination there will be no re-examination. This is that terrible reply by which the lot of man will be determined for immeasurable eternity... Although the Lord Jesus Christ is very merciful, He is also just. Of course, the Spirit of Christ overflows with love, which came down to earth and gave itself completely for the salvation of man. But it will be terrible at the Terrible Judgement for those who will see that they have not made use of the Great Sacrifice of Love incarnate, but have rejected it. Remember your end, man, and you will not sin to the ages."

He also studied the writings of the holy fathers, and learned by heart all four Gospels. One of his favourite passages of Scripture was the passage from the Apocalypse reproaching the lukewarmness of men, their indifference to the truth. Thus in a sermon on the Sunday of All Saints he said:

“The Orthodox Church is now glorifying all those who have pleased God, all the saints..., who accepted the holy word of Christ not as something written somewhere to someone for somebody, but as written to himself; they accepted it, took it as the guide for the whole of their life and fulfilled the commandments of Christ.

“... Of course, their life and exploit is for us edification, they are an example for us, but you yourselves know with what examples life is now filled! Do we now see many good examples of the Christian life?!... When you see what is happening in the world,... you involuntarily think that a man with a real Orthodox Christian intention is as it were in a desert in the midst of the earth’s teeming millions. They all live differently... Do you they think about what awaits them? Do they think that Christ has given us commandments, not in order that we should ignore them, but in order that we should try to live as the Church teaches?

“... We have brought forward here one passage from the Apocalypse, in which the Lord says to one of the servers of the Church: ‘I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Oh if only you were cold or hot!’ We must not only be hot, but must at least follow the promptings of the soul and fulfil the law of God.

“But there are those who go against it... But if a man is not sleeping spiritually, is not dozing, but is experiencing something spiritual somehow, and if he does not believe in what people are now doing in life, and is sorrowful about this, but is in any case not dozing, not sleeping – there is hope that he will come to the Church. Do we not see quite a few examples of enemies and deniers of God turning to the way of truth? Beginning with the Apostle Paul...

“In the Apocalypse the Lord says: ‘Oh if only thou wast cold or hot, but since thou art neither cold nor hot (but lukewarm), I will spew thee out of My mouth’... This is what the Lord says about those who are indifferent to His holy work. Now, in actual fact, they do not even think about this. What are people now not interested in, what do they not stuff into their heads – but they have forgotten the law of God. Sometimes they say beautiful words. But what can words do when they are from a person of abominable falsehood?!... It is necessary to beseech the Lord God that the Lord teach us His holy law, as it behoves us, and teach us to imitate the example of those people have accepted this law, have fulfilled it and have, here on earth, glorified Almighty God.”

In 1933 Fr. Philaret’s father was tonsured into monasticism with the name Demetrius, and within a year he had been tonsured as Bishop of Hailar while remaining as rector of the Iveron parish in Harbin.

In the same year Fr. Philaret was raised to the rank of igumen, and in 1937 - to the rank of archimandrite. Thousands of young people came to the community at the House of Mercy to listen to the young igumen’s sermons and to share with him their

woes.

In these early years of his priesthood Fr. Philaret was greatly helped by the advice of the then First-Hierarch of ROCOR, Metropolitan Anthony (+1936), with whom he corresponded for several years. The young pastor was a talented preacher and pedagogue. He performed the Divine services with burning faith, and attracted multitudes to the church. All sections of the population of Harbin loved him; his name was also known far beyond the boundaries of the Harbin diocese. He was kind and accessible to all those who turned to him. Queues of people thirsting to talk with him stood at the doors of his humble cell; on going to him, people knew that they would receive correct advice, consolation and help. He converted many to God and the Holy Church, and had hundreds, if not thousands of disciples who remembered him for the rest of their lives. Fr. Philaret immediately understood the condition of a man's soul, and, in giving advice, consoled the suffering, strengthened the despondent and cheered up the despairing with an innocent joke. He loved to say: "Do not be despondent, Christian soul! There is no place for despondency in a believer! Look ahead - there is the mercy of God!" People went away from him pacified and strengthened by his strong faith.

In imitation of his name-saint, Fr. Philaret was generous not only in spiritual, but also in material alms, and secretly gave help to the needy. Many homeless people turned to him, and he refused help to nobody, except in those cases in which he literally had nothing left, when he would smile guiltily and say: "Nothing, my dear!" But then he would find a way out - and give away the things he was wearing.

Once Fr. Philaret had visited his father, and on the way back had to go from the Iveron church to the House of Mercy - quite a long distance. He had ten cents for the journey. However, on leaving the house a poor man came to him begging for alms. Fr. Philaret gave him the ten cents and went home on foot, thinking that he should not be sorry about the ten cents since the Lord would reward him a hundredfold. On returning home, he remembered that he was due to celebrate a wedding in the church. After the wedding, to his surprise, the newly-weds gave him ten dollars, saying: "Dear Batyushka, please take these ten dollars for yourself out of our great love for you". Fr. Philaret joyfully reflected that he had received exactly a hundred times what he had given to the beggar, but then complained: "For today's good work I will receive nothing in the Kingdom of Heaven, since I have received [my reward] completely in this age"...

On another occasion Fr. Philaret came out of the church in his vestments with a golden cross on his breast. Some believers came up to him and said that they were intending to collect some initial capital for a soup-kitchen for the poor. Fr. Philaret began to look for something in his pockets, but found nothing. Then he asked them to wait, and went to a pawn-shop not far away, where he pawned his gold cross. Then he gave the money to the needy...

On hearing about this, Fr. Methodius ran around the rich parishioners, quickly collected some money and redeemed the cross before the owner of the pawn-shop could re-sell it or melt it down...

Fr. Philaret did not teach others what he himself did not do. He himself, like the saints, whom he called on people to imitate, accepted everything written in the Holy Scriptures and the patristic writings "not as something written somewhere to someone for somebody," but as a true guide to life. He was exceptionally strict with himself and conducted a truly ascetic style of life. He had a rare memory, keeping in his head not only the words of the Gospel and the holy fathers, but also the sorrows and woes of his flock. On meeting people the holy hierarch demonstrated great interest in all sides of their life, he did not need to remember their needs and difficulties - he himself developed the subject of conversation that interested a man, and gave ready replies to the perplexities tormenting him.

Confessor against Paganism

From 1931 until 1945 Manchuria with its capital city of Harbin was occupied by the Japanese. At first the Russians were not worried. They remembered how the Japanese had helped many Russians to escape to the east at the end of the Civil War, and they welcomed the order that they introduced into the country.

However, the Japanese soon began to persecute all those Russians who were against them (many Russians had married Chinese, and so were against the Japanese occupation for that reason), numbering them together with the Soviet agents. Moreover, towards the end of this period the Russians were called upon to confess their faith; for the Japanese placed a statue of their goddess Amateras, who according to Japanese tradition was the foundress of the imperial race, directly opposite the Orthodox cathedral of St. Nicholas. Then, in May, 1943, they demanded that Russians going to church in the cathedral should first make a "reverential bow" towards the goddess. It was also required that on certain days Japanese temples should be venerated, while a statue of the goddess was to be put in Orthodox churches.

The question of the admissibility of participating in such ritual veneration was discussed at the diocesan assemblies of the Harbin diocese on September 8 and October 2, 1943, in the presence of the hierarchs of the Harbin diocese: Metropolitan Meletius, Bishop Demetrius and Bishop Juvenal (Archbishop Nestor was not present). According to the witness of the secretary of the Episcopal conference, Fr. Leonid Upshinsky, "the session was stormy, since some objected that... Amateras was not a goddess but the Ancestress." It was decided "to accept completely and direct to the authorities" the reports of Bishop Demetrius of Hailar and Professor K.I. Zaitsev (the future Archimandrite Constantine), which expressed the official view of the episcopate that participation in the ritual veneration was inadmissible.

However, on February 5, 1944 the congress of leaders of the Russian emigration in Manchuria met in Harbin. The congress opened with a moleben in the St. Nicholas cathedral, after which the participants went to the Japanese temple "Harbin-Jinjya", where they carried out a veneration of the goddess Amateras. On February 12 the Harbin hierarchs responded with a archpastoral epistle, in which they said: "Since any kind of veneration of pagan divinities and temples is forbidden by the commandments of God..., Orthodox Christians, in obedience to the will of God and his Law, cannot and must not carry out this veneration, for such venerations contradict the basic theses of the Orthodox Faith." Archbishop Nestor refused to sign this epistle.

In March both vicars of the Harbin diocese, Bishop Demetrius and Bishop Juvenal, were summoned to the police, where they were closely interrogated about the circumstances of the illegal distribution of the archpastoral epistle and about the attitude of the flock to this question. On April 28 Metropolitan Meletius was subjected to interrogation. The conversation, which lasted for several hours, produced no result. Referring to his extreme exhaustion and illness, Vladyka Meletius asked that the conversation be continued on May 1. This again produced no result. Bishop Demetrius, who also took part, categorically and sharply protested against the veneration.

On May 2, an Episcopal Convention took place (Archbishop Nestor, as usual, was not present), at which this position was confirmed. Several days later, Metropolitan Meletius presented the text of the Episcopal Convention to Mr. Kobayasi. Kobayasi demanded that he give a written promise not to raise the question of veneration until the end of the war. Metropolitan Meletius asked that the words "if there will be no compulsion to veneration" should be added to the text. Vladyka's demand again elicited a quarrel. However, in the end Kobayasi gave in. On August 31 the Harbin archpastors sent a letter to Archbishop Nestor in which they appealed to him "to unite with us, return, and may your voice sound out in defence of the purity of the Faith and zeal for its confession. Sign (better late than never) our Archpastoral Epistle and announce this publicly - in whatever way and place you can." In reply, Vladyka Nestor wrote that he did not disagree with his brother archpastors about the inadmissibility of venerating the temples of Amateras.

An important influence on the Japanese in their eventual climb-down was the courageous confession of Fr. Philaret. The Japanese seized him and subjected him to torture. His cheek was torn and his eyes were almost torn out, but he suffered this patiently. Then they told him: "We have a red-hot electrical instrument here. Everybody who has had it applied to them has agreed to our requests. And you will also agree." The torturer brought the instrument forward. Then Fr. Philaret prayed to St. Nicholas: "Holy Hierarch Nicholas, help me, otherwise there may be a betrayal." The torturer commenced his work. He stripped the confessor to his waist

and started to burn his spine with the burning iron. Then a miracle took place. Fr. Philaret could smell his burning flesh, but felt no pain. He felt joyful in his soul. The torturer could not understand why he was silent, and did not cry out or writhe from the unbearable pain. Then he turned and looked at his face. Amazed, he waved his hand, muttered something in Japanese and fled, conquered by the superhuman power of the confessor's endurance. Fr. Philaret was brought, almost dead, to his relatives. There he passed out. When he came to he said: "I was in hell itself." Gradually his wounds healed. Only his eyes were a bit distorted. And the Japanese no longer tried to compel the Orthodox to bow down to their idol.

Confessor against Communism

In 1945 the Soviet armies defeated the Japanese army; later the Chinese communists took control of Manchuria. In the first days of the "Soviet coup" the Soviets began to offer Russian émigrés the opportunity to take Soviet passports. Their agitation was conducted in a skilful manner, very subtly and cleverly, and the deceived Russian people, exhausted from the hard years of the Japanese occupation during which everything Russian had been suppressed, believed that in the USSR there had now come "complete freedom of religion", and they began to take passports en masse.

50,000 Russian citizens of Harbin, and every third young person, fell into the snare. The reality was soon revealed to them. At Atpor station 14,000 people were shot, and the remaining 36,000 were deported to concentration camps, where most of them perished of hunger and other privations.

Metropolitan Valentine of Suzdal writes: "I remember the year 1956, the Dormition men's monastery in Odessa, where I was an unwilling witness as there returned from the camps and prisons, having served their terms, those hierarchs who returned to Russia after the war so as to unite with the 'Mother Church' at the call of Stalin's government and the Moscow patriarchate: 'The Homeland has forgiven you, the Homeland calls you!' In 1946 they trustingly entered the USSR, and were all immediately captured and incarcerated for 10 years, while the 'Mother Church' was silent, not raising her voice in defence of those whom she had beckoned into the trap. In order to be 're-established' in their hierarchical rank, they had to accept and chant hymns to Sergianism, and accept the Soviet patriarch. And what then? Some of them ended their lives under house arrest, others in monastery prisons, while others soon departed for eternity."

At this time Fr. Philaret was the rector of the church of the holy Iveron icon in Harbin. There came to him a reporter from a Harbin newspaper asking his opinion on the "mercifulness" of the Soviet government in offering the émigrés Soviet passports. He expected to hear words of gratitude and admiration from Fr. Philaret, too. "But I replied that I categorically refused to take a passport, since I knew of no 'ideological' changes in the Soviet Union, and, in particular, I did not know how

Church life was proceeding there. However, I knew a lot about the destruction of churches and the persecution of the clergy and believing laypeople. The person who was questioning me hastened to interrupt the conversation and leave...”

Soon Fr. Philaret read in *the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* that Lenin was the supreme genius and benefactor of mankind. He could not stand this lie and from the ambon of the church he indicated to the believers the whole unrighteousness of this disgraceful affirmation in an ecclesiastical organ, emphasising that Patriarch Alexis (Simansky), as the editor of the JMP, was responsible for this lie. Fr. Philaret’s voice sounded alone: none of the clergy supported him, and from the diocesan authorities there came a ban on his preaching from the church ambon, under which ban he remained for quite a long time. Thus, while still a priest, he was forced to struggle for church righteousness on his own, without finding any understanding amidst his brothers. Practically the whole of the Far Eastern episcopate of the Russian Church Abroad at that time recognised the Moscow Patriarchate, and so Fr. Philaret found himself involuntarily in the jurisdiction of the MP, as a cleric of the Harbin diocese. This was for him exceptionally painful. He never, in whatever parish he served, permitted the commemoration of the atheist authorities during the Divine services, and he never served molebens or pannikhidas on the order of, or to please, the Soviet authorities. As he said, “I never sullied my lips and my prayer with prayers for the servants of the Antichrist”. But even with such an insistent walling-off from the false church, his canonical dependence on the MP weighed on him “as a heavy burden, as an inescapable woe”, and he remained in it only for the sake of his flock. When the famous campaign for “the opening up of the virgin lands” was declared in the USSR, the former émigrés were presented with the opportunity to depart for the Union. To Fr. Philaret’s sorrow, in 1947 his own father, Archbishop Demetrius of Hailar, together with several other Bishops, were repatriated to the USSR. But Fr. Philaret, on his own as before, tirelessly spoke in his flaming sermons about the lie implanted in the MP and in “the country of the soviets” as a whole. Not only in private conversations, but also from the ambon, he explained that going voluntarily to work in a country where communism was being built and religion was being persecuted, was a betrayal of God and the Church. He refused outright to serve molebens for those departing on a journey for the USSR, insofar as at the foundation of such a prayer lay a prayer for the blessing of a good intention, while the intention to go to the Union was not considered by Fr. Philaret to be good, and he could not lie to God and men. That is how he spoke and acted during his life in China.

Such a firm and irreconcilable position in relation to the MP and the Soviet authorities could not remain unnoticed. Fr. Philaret was often summoned by the Chinese authorities for interrogations, at one of which he was beaten. In October, 1960 they even tried to kill him...

As he himself recounted the story, at two o’clock on a Sunday morning Fr. Philaret got up from bed because of a strange smell in his house. He went to the

living-room, in the corner of which was a larder. From under the doors of the larder there was coming out smoke with a sharp, corrosive smell. Then he went to the lavatory, poured water into a bowl, returned to the larder and, opening the doors, threw the water in the direction of the smoke. Suddenly there was an explosion and a flash. The fire burned him, while the wave of the explosion lifted him up and hurled him with enormous force across the whole length of the living-room and against the door leading out. Fortunately, the door opened outwards: from the force of his flying body the bolts were broken, and he fell on the ground deafened but alive. On coming to, he saw the whole of his house on fire like a torch. He understood that the explosion had been caused by a thermal bomb set to go off and burn down the house at a precise time.

During this night, at about midnight, a certain Zinaida Lvovna, one of the sisters of the church of the House of Mercy, came out of her house, which was situated opposite the church across the street, and saw some fire engines in the street near the church – but there was no fire. This unusual concourse of fire engines surprised her. About two hours later, when the sound of the bomb awoke her, she immediately went out into the street and saw the fire, which the fire-fighters had already managed to put out. Fr. Philaret was standing on the threshold of the church shaking from the cold and suffering from burns and concussion. Zinaida Lvovna immediately understood that the fire had been started by the communists with the purpose of killing Fr. Philaret. She quickly crossed the street and invited him to enter her house.

But the Chinese firemen, on seeing Archimandrite Philaret alive, accused him of starting the fire and wanted to arrest him. However, the quick-witted Zinaida Lvovna quickly turned to the chief fireman and said: “It looks like you put your fire engines here in advance, knowing that a fire was about to begin. Who told you beforehand that about the fire?” The fire chief was at a loss for words and could not immediately reply. Meanwhile, Zinaida Lvovna and Fr. Philaret went into her house. She put him in a room without windows because she knew that the communists might enter through a window and kill him.

The next day, some young people came early to the Sunday service, but the church was closed, and the house in which Fr. Philaret lived was burned to the ground. The twenty-year-old future pastor, Fr. Alexis Mikrikov came and learned from Zinaida Lvovna what had happened during the night. He asked to see Fr. Philaret. Immediately he saw that the saint was extremely exhausted and ill. His burned cheek was dark brown in colour. But the look in his eyes was full of firm submission to the will of God and joyful service to God and men. Suddenly Fr. Alexis heard him say: “Congratulations on the feast!” as he would say “Christ is risen!” Tears poured down the face of Fr. Alexis in reply. He had not wept since his childhood, and here he was, a twenty-year-old man, on his knees before the confessor, weeping and kissing his hand.

As a consequence of the interrogations and burns he suffered, for the rest of his life Fr. Philaret retained a small, sideways inclination of his head and a certain distortion of the lower part of his face; his vocal chords also suffered.

Two months passed. Fr. Philaret again began to serve, and within half a year he was able to live on his own in a separate maisonette above the church. But then he again went to Zinaida Lvovna. The reason was that he had gone into his cell after the service, but suddenly saw two big boots sticking out from under the curtain. Understanding that an assassin sent by the communists was standing there, he went to the chest of drawers, took something out to divert attention, and then quickly left the cell, locking it behind him. After this a Chinese policeman came to Zinaida Lvovna and asked her why Archimandrite Philaret did not sleep in his cell. She immediately understood what he was on about, and replied: because of his physical weakness.

Soon after this Fr. Philaret, through his spiritual sight, discovered a portrait of satan under the altar in the church of the House of Mercy. The portrait was immediately removed...

Having made contact with Metropolitan Anastasy, from 1953 Archimandrite Philaret made continual efforts to leave China. Finally, in 1962, after almost the whole of his flock had left Harbin, he succeeded. On March 29, 1962 the Hierarchical Synod of the Russian Church Abroad "heard a letter of Archimandrite Philaret (Voznesensky) to the president of the Synod on his arrival in Hong Kong and his repentance over the fact that in 1945 he had entered the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, and also a penitential declaration signed by him in accordance with the form established by the Council of Bishops" in 1959.

The form in question was as follows: "I, the undersigned, a former clergyman of the Moscow Patriarchate, ordained to the rank of deacon (by such-and-such a bishop in such-and-such a place at such-and-such a time) and ordained to the rank of presbyter (by such-and-such a bishop in such-and-such a place at such-and-such a time) and having passed through my service (in such-and-such parishes), petition that I be received into the clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad.

"I am sincerely sorry that I was among the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate, which is in union with the God-fighting authorities.

"I sweep aside all the lawless acts of the Moscow hierarchy in connection with its support of the God-fighting authorities and I promise from now on to be faithful and obedient to the lawful hierarchy of the Russian Church Abroad."

"While striving to guard my flock from Soviet falsehood and lies," recounted the

metropolitan, "I myself sometimes felt inexpressibly oppressed – to the point that I several times came close to the decision to leave altogether, to cease serving. And I was stopped only by the thought of my flock: how could I leave these little ones? If I went and stopped serving, that would mean that they would have to enter into service to the Soviets and hear prayers for the forerunners of the Antichrist – 'Lord, preserve them for many years,' etc. This stopped me and forced me to carry out my duty to the end.

"And when, finally, with the help of God I managed to extract myself from red China, the first thing I did was turn to the First Hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, Metropolitan Anastasy, with a request that he consider me again to be in the jurisdiction of the Russian Church Abroad. Vladyka Metropolitan replied with mercy and love, and immediately blessed me to serve in Hong Kong already as a priest of the Synodal jurisdiction, and pointed out that every church server passing into this jurisdiction from the jurisdiction of Moscow must give a special penitential declaration to the effect that he is sorry about his (albeit involuntary) stay in the Moscow jurisdiction. I did this immediately."

Soon Fr. Philaret flew to Australia and arrived in Sydney, from where he went to Brisbane. Many of his former parishioners were there, and they petitioned the Synod to appoint him bishop of Brisbane. Archbishop Savva of Australia supported this petition enthusiastically. Archimandrite Philaret considered himself weak and unworthy of such a lofty service. However, the experience of monastic obedience did not allow him to decline from the path to which ecclesiastical authority summoned him. On May 26, 1963 he was consecrated Bishop of Brisbane, a vicariate of the Australian diocese, by Archbishop Sabbas of Sydney and Bishop Anthony of Melbourne.

In his sermon at his nomination as Bishop Archimandrite Philaret said to the Archpastors who were present:

"Holy Hierarchs of God! I have thought and felt much in these last days, I have reviewed and examined the whole of my life – and... I see, on the one hand, a chain of innumerable benefactions from God, and on the other – the countless number of my sins... And so raise your hierarchical prayers for my wretchedness in this truly terrible hour of my ordination, that the Lord, the First of Pastors, Who through your holiness is calling me to the height of this service, may not deprive me, the sinful and wretched one, of a place and lot among His chosen ones..."

"One hierarch-elder, on placing the hierarchical staff in the hands of a newly appointed bishop, said to him: 'Do not be like a milestone on the way, that points out for others the road ahead, but itself remains in its place...' Pray also for this, Fathers and Archpastors, that in preaching to others, I myself may not turn out to be an idle slave."

On May 14/27, 1964, having been for many years First Hierarch of ROCOR, Metropolitan Anastasy, for reasons of health and age, petitioned the Hierarchical Council for his retirement. The question arose who would be the new First Hierarch. Some members of ROCOR wanted to see the holy Hierarch John (Maximovich) as their head, but another part was very opposed to this. Then, to avoid any further aggravation of the situation, and a possible scandal and even schism, the Hierarch John removed his candidacy and suggested making the youngest Hierarch, Bishop Philaret, First Hierarch. According to one source, Philaret's election was "entirely due to the prompting and influence of Archbishop John". According to another source, however, the suggestion was made by Archbishop Sabbas, who had sent Fr. Philaret to New York in his place. This choice was supported by Metropolitan Anastasy: Vladyka Philaret was the youngest by ordination, had mixed little in Church Abroad circles, and had not managed to join any "party". He himself compared his election to a death sentence: "My position at that time reminds me of the position of one who is being led out to execution," he said in his *Word* to the Hierarchical Council. And so he was enthroned as First Hierarch by Metropolitan Anastasy himself in a service that, for the first time in centuries, used the ancient text for the enthroning of a metropolitan of Moscow.

Almost immediately, in his 1965 Epistle "to Orthodox Bishops and all who hold dear the Fate of the Russian Church", Metropolitan Philaret made clear his completely uncompromising attitude to the Moscow Patriarchate and his great love for the Catacomb Church. In view of the continuing relevance of his words, when the gracelessness of the Moscow Patriarchate is understood by few, we quote it in full:

"In recent days the Soviet Government in Moscow and various parts of the world celebrated a new anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917 which brought it to power.

"We, on the other hand, call to mind in these days the beginning of the way of the cross for the Russian Orthodox Church, upon which from that time, as it were, all the powers of hell have fallen.

"Meeting resistance on the part of Archpastors, pastors, and laymen strong in spirit, the Communist power, in its fight with religion, began from the very first days the attempt to weaken the Church not only by killing those of her leaders who were strongest in spirit, but also by means of the artificial creation of schisms.

Thus arose the so-called "Living Church" and the renovationist movement, which had the character of a Church tied to a Protestant-Communist reformation. Notwithstanding the support of the Government, this schism was crushed by the

inner power of the Church. It was too clear to believers that the 'Renovated Church' was uncanonical and altered Orthodoxy. For this reason people did not follow it.

"The second attempt, after the death of Patriarch Tikhon and the rest of the locum tenentes of the patriarchal throne, Metropolitan Peter, had greater success. The Soviet power succeeded in 1927 in sundering in part the inner unity of the Church. By confinement in prison, torture, and special methods it broke the will of the vicar of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Sergius, and secured from him the proclamation of a declaration of the complete loyalty of the Church to the Soviet power, even to the point where the joys and successes of the Soviet Union were declared by the Metropolitan to the joys and successes of the Church, and its failures to be her failures. What can be more blasphemous than such an idea, which was justly appraised by many at that time as an attempt to unite light with darkness, and Christ with Belial. Both Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter, as well as others who served as locum tenens of the Patriarchal throne, had earlier refused to sign a similar declaration, for which they were subjected to arrest, imprisonment, and banishment.

"Protesting against this declaration—which was proclaimed by Metropolitan Sergius by himself alone, without the agreement of the suppressed majority of the episcopate of the Russian Church, violating thus the 34th Apostolic Canon—many bishops who were then in the death camp at Solovki wrote to the Metropolitan: 'Any government can sometimes make decisions that are foolish, unjust, cruel, to which the Church is forced to submit, but which she cannot rejoice over or approve. One of the aims of the Soviet Government is the extirpation of religion, but the Church cannot acknowledge its successes in this direction as her own successes' (Open Letter from Solovki, September 27, 1927).

"The courageous majority of the sons of the Russian Church did not accept the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, considering that a union of the Church with the godless Soviet State, which had set itself the goal of annihilating Christianity in general, could not exist on principle.

"But a schism nonetheless occurred. The minority, accepting the declaration, formed a central administration, the so-called 'Moscow Patriarchate,' which, while being supposedly officially recognized by the authorities, in actual fact received no legal rights whatever from them; for they continued, now without hindrance, a most cruel persecution of the Church. In the words of Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd, Metropolitan Sergius, having proclaimed the declaration, entered upon the path of 'monstrous arbitrariness, flattery, and betrayal of the Church to the interests of atheism and the destruction of the Church.'

"The majority, renouncing the declaration, began an illegal ecclesiastical existence. Almost all the bishops were tortured and killed in death camps, among

them the locum tenentes Metropolitan Peter and Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, who was respected by all, and Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd, who was shot to death at the end of 1938, as well as many other bishops and thousands of priests, monks, nuns, and courageous laymen. Those bishops and clergy who miraculously remained alive began to live illegally and to serve Divine services secretly, hiding themselves from the authorities and originating in this fashion the Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union.

“Little news of this Church has come to the free world. The Soviet press long kept silent about her, wishing to give the impression that all believers in the USSR stood behind the Moscow Patriarchate. They even attempted to deny entirely the existence of the Catacomb Church.

“But then, after the death of Stalin and the exposure of his activity, and especially after the fall of Khrushchev, the Soviet press has begun to write more and more often on the secret Church in the USSR, calling it the ‘sect’ of True-Orthodox Christians. It was apparently impossible to keep silence about it any longer; its numbers are too great and it causes the authorities too much alarm.

“Unexpectedly in the *Atheist Dictionary* (Moscow, 1964), on pages 123 and 124 the Catacomb Church is openly discussed. “True-Orthodox Christians,’ we read in the *Dictionary*, ‘an Orthodox sect, originating in the years 1922-24. It was organized in 1927, when Metropolitan Sergius proclaimed the principle of loyalty to the Soviet power.’ ‘Monarchist’ (we would say ecclesiastical) ‘elements, having united around Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Leningrad’ (Petrograd) – the Josephites,’ or, as the same *Dictionary* says, the Tikhonites, formed in 1928 a guiding centre, the True-Orthodox Church, and united all groups and elements which came out against the Soviet order’ (we may add from ourselves, ‘atheist’ order). ‘The True-Orthodox Church directed unto the villages a multitude of monks and nuns,’ for the most part of course priests, we add again from ourselves, who celebrated Divine services and rites secretly and ‘conducted propaganda against the leadership of the Orthodox Church,’ i.e., against the Moscow Patriarchate which had given in to the Soviet power, ‘appealing to people not to submit to Soviet laws,’ which are directed, quite apparently, against the Church of Christ and faith. By the testimony of the *Atheist Dictionary*, the True-Orthodox Christians organized and continue to organize house, ‘i.e., secret, catacomb churches and monasteries... preserving in full the doctrine and rites of Orthodoxy.’ They ‘do not acknowledge the authority of the Orthodox Patriarch,’ i.e., the successor of Metropolitan Sergius, Patriarch Alexis.

“‘Striving to fence off’ the True-Orthodox Christians ‘from the influence of Soviet reality,’ chiefly of course from atheist propaganda, ‘their leaders... make use of the myth of Antichrist, who has supposedly been ruling in the world since 1917.’ The anti-Christian nature of the Soviet power is undoubted for any sound-thinking person, and all the more for a Christian.

“True Orthodox Christians ‘usually refuse to participate in elections,’ which in the Soviet Union, a country deprived of freedom, are simply a comedy, ‘and other public functions; they do not accept pensions, do not allow their children to go to school beyond the fourth class...’ Here is an unexpected Soviet testimony of the truth, to which nothing need be added.

“Honour and praise to the True-Orthodox Christians, heroes of the spirit and confessors, who have not bowed before the terrible power, which can stand only by terror and force and has become accustomed to the abject flattery of its subjects. The Soviet rulers fall into a rage over the fact that there exist people who fear God more than men. They are powerless before the millions of True-Orthodox Christians.

“However, besides the True Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union and the Moscow Patriarchate, which have communion neither of prayer nor of any other kind with each other, there exists yet a part of the Russian Church—free from oppression and persecution by the atheists the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia. She has never broken the spiritual and prayerful bonds with the Catacomb Church in the home land. After the last war many members of this Church appeared abroad and entered into the Russian Church Outside Russia, and thus the bond between these two Churches was strengthened yet more—a bond which has been sustained illegally up to the present time. As time goes on, it becomes all the stronger and better established.

“The part of the Russian Church that is abroad and free is called upon to speak in the free world in the name of the persecuted Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union; she reveals to all the truly tragic condition of believers in the USSR, which the atheist power so carefully hushes up, with the aid of the Moscow Patriarchate, she calls on those who have not lost shame and conscience to help the persecuted.

“This is why it is our sacred duty to watch over the existence of the Russian Church Outside of Russia. The Lord, the searcher of hearts, having permitted His Church to be subjected to oppression, persecution, and deprivation of all rights in the godless Soviet State, has given us, Russian exiles, in the free world the talent of freedom, and He expects from us the increase of this talent and a skilful use of it. And we have not the right to hide it in the earth. Let no one dare to say to us that we should do this, let no-one push us to a mortal sin. For the fate of our Russian Church we, Russian bishops, are responsible before God, and no one in the world can free us from this sacred obligation. No one can understand better than we what is happening in our homeland, of which no one can have any doubt. Many times foreigners, even Orthodox people and those vested with high ecclesiastical rank, have made gross errors in connection with the Russian Church and false conclusions concerning her present condition. May God forgive them this, since they do not know what they are doing.

“We shall not cease to accuse the godless persecutors of faith and those who evilly cooperate with them under the exterior of supposed representatives of the Church. In this the Russian Church Outside of Russia has always seen one of her important tasks. Knowing this, the Soviet power through its agents wages with her a stubborn battle, not hesitating to use any means: lies, bribes, gifts, and intimidation. We, however, shall not suspend our accusation.

“Declaring this before the face of the whole world, I appeal to all our brothers in Christ—Orthodox bishops—and to all people who hold dear the fate of the persecuted Russian Church as a part of the Universal Church of Christ, for understanding, support, and their holy prayers. As for our spiritual children, we call on them to hold firmly to the truth of Orthodoxy, witnessing of her both by one's word and especially by a prayerful, devout Christian life.”

Confessor against Ecumenism

The new metropolitan faced a daunting task. For he had, on the one hand, to lead his Church in decisively denouncing the apostasy of World Orthodoxy, communion with which could no longer be tolerated. And on the other, he had to preserve unity among the members of his own Synod, some of whom were in spirit closer to “World Orthodoxy” than True Orthodoxy...

While Metropolitan Philaret was first-hierarch, ecumenism finally showed its true face - the mask of a terrible heresy uniting in itself all the earlier heresies and striving to engulf Orthodoxy completely, destroying the very concept of the Church of Christ and creating a universal “church” of the antichrist. An important turning-point came in 1964, when, in defiance of the holy canons, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople prayed together in Jerusalem, and in December, 1965 they “lifted the anathemas” placed by the Roman and Constantinopolitan Churches on each other in 1054.

At this critical point the Lord raised Metropolitan Philaret to explain to the ecumenist Orthodox the essence of the danger into which they were falling. In the first of a series of “Sorrowful Epistles”, on December 2/15, 1965, he wrote to Patriarch Athenagoras protesting against his action: “The organic belonging of the Orthodox to the union of the contemporary heretics does not sanctify the latter, while it tears away the Orthodox entering into it from Catholic Orthodox Unity... Your gesture puts a sign of equality between error and truth. For centuries all the Orthodox Churches believed with good reasons that it has violated no doctrine of the Holy Ecumenical Councils; whereas the Church of Rome has introduced a number of innovations in its dogmatic teaching. The more such innovations were introduced, the deeper was to become the separation between the East and the West. The doctrinal deviations of Rome in the eleventh century did not yet contain the errors that were added later. Therefore the cancellation of the mutual

excommunication of 1054 could have been of meaning at that time, but now it is only evidence of indifference in regard to the most important errors, namely new doctrines foreign to the ancient Church, of which some, having been exposed by St. Mark of Ephesus, were the reason why the Church rejected the Union of Florence... No union of the Roman Church with us is possible until it renounces its new doctrines, and no communion in prayer can be restored with it without a decision of all the Churches, which, however, can hardly be possible before the liberation of the Church of Russia which at present has to live in the catacombs... A true dialogue implies an exchange of views with a possibility of persuading the participants to attain an agreement. As one can perceive from the Encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, Pope Paul VI understands the dialogue as a plan for our union with Rome with the help of some formula which would, however, leave unaltered its doctrines, and particularly its dogmatic doctrine about the position of the Pope in the Church. However, any compromise with error is foreign to the history of the Orthodox Church and to the essence of the Church. It could not bring a harmony in the confessions of the Faith, but only an illusory outward unity similar to the conciliation of dissident Protestant communities in the ecumenical movement."

In his second Epistle, written in 1969, Metropolitan Philaret said that he had decided to turn to all the hierarchs, "some of whom occupy the oldest and most glorious sees", because, in the words of St. Gregory the Theologian, "the truth is betrayed by silence", and it is impossible to keep silent when you see a deviation from the purity of Orthodoxy – after all, every bishop at his ordination gives a promise to keep the Faith and the canons of the holy fathers and defend Orthodoxy from heresies. The holy metropolitan quoted various ecumenist declarations of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and clearly showed, on the basis of the patristic teaching and the canons, that the position of the WCC had nothing in common with Orthodoxy, and consequently the Orthodox Churches should not participate in the work of this council. He also emphasised that the voice of the MP was not the voice of the True Russian Church, which was persecuted and concealed itself in the catacombs. He called on all the Orthodox hierarchs to stand up in defence of the purity of Orthodoxy.

On December 16, 1969 the MP Synod decided "that in cases where Old Believers and Catholics ask the Orthodox Church to administer the holy sacraments to them, this is not forbidden."

ROCOR's Archbishop Averky commented on this decision: "Now, even if some entertained some sort of doubts about how we should regard the contemporary Moscow Patriarchate, and whether we can consider it Orthodox after its intimate union with the enemies of God, the persecutors of the Faith and Christ's Church, these doubts must now be completely dismissed: by the very fact that it has entered into liturgical communion with the Papists, it has *fallen away from Orthodoxy* [emphasis in the original] and can no longer be considered Orthodox..."

Metropolitan Philaret agreed with this judgement; and on March 31, 1970, under his presidency the ROCOR Synod passed the following resolution, which for the first time in the history of ROCOR defined the MP as not only schismatic, but also *heretical*: “to consider the decision of the Moscow Patriarchate granting Roman Catholics access to all the sacraments of the Orthodox Church as in violation of the holy canons and contrary to Orthodox dogmatical doctrines. Entering thus into communion with the heterodox, the Moscow Patriarchate estranges itself from the unity of the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church. By its action it does not sanctify the heretics to whom it offers the sacraments, but it itself becomes part of their heresy.”

Eighteen months later, on September 15/28, 1971 a decree of the Hierarchical Council confirmed this decision: “The lack of accord of the decree of the Moscow Patriarchate, concerning the granting of communion to Roman Catholics, with Orthodox dogmatic teaching and the Church canons is completely clear to any person even slightly informed in theology. It was justly condemned by a decree of the Synod of the Church of Greece. The holy canons do permit the communication of a great sinner who is under penance (epitimia) when he is about to die (I Ecumenical 13, Carthage 6, Gregory of Nyssa 2 and 5), but there is not a single canon which would extend this to include persons foreign to the Orthodox Church, as long as they have not renounced their false doctrines. No matter what explanation Metropolitan Nicodemus and the other Moscow hierarchs might try to give of this act, it is completely clear that by this decision, even though with certain limitations, communion has been established between the Moscow Patriarchate and Roman Catholics. Furthermore, the latter have already made the decision to permit members of the Orthodox Church to receive communion from them. All this was particularly clearly demonstrated in the service held on December 14, 1970, in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, when Metropolitan Nicodemus gave communion to Catholic clerics. It is perfectly clear that this act could not be justified by any need. By this act the Moscow Patriarchate has betrayed Orthodoxy. If the 45th Canon of the Holy Apostles excommunicates from the Church an Orthodox bishop or cleric who has ‘only prayed together with heretics’, and the 10th Apostolic Canon forbids even prayer together with those who are excommunicated, what can we say about a bishop who dares to offer the Holy Mysteries to them? If catechumens must leave the church before the sanctification of the Gifts and are not permitted even at point of death to receive communion until they are united to the Church, how can one justify the communicating of persons who, being members of heretical communities, are much farther away from the Church than a catechumen, who is preparing to unite with her? The act of the Moscow Synod, which was confirmed by the recent Council of the Moscow Patriarchate in Moscow, extends the responsibility for this un-Orthodox decision to all participants of the Moscow Council and to their entire Church organization. The decision to admit Catholics to communion is an act that is not only anticanonical, but heretical as well, as inflicting harm on the Orthodox

doctrine of the Church, since only true members of the Church are called to communicate of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. The Moscow decree, logically considered, recognizes as her members those who, through their doctrinal errors, in both heart and mind are far from her."

The metropolitan wrote a third "Sorrowful Epistle" on the Sunday of Orthodoxy, 1972. In it he noted that although in the last two years hierarchs had made declarations about the heterodoxy of the ecumenical movement, not one Orthodox Church had declared that it was leaving the WCC. His aim in writing this fresh epistle was "to show that abyss of heresy against the very concept of the Church into which all the participants in the ecumenical movement are being drawn". He recalled the threatening prophecy of the Apostle Paul that to those who will not receive "the love of the truth for salvation" the Lord will send "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thessalonians 2.10-12).

A fourth Epistle, written in 1975, was devoted to the so-called "Thyateira Confession" of Metropolitan Athenagoras [of Thyateira and Great Britain], the exarch of the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate in Europe - a document written in a completely heretical spirit, but which did not elicit any reaction from the leaders of the official churches. Evidently Metropolitan Philaret hoped at the beginning that at any rate one of the bishops of 'World Orthodoxy' might listen to his words, which is why he addressed them in his epistles as true Archpastors of the Church. Besides, attempts at exhortation corresponded to the apostolic command: 'A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself' (Titus 3. 10-11). It was fitting, before anathematizing the apostates, to try and convert them from their error. Alas, no conversion took place, and the ecumenical impiety continued to pour out. And so the saint continued to explain the danger of the new heresy, which encompassed all the old heresies into a *heresy of heresies*.

Thus while telling about the zeal of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, who slapped the face of Arius when he blasphemed against the Son of God, Vladyka said: "O how often we do not have enough of such zeal when it is really necessary to speak for the insulted and trodden-on truth! I want to tell you about one incident that took place not long ago and which it would have been difficult even to imagine several years ago - and now we are going further and further downhill all the time. One man came from Paris and said that the following incident had taken place at a so-called 'ecumenical meeting'. Of course, you know what ecumenism is; it is *the heresy of heresies*. It wants to completely wipe out the concept of the Orthodox Church as the guardian of the Truth, and to create some kind of new, strange church. And so there took place this 'ecumenical meeting'. Present were a so-called Orthodox protopriest from the Paris Theological (more exactly, heretical) Institute, a Jewish rabbi, a pastor and a Catholic priest. At first they sort of prayed, and then began the speeches. And

then (forgive me for saying such things from the holy ambon, but I want to show you what we have come to) the Jewish rabbi said that the Lord Jesus Christ was the illegitimate son of a dissolute woman...

"But that's not the main horror. The Jewish people has opposed God for a long time... - so there's nothing surprising in this. But the horror was that when he said this *everyone* was silent. Later, a man who had heard this terrible blasphemy asked the 'Orthodox' protopriest: 'How could you keep silent?' He replied: 'I didn't want to offend this Jew.' It's wrong to offend a Jew, but to insult the All-Pure Virgin Mary is permitted! Look at the state we have come to! How often does it happen to us all now that we do not have the zeal to stand up, when necessary, in defence of our holy things! The Orthodox cleric must zealously stand up against blasphemy, just as the holy Hierarch Nicholas stopped the mouth of the heretic... But now, unfortunately, we have become, as the saying goes, 'shamefully indifferent to both the evil and the good'. And it is precisely in the soil of this indifference, of a kind of feeling of self-preservation, that the heresy of ecumenism has established itself - as also apostasy, that falling away which is becoming more and more evident... Let us remember, brethren, that Christian love embraces all in itself, is compassionate to all, wishes that all be saved and is sorry for, and merciful to, and loves every creature of God; but where it sees a conscious assault on the truth it turns into fiery zeal which cannot bear any such blasphemy... And so must it always be, because every Orthodox Christian must always be zealous for God."

Again he wrote, concerning the comments of certain ecumenist intellectuals: "I must say that it is not the Church that has lagged behind the times, but it is they that have fled to who knows where!"

"To what lengths of lunacy has contemporary mankind gone! It is not difficult to arrive at this conclusion, if one observes what is transpiring in the world. Recently, there was a press report stating that the organization of the so-called World Council of Churches - which includes nearly all Christian denominations and Orthodox Churches, except one i.e. ROCA - has accepted as a full member, a new religious order that serves satan! Satanism has been embraced by the World Council of Churches!

"Consequently, this means that the ill-fated person, which heads this frightening and ungodly teaching - Satanism, will be seated at the same table with representatives of Christian faiths, perhaps assisting in the formulation of ecumenical communion and services that will not displease anyone! This means that the WCC has secured a new brother-in-arms, a new colleague - the leader of this insane Satanism.

"Incidentally, in passing, and as I stated before, nearly all Orthodox Churches have joined the World Council of Churches, the most recent being the partial entry

of the American Red Sovietonomous Church, which has now existed for a number of years.

“All these developments beg the question - where to now? This is to what extent of madness that humanity has reached! Yet they yell that the Church cannot keep up with them. But keep up with what? I reiterate - it's not the Church that has lagged behind the times, but these people that have created their new lifestyle. They are the ones that have fled from the Church to who knows where, and their demise will be frightening!”

In addition to issuing his “Sorrowful Epistles”, Metropolitan Philaret and his Synod took concrete measures to guard his flock against the heresy of ecumenism. It was especially necessary to make clear that Catholics and Protestants were not inside the True Church. And so in 1971 it was decreed that all Catholics and Protestants coming to the Orthodox Church should be received by full threefold immersion baptism.

This re-establishment of the canonical norms in relation to the reception of heretics increased the prestige of ROCOR among all those seeking the truth of Orthodoxy, and many converts from western confessions, as well as Orthodox from other, ecumenical jurisdictions, sought refuge in ROCOR.

While rebuking the apostasy of the “World Orthodox” who took part in the World Council of Churches, Metropolitan Philaret was zealous to establish relations with other truly confessing Churches. Thus in December, 1969, under his leadership, the Synod of ROCOR officially recognised the validity of the ordinations of the “Florinite” branch of the Greek Old Calendarists. And in September, 1971 communion was also established with the “Matthewite” branch of the same Church.

On September 20, 1975, Metropolitan Philaret wrote to Metropolitan Epiphanius of Kition, the leader of the Old Calendarist Church of Cyprus: “From the beginning our Russian Church has known that the calendar innovation was unacceptable, and has not dared to move this boundary set by patristic tradition, for the Ecclesiastical Calendar is a support of the life of the Church and as such is fortified by decrees of Holy Tradition.

“However, it is obvious to all that the calendar innovation caused a schism in the Greek Church in 1924, and the responsibility for the schism weighs exclusively on the innovators. This is the conclusion that will be reached by anyone studying the Patriarchal Tomoi (as that of 1583) and taking into account the wretched and self-evident fact of the schism and the frightful punishments, persecutions and blasphemies which those who have cleaved to the patristic piety of Holy Tradition have undergone.

“Thinking in this way, our Holy Synod has decreed that we ‘flee’ concelebrations with the new calendarist modernists. We do not concelebrate with them, nor do we give permission or a blessing to our clergy for such a concelebration. In order to assure you of the truth of what we say, we inform you that whenever a community in the diaspora is received into our Church, they are required to follow the patristic Calendar of the Orthodox Church...”

In 1977 the metropolitan received under his omophorion fourteen priests of the Russian Catacomb Church whose archpastor had died, thereby marking the beginning of the return of ROCOR to the Russian land. He had a lofty estimate of the exploit of the catacombniks and used to cite the example of the catacomb nuns imprisoned in an Arctic camp, who refused to work for the commands of the godless authorities and were put out in the icy wind in order to die - but through a miracle of God - did not die. He used to say: “If the whole multi-million mass of Russian people were to display such faithfulness as these nuns displayed, and refused to obey the robbers who have planted themselves on the Russian people - communism would fall in a moment, for the people would receive the same help from God as miraculously saved the nuns who went to certain death. But as long as the people recognises this power and obeys it, even if with curses in their soul, this power will remain in place.”

The decision of the MP to give communion to Catholics put the other Russian jurisdiction in North America, the American Metropolia, into a difficult position; for in the early 1960s the Metropolia (a body in schism from ROCOR since 1946) had been, through Fr. Georges Florovsky, among the most conservative participants in the ecumenical movement. However, this Church had been secretly negotiating with the Moscow Patriarchate for a grant of autocephaly. According to the deal eventually agreed upon, the patriarchate was to declare the Metropolia to be the autocephalous Orthodox Church of America (OCA) in exchange for the Japanese parishes of the Metropolia coming within the jurisdiction of the patriarchate. And yet the MP’s parishes in America did not pass into the OCA, but remained directly under the patriarchate!

This deal, which was recognized by none of the Local Churches and was to the advantage, in the long run, only of the MP and the KGB (it was engineered by the KGB General Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad), was made public in December, 1969 - just at the moment that the patriarchate announced that it had entered into partial communion with the Catholics. Thus the former Metropolia found that it had been granted autocephaly by a Church that was now in communion with the Catholics. Naturally, this dealt a death blow to such anti-ecumenist opinion as still existed in that Church.

In 1971 the ROCOR Council of Bishops passed over the heretical aspect of the matter, and concentrated on the illegality of the church that had given the

autocephaly: “The Council of Bishops, having listened to the report of the Synod of Bishops concerning the so-called Metropolia’s having received autocephaly from the Patriarchate of Moscow, approves all the steps taken in due course by the Synod of Bishops to convince Metropolitan Irenaeus and his colleagues of the perniciousness of a step which deepens the division which was the result of the decision of the Cleveland Council of 1946 which broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

“The American Metropolia has received its autocephaly from the Patriarchate of Moscow, which has not possessed genuine canonical succession from His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon from the time when Metropolitan Sergius, who later called himself Patriarch, violated his oath with regard to Metropolitan Peter, the *locum tenens* of the patriarchal throne, and set out upon a path which was then condemned by the senior hierarchs of the Church of Russia. Submitting all the more to the commands of the atheistic, anti-Christian regime, the Patriarchate of Moscow has ceased to be that which expresses the voice of the Russian Orthodox Church. For this reason, as the Synod of Bishops has correctly declared, none of its acts, including the bestowal of autocephaly upon the American Metropolia, has legal force. Furthermore, apart from this, this act, which affects the rights of many Churches, has elicited definite protests on the part of a number of Orthodox Churches, who have even severed communion with the American Metropolia.

“Viewing this illicit act with sorrow, and acknowledging it to be null and void, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia, which has hitherto not abandoned hope for the restoration of ecclesiastical unity in America, sees in the declaration of American autocephaly a step which will lead the American Metropolia yet farther away from the ecclesiastical unity of the Church of Russia. Perceiving therein a great sin against the enslaved and suffering Church of Russia, the Council of Bishops *DECIDES*: henceforth, neither the clergy nor the laity [of the Russian Church Abroad] are to have communion in prayer or the divine services with the hierarchy or clergy of the American Metropolia.”

The Third All-Diaspora Council

In spite of his strictness in relation to heretical and schismatic churches, ROCOR under the wise leadership of Metropolitan Philaret flourished and grew. True Orthodoxy was preached not only to the Russian émigrés, but also in Alaska, and India and Africa. New monasteries were founded, and the seminary attached to the Holy Trinity monastery in Jordanville, New York State, became the major publisher of books in Church Slavonic, as well as the best publisher of Orthodox English-language texts. Old Russian icon-painting was regenerated under the hand of Archimandrite Cyprian of Jordanville and his disciples. And church schools, orphanages, work-houses and old people’s homes were built in many dioceses.

In 1974 the Third All-Emigration Council of ROCOR took place in Jordanville.

Just as the First Council, held at Karlovtsy in 1921, had defined the relationship of ROCOR to the Bolshevik regime and the Romanov dynasty; and the Second Council, held in Belgrade in 1938, defined her relationship to the Church inside Russia; so the Third Council tried to define her relationship to the ecumenical and dissident movements. As Metropolitan Philaret, president of the Council, said in his keynote address: "First of all, the Council must declare not only for the Russian flock, but for the entire Church, its concept of the Church; to reveal the dogma of the Church... The Council must determine the place our Church Abroad holds within contemporary Orthodoxy, among the other 'so-called' churches. We say 'so-called' for though now they often speak of many 'churches', the Church of Christ is single and One."

Here the metropolitan was hinting that faithfulness to the dogma of the One Church was not compatible with communion with "World Orthodoxy", the Local Orthodox Churches that participated in the ecumenical movement. However, such a vision of ROCOR was not shared by all her hierarchs. Some saw the isolation of ROCOR from other local Churches as necessitated, not so much by the struggle against ecumenism, as by the need to preserve *Russianness* among the Russian émigrés. They had passively acquiesced in Metropolitan Philaret's "Sorrowful Epistles", and in the union with the Greek Old Calendarists. But they began to stir when the consequences of this were spelled out by the "zealots" in ROCOR: no further communion with the new calendarists, the Serbs and Jerusalem. The unofficial leader of this group of bishops turned out to be Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, who was supported by Bishop Laurus of Manhattan, Archbishop Philotheus of Germany and Bishop Paul of Stuttgart.

In his address to the Council, entitled "Our Church in the Modern World", Anthony of Geneva declared: "By the example of our First Hierarchs [Anthony and Anastasy] we must carefully preserve those fine threads which bind us with the Orthodox world. Under no circumstances must we isolate ourselves, seeing around us, often imagined, heretics and schismatics. Through gradual self-isolation we will fall into the extremism which our metropolitans wisely avoided, we will reject that middle, royal path which until now our Church has travelled... By isolating ourselves, we will embark upon the path of sectarianism, fearing everyone and everything, we will become possessed with paranoia."

This somewhat hysterical appeal not to separate from the World Orthodox at just the point when they were embarking upon "super-ecumenism" was criticised by Protopresbyter George Grabbe: "The report does not mention to the degree necessary, maybe, that life goes on, and the sickness of ecumenism deepens and widens more and more. Condescension, *oikonomia*, must under different circumstances be applied differently, and to different degrees. In doses too great it can betray the Truth." Then Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles recalled that "we have many Greek [Old Calendarist] parishes. Our concelebration with the new

calendarists was very bitter for them.”

Another important issue that divided the hierarchs was the attitude that needed to be taken to the Moscow Patriarchate. In 1971 the MP elected a new patriarch, which drew two resolutions from the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR. The first, dated September 1/14, declared: “The free part of the Russian Church, which is beyond the frontiers of the USSR, is heart and soul with the confessors of the faith who... are called ‘the True Orthodox Christians’, and who often go by the name of ‘the Catacomb Church’... The Council of Bishops recognizes its spiritual unity with them...”

The second, of the same date, is called “Resolution of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia Concerning the Election of Pimen (Izvekov) as Patriarch of Moscow”: “All of the elections of Patriarchs in Moscow, beginning in 1943, are invalid on the basis of the 30th Canon of the Holy Apostles and the 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council, according to which, ‘if any bishop, having made use of secular rulers, should receive through them Episcopal authority in the Church, let him be defrocked and excommunicated along with all those in communion with him’. The significance that the Fathers of the 7th Council gave to such an offence is obvious from the very fact of a double punishment for it, that is, not only deposition but excommunication as well, something unusual for ecclesiastical law. The famous commentator on Canon Law, Bishop Nicodemus of Dalmatia, gives the following explanation of the 30th Canon of the Holy Apostles: ‘If the Church condemned unlawful influence by the secular authorities in the ordination of bishops at a time when the rulers were Christians, then it follows that She should condemn such action all the more when the latter are pagans and place even heavier penalties on the guilty parties, who were not ashamed of asking for help from pagan rulers and the authorities subordinated to them, in order to gain the episcopate. This (30th) Canon has such cases in view’. If in defence of this position examples are given of the Patriarchs of Constantinople who were placed on the Throne at the caprice of the Turkish Sultans, one can reply that no anomaly can be regarded as a norm and that one breach of Canon Law cannot justify another.

“The election of Pimen (Izvekov) as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia at the gathering calling itself an All-Russian Church Council in Moscow the 2nd of June of this year, on the authority of the 3rd Canon of the 7th Ecumenical Council and other reasons set forth in this decision, is to be regarded as unlawful and void, and all of his acts and directions as having no strength.”

However, ROCOR’s attitude to the MP was complicated by the phenomenon known as “the dissident movement” in the Soviet Union. The dissidents were courageous opponents of the Soviet regime and supporters of human rights whose activity affected both the political sphere (for example, Sakharov and Solzhenitsyn) and the religious sphere (Solzhenitsyn again, the priests Eshliman, Yakunin and

Dudko, the layman Boris Talantov).

One of the most famous dissidents, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, had been expelled from the Soviet Union in 1974 and now turned up at ROCOR's All-Diaspora Council, although he was a member of the MP, at the invitation of Archbishop Anthony of Geneva. He promptly created a sensation by declaring that he did not believe in the existence of the Catacomb Church. He supported ROCOR's independent stance, but opposed any condemnation of the MP as graceless.

This position eminently suited those hierarchs of ROCOR, such as Anthony of Geneva, whose attitude to events in Russia was dictated as much by political as by spiritual or ecclesiological considerations. They were sincere anti-communists and despised the kowtowing of the MP hierarchs to communism, but did not wish to deny that the MP was a true Church. In other words, their opposition to the MP was political and patriotic rather than strictly ecclesiastical and dogmatic.

Taking the opportunity presented by Solzhenitsyn's speech, Archbishop Anthony of Geneva read a report calling on ROCOR to support the dissidents, in spite of the fact that they were ecumenists and in the MP. He was countered by Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, who, while respecting the courage of the dissidents, objected to a recognition of them that would devalue the witness of the true catacomb confessors by giving the impression that it is possible to be a true confessor from within a heretical church organization.

Also, Metropolitan Philaret moved for an official statement that the MP was graceless. According to the witness of a seminarian present at the Council, the majority of bishops and delegates would have supported such a motion. However, at the last minute the metropolitan was persuaded not to proceed with the motion on the grounds that it would have caused a schism.

The following is an extract from Protocol № 3 of the ROCOR Council, dated October 8/21, 1974: "Bishop Gregory says that to the question of the existence (of grace) it is not always possible to give a final reply immediately. The loss of grace is the consequence of spiritual death, which sometimes does not come immediately. Thus plants sometimes die gradually. In relation to the loss of grace in the Moscow Patriarchate, it would be interesting to make the comparison with the position of the iconoclasts, although the sin of the Patriarchate is deeper. The President [Metropolitan Philaret] says that we cannot now issue a resolution on grace in the Moscow Patriarchate, but we can be certain that grace lives only in the true Church, but the Moscow hierarchs have gone directly against Christ and His work. How can there be grace among them? The metropolitan personally considers that the Moscow Patriarchate is graceless."

Voices were heard at the 1974 Council arguing for union not only between the ROCOR and MP dissidents, but also between ROCOR and the Paris and American

Metropolia (Orthodox Church of America) jurisdictions. Love, they said, should unite us, and we should not emphasize our differences. But Metropolitan Philaret pointed out that love which does not wish to disturb our neighbour by pointing out his errors is not love but hatred! He continued to regard the Paris and American jurisdictions as schismatic, and did not allow intercommunion with them. This was in accordance with his profoundly felt conviction that there is only One True Church.

Some years later, on November 26 / December 9, 1979, he returned to this subject in a letter to Abbess Magdalena (Grabbe) of Lesna: "To such a degree do I not believe in the grace of the schismatics' 'manipulations', that in the event that I were dying and it was necessary to give me Communion, I would receive it neither from the 'Parisians' nor from the American False-Autocephalites, lest in place of the Holy Mysteries I should swallow a piece of bread and some wine... I am accused of excessive strictness and of 'fanaticism'. But I have sufficient basis for holding my point of view, for behind me stand great authorities, both ancient and contemporary... What do these clear and categorical words of this Holy Father [John Chrysostom] signify? They indicate nothing other than that schism is graceless! Christ was not divided, and His grace is one. If one is to believe in the 'state of grace' of schism, then one must either admit that we do not have grace, those who broke away having taken it with them; or else admit that there are two graces and obviously two true Churches, for grace is given only in the true Church... How correct Vladyka Nektary [of Seattle] is when he always affirms: there is no such thing as 'different jurisdictions'; but there is only the Orthodox Church Abroad, and outside of her are schisms and heresies."

Conflicts in the Synod

The divisions that were beginning to emerge between Metropolitan Philaret and the majority of other hierarchs were expressed by him in a letter to one of his few allies, Protopresbyter George Grabbe, the Secretary of the Synod. Describing a meeting with the hierarchs, he wrote: "I saw how truly alone I am among our hierarchs with my views on matters of principle (although on a personal level I am on good terms with everyone). And I am in earnest when I say that I am considering retiring. Of course, I won't leave all of a sudden, unexpectedly. But at the next Council I intend to point out that too many things that are taking place in our church life do not sit well with me. And if the majority of the episcopacy agree with me then I will not raise the matter of retiring. But if I see that I am alone or see myself in the minority then I will announce that I am retiring. For I cannot head, nor, therefore bear the responsibility for that with which I am not in agreement in principle. In particular, I do not agree with our practice of halfway relations with the American and Parisian schismatics. The Holy Fathers insistently state that long and obdurately continuing schism is close to being heresy, and that it is necessary to relate to stubborn schismatics as to heretics, not allowing any communion with them whatsoever (how Vladyka Anthony's hair would stand on end at such a

pronouncement! But I remain unyielding)... There are very many other matters, too, in particular about Solzhenitsyn, concerning whom I continue to remain more than just cautious..."

Another important dissident was the Moscow priest Fr. Demetrius Dudko, who conducted open meetings in his church that attracted many and influenced many more. Unlike Solzhenitsyn, he knew of the Catacomb Church, and wrote of it in relatively flattering terms. However, Fr. Demetrius was infected with ecumenist and liberal ideas, which, of course, he communicated to his followers. The right attitude to him would have been to applaud his courage and the correct opinions he expressed, while gently seeking to correct his liberalism and ecumenism. In no way was it right to treat him as if he were a true priest in the True Church, and an example to be followed that was no less praiseworthy than those of the true confessors in the catacombs. But that is precisely what many in ROCOR, led by Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, now began to do.

In 1979, in response to a series of protests by Fr. Demetrius against what he saw as excessive strictness on the part of ROCOR towards the MP, Archbishop Anthony, breaking the rule imposed by Metropolitan Anastasy and reasserted by Metropolitan Philaret that ROCOR members should have no contact, "even of an everyday nature", with Soviet church clergy, wrote to Dudko: "I hasten to console you that the part of the Russian Church which lives in freedom beyond the bounds of the homeland, has never officially considered the Moscow Patriarchate, which is recognised in the USSR, as graceless.... We have never dared to deny the grace-filled nature of the official church, for we believe that the sacraments carried out by her clergy are sacraments. Therefore our bishops received your clergy into the Church Abroad in their existing rank... On the other hand, the representatives of the Catacomb Church in Russia accuse us of not wanting to recognise the Moscow Patriarchate as graceless."

However, in 1980, Fr. Demetrius was arrested, which was closely followed by the arrest of his disciples Victor Kapitanchuk and Lev Regelson. Then, on Soviet television, Dudko confessed that his "so-called struggle with godlessness" was in fact "a struggle with Soviet power". Regelson confessed to having "criminal ties" with foreign correspondents and of mixing religious activity with politics, while Kapitanchuk also confessed to links with Western correspondents, saying that he had "inflicted damage on the Soviet state for which I am very sorry". Both men implicated others in their "crimes".

Metropolitan Philaret had been proved right - although many continued to justify Dudko and denounced the zealots for "judging" him. But it was not a question of "judging", and nobody rejoiced in the fall of the dissident. It was a question of the correct discerning of the boundaries of the Church and the correct attitude to those struggling outside it. This tragedy overtook Dudko, wrote the metropolitan, because

his activity had taken place from within the Moscow Patriarchate – that is, “outside the True Church”. And he continued: “What is the ‘Soviet church’? Fr. Archimandrite Constantine has said often and insistently that the most terrible thing that the God-fighting authorities have done to Russia is the appearance of the ‘Soviet church’, which the Bolsheviks offered up to the people as the True Church, having driven the real Orthodox Church into the catacombs or the concentration camps. This false church has been twice anathematised. His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the All-Russian Church Council anathematised the communists and all their co-workers. This terrible anathema has not been lifted to this day and preserves its power, since it can be lifted only by an All-Russian Church Council, as being the canonically higher Church authority. And a terrible thing happened in 1927, when the leader of the Church, Metropolitan Sergius, by his shameful apostate declaration submitted the Russian Church to the Bolsheviks and declared that he was cooperating with them. In the most exact sense the expression of the prayer before confession was fulfilled: ‘fallen under his own anathema’! For in 1918 the Church anathematised all the co-workers of communism, and in 1927 she herself entered into the company of these co-workers and began to praise the red God-fighting authorities – to praise the red beast of which the Apocalypse speaks. And this is not all. When Metropolitan Sergius published his criminal declaration, the faithful children of the Church immediately separated from the Soviet church, and the Catacomb Church was created. And she in her turn anathematised the official church for her betrayal of Christ... We receive clergymen from Moscow not as ones possessing grace, but as ones receiving it by the very act of union. But to recognize the church of the evil-doers as the bearer and repository of grace – that we, of course, cannot do. For outside of Orthodoxy there is *no* grace; and the Soviet church has deprived itself of grace.”

Again, writing to Fr. Victor Potapov in 1980, he said: “Will anyone dare to affirm that the Lord and His grace abide in the church of the evil-doers, which praises His demonized enemies and cooperates with them... Can a church be grace-filled which has been united with the God-fighters?! The reply is obvious.... We received clergy from Moscow not as having grace, but as receiving it in the act of union itself. But we cannot of course recognize the church of the evil-doers as the bearer and keeper of grace. For there is not grace outside Orthodoxy, and the Soviet church has deprived itself of grace.”

Another important cause of conflict between Metropolitan Philaret and Archbishop Anthony of Geneva was the issue of relations with the Serbian Church. The Serbs had joined the WCC in 1965 and were as fully under the control of the communists as the MP. In spite of this, Archbishop Anthony continued to serve with the Serbs in his West European diocese, citing the pre-war hospitality of the Serbs to ROCOR in his justification. He also continued to serve with the new calendarists, which led to several parishes leaving his diocese, and to the Matthewite Greek Old Calendarists breaking communion with ROCOR in 1976.

The ROCOR Bishops had actually decided to refrain from communion with Serbs as long ago as May 19 / June 1, 1967 in a conciliar resolution marked "Top Secret": "In addition to the resolution of the present Council of Bishops on relations with the Serbian Orthodox church, the suggestion of his Eminence the First Hierarch and President of the Council of Bishops Metropolitan Philaret has been accepted and confirmed, that all the Reverend Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad should refrain from concelebration with the hierarchy of the Serbian Orthodox Church."

In connection with the Serbian issue Metropolitan Philaret wrote to Archbishop Anthony: "I consider it my duty to point out to you, Vladyka, that your assertion that we must thank the Serbian Church for her treatment of us, I fully accept, but only as regards her past – the glorious past of the Serbian Church. Yes, of course, we must hold the names of their Holinesses Patriarchs Demetrius and Barnabas in grateful memory for their precious support of the Church Abroad at that time when she had no place to lay her head.

"There is no denying that a certain honour is due the Serbian Church for her refusing to condemn our Church Abroad at the parasynagogue in Moscow in 1971, and also on later occasions when Moscow again raised the matter. But then, on the other hand, she did participate in the aforementioned parasynagogue, when it elected Pimen, and the Serbian hierarchs did not protest against this absolutely anti-canonical election, when he who had already been chosen and appointed by the God-hating regime was elected. Our Council of 1971 did not, and could not, recognize Pimen, whereas the Serbian Patriarchate recognized and does recognize him, addressing him as Patriarch, and is in full communion with him. And thus she opposes us directly, for we attempt at all times to explain to the "Free World" that the Soviet Patriarchate is not the genuine representative and head of the much-suffering Russian Church. But the Serbian Church recognizes her as such, and by so doing commits a grave sin against the Russian Church and the Russian Orthodox people.

"How can there be any talk here of a special gratitude to her? Oh, if the Serbian Church would, while recognizing our righteousness, likewise directly and openly, boldly recognize the unrighteousness of the Soviets! Well – then there would truly be something for us to thank her for! But now, as it is, while extending one hand to us, she extends her other hand to our opponents and the enemies of God and the Church. If it pleases you, having shut your eyes to this sad reality, to thank the Serbs for such 'exploits' of theirs, then that is your affair, but I am not a participant in this expression of gratitude.

"How dangerous are compromises in matters of principle! They render people powerless in defence of the Truth. Why is it that the Serbian Patriarchate cannot

resolve to sever communion with the Soviet hierarchy? Because she herself is travelling along the same dark and dangerous path of compromise with the God-hating communists. True, she has not progressed along that path to the extent that the Soviet hierarchy has, and she attempts to preach and defend the faith, but if the shades and nuances here are quite different, yet, in principle, the matter stands on one and the same level”.

Metropolitan Philaret was the humblest and meekest of men. However, when it came to matters of the faith, he showed no partiality to anyone. Thus in 1970 Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Jordanville, who was a zealot for the faith and close to the views of the metropolitan, permitted some Monophysite Copts to celebrate a service in Jordanville. Metropolitan Philaret, considering that the church in Jordanville had been defiled by the ministrations of heretics, ordered that it be re-consecrated. Then, in a letter to Archbishop Averky, he pointed out all the anticanonicity of this act, emphasising that it could be justified by no economy and expressing the fear that the faithful children of ROCOR would turn away from her if similar incidents were repeated...

Sorrows and Joys

Metropolitan Philaret was a very humble, shy man, who avoided worldly events and people. At the same time he had a great sense of humour and was very compassionate. As with all the saints, he had to suffer many slanders and attacks, even physical ones. Once a certain archimandrite in his presence declared to the other hierarchs that it was necessary quickly to remove “such an unfitting Metropolitan” ...

In 1976, the holy hierarch came to England and was asked by the ruling hierarch, Archbishop Nikodim of Richmond and Great Britain, why he had criticised the baptism of a group of laypeople in his diocese. The metropolitan said he had no objection and asked to see his letter. On being shown it, he said that he had not written it – his signature had been forged...

Again, in 1977, to a layman who was protesting against the ecumenist activities of Archbishop Anthony of Geneva, he said that while he agreed with his protest, he could do nothing to help him because he had a gun at his head – and at this point he formed the fingers of his right hand in the form of a revolver and pointed it at his temple.

According to Fr. Alexis Makrikov, several attempts were made on his life. One took place when he was returning by ship from the Lesna convent in France to the USA. Suddenly the fire in the ship’s furnace became so powerful that the smoke-stack became white-hot. The captain of the ship, seeing no possibility of quenching the force of the fire, which threaten to melt down the smoke-stack and engulf the whole ship, turned for help to Metropolitan Philaret and asked him to pray, because

in his opinion only God could save the ship and its passengers. The saint listened to the captain and immediately began to pray to God. Between 10 and 20 minutes passed, and the smoke-stack began to cool and turn red. And within an hour it had become black again. The ship was saved by the grace of God! The captain again came to the metropolitan, kissed his hand and thanked him for his prayers...

In spite of the opposition of individual bishops and clergy, as well as the enemies from outside the Church, Metropolitan Philaret was loved by the broad masses of the church people. As during his life in Harbin, the holy hierarch refused nobody help on his becoming First-Hierarch. He took special care over the spiritual enlightenment of the young, whom he very much loved and by whom he was always surrounded.

He taught people true humility and repentance: "Sometimes people say about themselves: "Oh, I'm very religious, I'm a deep believer," - and they say this sincerely, thinking that can in actual fact say this about themselves with good reason... From the life of the Church we see that those who really had true faith always thought about themselves and their faith in a very humble way, and always considered and were conscious of themselves as being of little faith... He who really believes does not trust his faith and sees himself as being of little faith. He who in essence does not have the true faith thinks that he believes deeply...

"We see a similar 'paradox' in the moral, ethical and spiritual evaluation of a person;... righteous men see themselves as sinners, while sinners see themselves as righteous.

"... In the soul of a sinner unenlightened by the Grace of God, who does not think about the spiritual life, who does not think about correction, who does not think about how he will answer for himself before God, everything has merged together, and he himself can make out nothing in it; only the all-seeing God sees the pitiful condition of the soul of this man. But he himself does not feel it and does not notice it, and thinks that he is not that bad, and that the passages in the Gospel that talk about great sinners have no relationship at all to him. Perhaps he does not think of himself as holy, but he supposes that he is not that bad...

"Those who were pleasing to God thought of themselves in a completely different way and saw themselves and their spiritual nature in a completely different light. One ascetic wept all the time; his disciple asked him: 'Father, what are you weeping about?' 'About my sins, my son,' he replied. 'But what sins can you have? And why do you weep over them so much?' 'My son,' replied the ascetic, 'if I could see my sins as they should be seen, in all their ugliness, I would ask you to weep for my sins together with me.' That is how these extraordinary people spoke about themselves. But we, being ordinary people, do not see our sinfulness and do not feel its weight. Hence it turns out as I have just said: a person comes to confession and does not

know what to say. One woman arriving for confession just said: 'Batyushka, I've forgotten everything.' What do you think: if a man has a painful hand or leg or some inner organ, and goes to the doctor, will he forget that he has a pain? So is it with the soul: if it really burns with a feeling of repentance, it will not forget its sins. Of course, not one person can remember all his sins – all to the last one, without exception. But true repentance unfailing demands that a man should be conscious of his sinfulness and feel sincere compunction over it.

"We pray in the Great Fast that the Lord grant us to behold our sins – our sins, and not other people's. But it is necessary to pray about this not only in the Fast, but at all times – to pray that the Lord may teach us to see ourselves as we should and not think about our supposed 'righteousness'. But we must remember that only the mercy of God can open a man's eyes to his true spiritual condition and in this way place him on the path of true repentance."

During the period of service of Metropolitan Philaret as first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad many new saints of God were glorified by the Church Abroad: Righteous John of Kronstadt (in 1964), St. Herman of Alaska (in 1971), Blessed Xenia of St. Petersburg (in 1978), the Synaxis of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia (1981) and St. Paisius Velichkovsky (1982).

Of these canonizations the most significant was that of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. Unlike the seemingly similar act of the MP in 2000, this act did not confuse true martyrs with false, true servants of Christ with sergianists and traitors. Its influence within Russia was, and continues to be, very great.

Metropolitan Philaret wrote about this unique event: "Although in the history of the Church of Christ we see examples of martyrdom in all periods of her existence, still, before the Russian Revolution the exploit of martyrdom was something primarily of the first centuries of Christianity, when paganism strove by iron and blood to annihilate the Holy Church.

"We see something else today. With the appearance and consolidation of God-fighting communism in Russia, there began a persecution of the faith unheard of in its cruelty and broad scale. As one Church writer has defined it, Orthodox Russia has been on Golgotha, and the Russian Church on the Cross The Russian Church and people have given an uncounted multitude of cases of the martyric endurance of persecutions and death for faith in Christ... not merely hundreds or thousands, but millions of sufferers for faith--an unheard of and shocking phenomenon!

"But at the same time the Russian land is being purified of this defilement by the sacred blood of the New Martyrs who have suffered for faith and righteousness. The Russian land has been abundantly watered by this blood--watered, sanctified, and cleansed from the senselessness of the atheists and God-fighters!

"The day draws near of the canonization-glorification of the uncounted choir of martyrs and confessors of the faith which the Russian Church and people have manifested to the world. This will be a day of the greatest solemnity for the Orthodox faith--not only in Russia and in the Russian diaspora, but in the whole World, wherever there are faithful children of the Orthodox Church....

"Great and numerous is the choir of the Russian New Martyrs. It is headed first of all by the sacred names of His Holiness, Patriarch Tikhon, the murdered Metropolitan Vladimir and Benjamin; Metropolitan Vladimir occupies a special place of honour in it as the first martyr who placed the beginning of this glorious choir. At the same time, an entirely special place in the choir of the New Martyrs is taken by the Royal Family, headed by the Tsar-martyr, Emperor Nicolas Alexandrovich, who once said: 'If for the salvation of Russia a sacrifice is needed, I will be this sacrifice...'

"Members of the Russian Church Outside of Russia! We are preparing for a great solemnity - a solemnity not only for the Russian Orthodox Church, but also for the entire Ecumenical Church, because the whole Orthodox Church in all its parts is one and lives a single spiritual life. Let this solemnity of the Orthodox faith and the beauty of the exploit of martyrdom be not only a general Church solemnity, but also a personal solemnity for each of us! We call all members of the Church Outside of Russia to prepare for it with increased prayer, confession, and communion of the Holy Mysteries of Christ, so that our whole Church with one mouth and one heart might glorify Him from Whom comes every good gift and every perfect gift - God Who is wondrous in His saints!"

In 1982 a great miracle of the mercy of God was revealed - the wonder-working icon of the Iveron-Montreal icon of the Mother of God, which for fifteen years unceasingly emitted myrrh until its disappearance in 1997...

The Anathema against Ecumenism

Time passed, and it became clearer and clearer that it was impossible for the Orthodox to have any kind of communion with the "churches" of World Orthodoxy, let alone be in them. In 1980 the ecumenical press-service (ENI) declared that the WCC was working out a plan for the union of the all Christian denominations into one new religion. In 1981 in Lima (Peru) an inter-confessional eucharistic service was devised at a conference during which Protestant and Orthodox representatives in the WCC agreed that the baptism, eucharist and ordination of all the denominations was valid and acceptable. But the greatest scandal was elicited by the Vancouver General Assembly of the WCC in 1983. Present at it were representatives of all existing religions, and it began with a pagan rite performed by the local Indians. Orthodox hierarchs took part in the religious ceremonies together with representatives of all the world's religions.

The ROCOR Synod was also meeting in Canada at this time. It condemned this latest and most extreme manifestation of ecumenism: "In its decision of 28 July / 10 August, our Council explained that the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia does not participate in the World Council of Churches insofar as the latter attempts to represent those assembled in it, representatives of religions differing in their opinions, as though they had some sort of unity in faith. In reality, though, this very position is a lie, inasmuch as they, members of various confessions and sects, have not given up their points of disagreement with each other, much less with the Orthodox Church, in dogmas and in fundamental attitudes. In the name of unifying formulas, these differences of opinion are not destroyed, but are just set aside. Instead of the unshakable truths of the faith, they try to see only opinions, not obligatory for anyone. In reply to the confession of the one Orthodox Faith, they say together with Pilate: 'What is truth?' And the nominally Orthodox members of the Ecumenical Movement more and more deserve the reproach of the Angel of the Church of Laodicea: 'I know your works: you are neither hot nor cold: O if only you were hot or cold' (Revelation 3.15). A clear manifestation of such false union was the serving of the so-called Lima Liturgy..."

Then the Synod anathematised ecumenism, declaring: "To those who attack the Church of Christ by teaching that Christ's Church is divided into so-called 'branches' which differ in doctrine and way of life, or that the Church does not exist visibly, but will be formed in the future when all 'branches' or sects or denominations, and even religions will be united in one body; and who do not distinguish the priesthood and mysteries of the Church from those of the heretics, but say that the baptism and eucharist of heretics is effectual for salvation; therefore to those who knowingly have communion with these aforementioned heretics or advocate, disseminate, or defend their new heresy of Ecumenism under the pretext of brotherly love or the supposed unification of separated Christians, **Anathema.**"

Commenting on the anathema, Archbishop Vitaly of Montreal wrote: "Without doubt, the time for discussion and polemics has passed, and the time has come to judge this movement. And, however insignificant our Council of 1983 may seem, it has at last condemned ecumenism and anathematized it..."

The Anathema against Ecumenism was seized upon with delight by the True Orthodox not only in ROCOR, but also in Greece and on Mount Athos, and may be considered the single most important ecclesiastical act of the True Orthodox Church in the second half of the twentieth century. For many who had been worried that ROCOR was not being firm and clear enough in her dealings with the ecumenists, it put an end to their doubts and reaffirmed their faith in her. The import of the anathema was clear: all Orthodox Churches that were fully participating members of the WCC fell under it and so were deprived of the grace of sacraments. Moreover, those in communion with the ecumenist heretics became participants in the same

heresy. De facto, the ecumenists had already fallen away from the Church, and the anathema only witnessed to the faithful at large that they were outside the Church.

The opponents of this decisive break with “World Orthodoxy” said and say much about the “invalidity” of this anathema – to the extent of saying that the hierarchs of ROCOR accepted no anathema at all, but that certain “evil-minded people” simply introduced it into the text of the Acts of the Council. However, this seems improbable: after all, none of the hierarchs later renounced the anathema (in fact, it was reaffirmed in council in 1998), none of them said that he had not signed it; the anathematisation of ecumenism was introduced into the Synodicon of the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy...

Thus the work of Metropolitan Philaret’s whole life found its highest expression in a historical act having universal significance for the whole fullness of Orthodoxy – in the official anathematisation of “the heresy of heresies” and the apostates of our age. It is evident that no exhortation directed at the “Orthodox” ecumenists could have any effect, and a very powerful cauterisation was necessary in order to halt the general infection. Thus in one of his sermons, while speaking about those who transgress the teaching of the Church, he explained the significance of the anathema: “The Church declares that they have cut themselves off from communion with the Church, having ceased to listen to her maternal voice. And this is not only for the information of others, so that they should know this, but also for the good of the excommunicates themselves. The Church hopes that this threatening warning, at any rate, will act upon them...”

“The distinguishing characteristic of our time,” he used to say, “is that people are now more and more possessed by indifference to the Divine truth. Many beautiful words are spoken, but in fact – in reality – people are completely indifferent to the truth. Such indifference was once displayed by Pilate, when the Lord stood before him at his trial. Before Pilate stood the Truth Himself, but he sceptically declared: “What is truth?” – that is, does it exist? And if it does, then it is a long way from us, and perhaps does not exist. And with complete indifference he turned away from Him Who announced the truth to him, Who was the Truth Himself. And now people have become similarly indifferent. You have probably more than once heard supposedly Christian words about the union of all into one faith, into one religion. But remember that what lies behind this is precisely indifference to the truth. If the truth were dear to a man, he would never go on this path. It is precisely because the truth is of little interest to everyone, and they simply want somehow to make simpler and more convenient arrangements in matters of the faith, too, that they say: ‘Everyone must unite’...

“Brethren, we must fear this indifference to the truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse clearly indicates to us how terrible indifference to the truth is. There he turns to the Angel standing at the head of the Laodicean Church and says: ‘I know

thy works. Thou art neither cold nor hot. Oh if only thou wast hot or cold! But since thou art neither cold nor hot (but lukewarm – neither the one nor the other, the truth is not dear to thee), I will spew thee from My mouth!’ As an organism cast out of itself something which is absolutely repulsive and harmful to it.

“Let us remember that this indifference to the truth is one of the main woes of our age of apostasies. Value the truth, O man! Be a fighter for the truth... Place the truth higher than all else in life, O man, and never allow yourself to decline in any way from the true path...”

And in a sermon he said: “I would like to tell you a few words about the temptation that spreads everywhere like a flooded river. It is the temptation of what is called the ecumenism, which pushes all peoples to unite, regardless of the faith they profess; unite everyone, in order to create what they call the true church of Christ.

“I would like to briefly draw your attention to the following: those who encourage us to participate in this ecumenism say: every church, each name has a certain part of Christianity, and therefore every name is obliged to contribute its part of truth in this spiritual treasure Common and in this way a church will be created. In other words, it is proposed to each person to recognize that their faith is not quite true, but only in part, while the rest, being false and wrong, must be rejected during the conclusion of this artificial union. But you have to be quite aware of what they expect from us through this call to join ecumenism. This is what we have to do: we must declare that we only have a part of the truth, as they said; that means that our faith is not completely true, all Orthodox teachings are not truth, but only one part, the rest being mistaken.

“What Orthodox would accept to recognize that in his holy Orthodox faith something is wrong, that it is only partially fair and true? No Orthodox Christian conscience will ever accept it. Nowadays, people's conscience has become too flexible, when they accept a lot of things like this that a Christian conscience must not accept...

Let us remember that it for this reason alone it is impossible to enter this ecumenism. Our Orthodox church knows that it is in the truth. She offers this truth to all; she reveals it to all; she does not hide it in herself, hidden, unknown to others, but invites everyone to recognize this truth. But she can never deny this truth, she will never deny it, nor will she ever recognize her truth as being false and accept this madness.

“Therefore, for us there can be no place for talk about ecumenism, because its attractive exterior hides this falsehood I have just talked to you about. Remember: our Orthodox Church has the whole fullness of the truth, not only a part of it.

“The Orthodox church maintains the christian faith just as the holy apostles transmitted it to us.

“Let [the heterodox] follow their own path, if they don't want to recognize that we have the pure and complete truth - it's their business, and we can't follow them. The Orthodox Church carries its sacred content, its faith, and will bear it until the end of the existence of the human race here on earth. Amen.”

Repose and Miracles

Metropolitan Philaret passed away to the Lord at about 6.30 a.m. on November 8/21, 1985, on the day of the Chief Captain of the Heavenly Hosts, St. Michael. He had been suffering from cancer.

In his typewriter after his repose was found a sheet of paper including the following words from his *Spiritual Testament*, a quotation from the words of the Lord to the angel of the Church of Philadelphia: “Hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown” (Revelation 3.11).

He continued: “These words, taken from the sacred Book of the Apocalypse, have a particular significance in our time, in our greatly sorrowful, evil, temptation-filled days. They remind us of that priceless spiritual wealth that we possess, as children of the Orthodox Church.

“Yes, we are rich. This spiritual wealth is that which the Holy Church possesses, and it is offered to all her faithful children. The teaching of the Faith, of our marvelous, salvific Orthodox Faith; the countless living examples of the lives of people who have lived according to the Faith, according to those lofty principles and rules that the Church offers us. Those who have attained that spiritual purity and exaltedness that is called holiness; the beauty and majesty of our Orthodox Divine services and a living participation in them through faith and prayer; the plenitude of the grace-filled spiritual life that is open to each and every one, and, crowning it all, the unity of the children of the Church in that love of which the Savior said: By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another (John 13.35).”

Metropolitan Philaret was truly the angel of the Philadelphian Church, the True Orthodox Church of Christ, and the righteous accuser of the Laodicean Church, the church of ecumenist indifference to the truth, the church of the Antichrist...

Nearly a thousand people attended the Metropolitan's funeral, which was held at the Cathedral of the Mother of God of the Sign in New York, on the Sunday after his blessed repose. Eight hierarchs, thirty-one priests and eight deacons led the service. At the end of the ceremony, when the faithful had given their Archpastor the last kiss, his relics were taken to the convent of Novo-Diveyevo in Spring Valley, where

they rested the night. In the early morning they were taken to Holy Trinity Monastery at Jordanville. After the Divine Liturgy, they were laid to rest in the crypt of the Cemetery Chapel of the Dormition of the Mother of God.

The handmaiden of God Nadia Mokhoff said, "This man was the kindest. He would take the youth that no one cared about and bring them into the church with nothing but kindness. He was a father to every single one of us." His care for the young people of the Church was something that did indeed characterize his episcopate. His instructions to young people have been published in English translation. Only a year before his blessed repose the Metropolitan presided at the consecration of his vicar, Bishop Hilarion of Manhattan, to whom he particularly entrusted the spiritual care of the youth. Larry Binins in *Newsday* (Monday, 25th November) caught the key-note of the Metropolitan's ministry by portraying him as 'the kind Bishop of Russian Orthodoxy'."

Nearly thirteen years passed, and it was arranged that the remains of Metropolitan Philaret should be transferred from the burial-vault under the altar of the cemetery Dormition church of the Holy Trinity monastery in Jordanville into a new burial-vault behind the monastery's main church. In connection with this, it was decided, in preparation for the transfer, to carry out an opening of the tomb. On November 17, 1998 Archbishop Laurus of Syracuse and Holy Trinity, together with the clergy of the community, served a pannikhida in the burial vault; the coffin of Metropolitan Philaret was placed in the middle of the room and opened. The relics of the metropolitan were found to be completely incorrupt, they were of a light colour; the skin, beard and hair were completely preserved. His vestments, Gospel, and the paper with the prayer of absolution were in a state of complete preservation. Even the white cloth that covered his body from above had preserved its blinding whiteness, which greatly amazed the undertaker who was present at the opening of the coffin - he said that this cloth should have become completely black after three years in the coffin... It is noteworthy that the metal buckles of the Gospel in the coffin fell into dust on being touched - they had rusted completely; this witnessed to the fact that it was very damp in the tomb; and in such dampness nothing except these buckles suffered any damage! In truth this was a manifest miracle of God.

However, the reaction of Archbishop Laurus to this manifest miracle was unexpected: he ordered that the coffin with the relics be again closed...

On the eve of the reburial of the relics, November 20, at the beginning of the fourth hour of the day, the coffin of the holy hierarch was taken from the Dormition church to the monastery church of the Holy Trinity in a car. The pannikhida was served by Archbishop Laurus and 20 clergy. None of the other hierarchs of ROCOR came to the translation of the relics of the holy hierarch Philaret (only Bishop Gabriel of Manhattan wanted to come, but he was hindered by a sudden illness). After the pannikhida the coffin with the body of the holy hierarch was placed in the side wall

of the church, and at 19.00 the All-Night Vigil began. The next day, November 21, Archbishop Laurus headed the celebration of the Divine Liturgy in the church. With him concelebrated 18 priests and 11 deacons, several more clergy who had arrived prayed with the laypeople in the church itself. About 400 people gathered in the over-crowded church. All those present were greatly upset and grieved by the fact that during the pannikhida, as during the All-Night Vigil and the Liturgy, the coffin with the relics of Metropolitan Philaret remained sealed. In spite of the numerous requests of clergy and laity, who had specially come to Jordanville so as to kiss the relics of the holy hierarch, Archbishop Laurus refused to open the coffin. He also very strictly forbade making photocopies from the shots that had already been taken of the incorrupt relics of the saint or even to show them to anyone. Archbishop Laurus called on those assembled to pray for the peace of the soul of the reposed First Hierarch until the will of God should be revealed concerning his veneration among the ranks of the saints... After the Liturgy a pannikhida was served, and then the coffin with the relics of the holy hierarch Philaret were taken in a cross procession around the Holy Trinity cathedral and then to the prepared place in the burial vault, where Archbishop Laurus consigned the relics of the holy hierarch to the earth.

Several miracles have been recorded since the repose of Metropolitan Philaret:

1. I.K. writes: "I am writing to you in order to inform you of an unusual occurrence in connection with Metropolitan Philaret. I will try to briefly convey to you all the details.

"In November of 1994 I had a serious operation after which the doctor gave the diagnosis of cancer in its third stage, i.e., the worst type, which would not successfully respond to treatment. Although they removed much of the malignant growth from the abdomen, still there remained some in microscopic form. After this there was a course of chemotherapy, the results of which were encouraging.

"In September of 1996 the cancer returned. The doctors determined that perhaps I might live until spring. Towards Pascha of 1997 my condition became very bad – my abdomen began to fill up with fluids and my strength was failing quickly. The doctors decided to try another course of chemotherapy, beginning on Wednesday of Bright Week.

"During Passion Week they brought me a shirt of Metropolitan Philaret. The shirt was wrapped in a plastic bag. Upon opening it I smelled the slight fragrance of myrrh.

"That evening I put the shirt on and stood to pray, first evening prayers and then an akathist for the reposed. During the reading the fragrance of myrrh increased from time to time. That night I was often awakened from the powerful fragrance of

myrrh. In the morning, when my family came to my bedroom to see me, they were all struck by the strong fragrance of myrrh which filled the room. This continued for three successive nights.

“Attending the Paschal services was very difficult, since by that time I had become very weak. I had to sit throughout the entire service. With much effort I walked in the procession, during which time I implored the Lord to have mercy on me. During Liturgy I felt relief and was even able to stand through part of it.

“On Wednesday I went to my scheduled appointment with the doctor. They took a blood sample. The course of chemotherapy followed, but during the first injection my body rejected the medicine. A serious reaction occurred and they stopped the treatment. In a week I returned for an appointment with the doctor. He was completely bewildered, and said that the analysis of the blood (taken before the attempted treatment the previous week) showed a sharp decrease in the spread of the cancer.

“I know that many people were praying, and continue to pray, for my health, for which I am deeply grateful and thankful. However, the incident with the shirt of Metropolitan Philaret is indisputable and miraculous. To this day the shirt continues to give off a faint fragrance.”

2. The seminarian Sergei Kartavy writes: “On Sunday, November 22, 1998, the feast of Archangel Michael and the day of the translation of the relics of Metropolitan Philaret, I was supposed to receive Communion. I awoke about an hour and a half before the beginning of Liturgy in order to read my morning prayers and the preparatory prayers for Communion. The night before I felt fine, but upon awakening I felt a severe pain in my stomach.

“Hoping that the pain would subside I remained lying in bed. The pain had not subsided but had in fact increased somewhat, and there was just a little extra time in which to read the prayers for Communion and go to Liturgy. Because of the severe pain in my stomach, I was already considering going to look for Fr. Gabriel in order to get some sort of medicine, but if I did, I would not be able to receive Communion.

“Prior to this many people were talking about Metropolitan Philaret, requesting prayers for him and somehow to him. Frankly speaking up to then I did not understand how to pray if a saint has not yet been glorified, nevertheless, I decided to somehow pray for him with the hope of receiving some relief from my pain, and mainly so I could read my prayers and receive Communion. I said three times, ‘Lord have mercy on the soul of Metropolitan Philaret’, unsure if I was praying correctly or not. But, in the course of five minutes after this, the pain completely went away. There remained only a feeling of heaviness in my stomach, which also vanished after some time. Therefore, I was able to read my prayers and receive Communion. Glory

be to God!"

3. Matushka Tatiana Fyodorov, the wife of Protopriest Constantine Fyodorov, writes: "During the time of the church troubles shortly after Metropolitan Philaret reposed, my husband was suffering very much over it. Hearing both sides of these sad situations finally 'got to him'. He prayed to Metropolitan Philaret about it. He was very tired and fell asleep. He had a dream that he was in church, fully vested for the Divine Liturgy, and was told that Metropolitan Philaret was coming unexpectedly. He prepared to meet the Bishop with the Holy Cross on the plate. The altar boy gave Metropolitan Philaret the staff and Metropolitan gave the altar boy his staff. Metropolitan was looking very radiant and young. Then Fr. Constantine put the plate with the Holy Cross on the anaglyph, which is not customarily done, made a full prostration before the metropolitan and said: 'Vladyka, it is so difficult for me.' The metropolitan answered: 'Yes, I know. But you, Fr. Constantine, should think less and pray more.' Father tried to get up from the prostration but the metropolitan pinned his head down with the staff. At that moment, Father woke up full of joy and peace, but with a headache where the staff had been placed on his head. Since then, he feels Metropolitan is looking after him, and is always there to help.

"In December of 2005, soon after the Feast of the Entrance of the Theotokos into the Temple, Father suffered terrible pains in the bones of his legs. He could not even walk. He had severe, excruciating pain. To try to get up he had to use crutches or a wheelchair, all with intense pain. From the severe pain he could not even sleep. He remained in bed for several days, thinking it would get better if he took some pain killers. That didn't help either. It was the worst he ever suffered, as he does have some bone problems. On Friday he finally called the doctor. He said he would come on Saturday with a specialist. That Friday evening we prayed from the Canon for the Sick and Father asked Blessed Metropolitan Philaret to help him. After the prayers, Father finally fell asleep peacefully for the night without pain. Lo, and behold, the next morning he was relieved of the pain so that he could walk normally! The doctor came with the specialist, examined him, asked questions and gave him some medicine. He said it was a bone virus. The pain did not come back and he was able to walk. Thanks be to God!"

4. Protopriest Constantine Fyodorov (France). "Just before going to Jordanville, on the occasion of the uncovering of the relics of Metropolitan Philaret, Matushka and I made a big trip around France. After two hours (it was necessary to travel seven hours in all), the car stalled. It seemed as if the petrol had run out. No matter how much I pumped the pedal, nothing helped. There was nothing around us, and my matushka panicked. I said: 'There's no need to worry so much - I'm wearing the epitachelion of Metropolitan Philaret, and the main thing is that I have the Life-giving Cross. You'd better get down to praying.' A couple of seconds passed, and suddenly she said from the heart: 'Vladyko Metropolitan, help. It's your child sitting here. Not for my sake, I'm unworthy, but for his sake, help us. Arrange it so that we

can go further.' I turned the key, and the machine started as if nothing had happened. That was a great joy for my matushka."

5. Protodeacon Christopher Birchall (Canada). "I was told this story by Lydia Mikhailovna Klar, the wife of Evgenia Iosiphovich Klar, the dean of the Jordanville seminary. In 1994 it was discovered that their daughter-in-law, Irina Klar, was ill with cancer. Her husband, Michael, a doctor by profession, was in despair. He prayed ardently for her recovery, and at times it seemed that the illness was in recession. Recently, however, in 1997, there was a sharp deterioration. Lydia Mikhailovna gave the pious spouses a shirt that had belonged to Metropolitan Philaret, which she in her time had received from the cell-attendant of the hierarch, Protodeacon Nikita Chakirov. Irina put it on and immediately sensed a powerful fragrance; she thought that someone in the room had poured out some perfume. Irina and Michael prayed fervently for the whole evening, and then Irina fell asleep in this shirt. The next morning she felt significantly better and went to the hospital for an examination. As a result of the investigation it became clear that the cancerous tumour had become 70 times smaller! There was no rational explanation for this, and the hospital personnel were amazed. At the end of 1998 Irina's tumour again began to grow. After the remains of Metropolitan Philaret had been uncovered and found to be incorrupt, Archimandrite Luke from Jordanville became to gather information on miracles. Irina decided that she had to tell him about her healing, and felt that she had not been right when she had been silent about it earlier. After she told Fr. Luke what had happened, she again felt better. Since then (a year has passed) she has been in good health. The cancerous tumour had not completely disappeared, but it has become so much smaller that Irina can carry on a normal life and dedicate herself to the upbringing of her children."

6. Priest Stephen Allen (USA). "Above my desk a photograph of Metropolitan Philaret has been hanging for a long time. I attached no particular significance to it. But suddenly I had the thought that I should light a lampada in front of it and pray to Vladyka. Several days later I was informed that his incorrupt relics had been uncovered in Jordanville. And now I always pray to the holy hierarch Philaret."

7. Elena Kudryavtseva (Moscow). "Some time ago, the symptoms of an allergy appeared in our little son. It got worse and worse from day to day. The doctors could give no coherent explanation of the rash, which spread all over his body, and in places was turning into a hard crust. Medicines provided only insignificant relief. Moreover, it was not without harm for the child to take the tablets so often. We didn't know how to be or what to do. An acquaintance of ours, a pious and sincere person, who venerated Vladyka Philaret (Voznesensky), told a story about a seriously ill person who was taken to hospital. The doctors had already lost hope of curing him. The sick person took a photograph of the hierarch and with faith placed it on the painful place. Soon he improved, an operation was not required, and he was healed from his serious illness. Remembering this story, we took a photograph

of the hierarch Philaret (Voznesensky) which had been taken not long before his death by Protopriest Constantine Fyodorov, and put it under the bed of the child. The next day the crusts on the legs of the child had begun to peel off, the rash became less, and after a time the symptoms of the allergy disappeared completely.”

8. Irina Smirnova (Konigsberg). “I am a journalist. I obtained work in the editorial office of a newspaper, but it was very difficult for me working there: I began to get an allergy from the ordinary dust, since I cannot be in an unventilated place, whereas my neighbour in the office, on the contrary did not like draughts and was always closing not only the hinged pane, but even the door into the office. I was suffocating, I was dying, I ran to inject myself, without pills I couldn’t enter the office. An acquaintance of mine advised me to pray for help to the hierarch Philaret. I began to pray to him, and soon the editor gave me a separate office, and I simply, so to speak, ‘rose from the dead’”

9. The following miracle accomplished through the prayers of Metropolitan Philaret took place on the feast of St. Stephen, January 9, 2006 in the True Orthodox women's monastery of New Stenik, Serbia. This monastery has just been built in a very remote part of Serbia in spite of threats to destroy it coming from the false patriarchate of Serbia. The nuns were expelled from Old Stenik a few years ago because of their opposition to the heresy of ecumenism, and are under the omophorion of a hierarch of the “Florinite” branch of the True Orthodox Church of Greece.

Nun Ipomoni (which means “patience” in Greek) suffers from very severe asthma attacks. On this day, she had the most severe attack yet and suffocated. For 20 minutes she did not breathe and her body was without any sign of life. Now it should be noted that a few days before this, the 10 nuns in this monastery led by Schema-Abbess Euphrosyne had earnestly prayed to the Lord to give them the fear of God.

During the 20 minutes that she was clinically dead Nun Ipomoni met several demons in a dark tunnel; they got hold of her and were trying to drag her to hell. It was a most terrifying experience. After 20 minutes, Matushka Euphrosyne anointed her dead body with oil from the lampada in front of the icon of Metropolitan Philaret of New York. At the moment when the oil touched her head, which felt like an electric shock, she revived and began to move. For some time afterwards, she was still very weak and wept all the time. But the next day Fr. Akakije arrived at the monastery, served the liturgy for three days in a row, communed her and gave her the sacrament of Holy Unction. Now she has fully recovered. She feels well, walks and even prepares food.

This whole incident has had a very beneficial effect on all of the nuns. Their prayer to receive the fear of God was answered. And they ardently thank God and

his great hierarch, Metropolitan Philaret of New York.

10. Milivoje Miljkovic from Belgrade writes: “My mother is about eighty years old, and out of a small lump on her right hand she got a big wound which started to ache. There were no medicines that could help, nor did the doctors know what the illness was. She was taking antibiotics, getting pain-killer injections, and in the end she got fifteen penicillin injections, too. But nothing helped; the wound was constantly increasing, so that even mum was pretty scared.

“Mum is very pious; even in the most difficult period of communist rule she studied theology and lived in a patriarchal Christian family. But it was in no way clear to her how it was possible that the whole (Serbian) Church could have separated from God, and that only three or four hundred of us could be standing in the truth. (I must admit that this was even difficult for me, but unfortunately that is the way it is.)

“Since she had brought me up in the Orthodox spirit, and I remained without a job, my mum financially supported my going to the Divine Liturgy - in the monasteries of the True Orthodox also. So I used to mention her in my prayers.

“One of these services took place on the day of St. Philaret the Confessor, which our leader Fr. Akakije traditionally celebrated with devout prayers and the celebration of the Divine Liturgy. A considerable support was provided by the sisters of the Novistjenik monastery at Mikulj rock, led by their abbess, the Reverend Mother Euphrosyne. The church was full of people, and this-earthly words are insufficient to convey the atmosphere - it can only be experienced. I think that not even the whole of the world’s technology would be able to convey even a bit of the atmosphere before the Holy Chalice.

“After the festal Agape, and the reading from the life of St. Philaret Voznesensky, which mentioned miracles that had taken place as a result of prayers to the Saint and holy oil from his incorrupt relics, we set off home sustained in faith and the Grace of God Who celebrated His Saint. By the efforts of the Novistjenik sisters, all the faithful received a copy of the Akathist to St. Philaret the Confessor, Metropolitan of New York and Eastern America and first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad. (The akathist had been written by one of the sisters, who often prayed to the Saint for support in the confession of the faith.) Besides the akathist, Monk Joseph, with the blessing of Fr. Akakije, gave me a bottle of holy oil from the lampada in front of the icon of St. Philaret.

“Having arrived home, I read the akathist to St. Philaret and then anointed my mother’s wound with the holy oil in the sign of the cross. The condition of my mother before the reading of the akathist was such that during the prayers she could not stand on her legs and had to sit down. After the anointing the pain ceased

immediately, and in the morning the wound had been halved in size, while puss was beginning to come out of it.

“Glory and honour to the holy and God-pleasing Philaret the Confessor. May the Lord in His Providence have mercy on all Serbian people, and through the prayers of St. Philaret may He bring the Serbs back to Christ and make the Bolsheviks ashamed and cast them into the everlasting fire with their master, Satan. Glory to God in the highest through the prayers of St. Philaret the Confessor and all the True Orthodox Christians. Amen.”

11. Svetlana Shumilo from Chernigov (RTOC) writes: "Tomorrow [December 1/14] is the commemoration of the Holy Hierarch Philaret, and I want to tell you a story. My son was two years old, and Fr. Evfimiy and M. Euphrosyne from Lesna came to stay with us for a couple of days, since there was a big conference on church matters. What is a church conference? Everybody is busy, and there's still more work... But one morning we had a couple of free hours, and we asked Fr. Evfimiy, since there was no time for a liturgy, to give communion to our son from the reserved Gifts. He had brought the Gifts with himself from Lesna. From the morning in his childish language he told everybody that Fr. Philaret had come to him in the night and said that he - the child - would receive Communion. We were a little surprised since we had not warned our son - he was still so young - about Communion. Nevertheless, he continued to repeat the phrase several time, striving to pronounce the complicated name. Everyone thought that he was talking about Fr. Philaret, who sometimes came to us and gave us Communion - and paid no attention to the words of a child. After Communion Fr. Evfimiy in his final words read out the saints of the day - and suddenly everyone remembered that today was the commemoration of the holy Hierarch Philaret (this was a year after the Council [of 2008] at which St. Philaret had been glorified). That evening, when everybody had already left, we showed our son several photographs of St. Philaret and asked him: is this Fr. Philaret who told you that you would receive Communion. Our son replied to this: "No, this is an old man!" Then we showed him an icon of St. Philaret and posed the same question. And he replied: "Yes, this is the one!"

12. Nikolai Jovanovich (Australia): From my early years I have suffered from sinus troubles and various allergies. On 20th April, 2005, I wrote the following in my diary: "Two weeks ago I had a strong sinus attack, accompanied by the flu, and my nose ran like a tap. The medicines, which I had been taking for three days, did not help. I was desperate, but just at this time Metropolitan Philaret came to mind. In China, Metropolitan Philaret had baptized me. I did not know - was it right or not? - but I asked the Lord to forgive me if I was doing anything wrong. I turned in prayer to Metropolitan Philaret, and asked God's help from him. My running nose dried up. Within 30 minutes my nose was completely dry. Yesterday (19th April) again, while I was praying, my nose began to run. I prayed to Metropolitan Philaret, asking him to

help me, and immediately it all passed.” From that time I have never taken any medication for my nose troubles.

13. Elena Pikul (Australia): From 1946, our family lived in Harbin. We attended the church attached to the House of Kindheartedness, where Father Philaret served. Once during the Winter of 1960, my elder son, Galik, fell ill. His temperature rose to over 40o. He was suffering greatly. We called a Chinese doctor, and he found that pneumonia was setting in. Before the doctor came, our daughter, Zina, ran to Fr Philaret, but he was not at home. She asked the neighbours to tell Batiushka that her brother had fallen ill. I sat by Galik’s bed; his temperature was 40 and higher; his heart was pounding. He was delirious... and then what? His temperature began to fall, it went down to 37o. Galik started breathing regularly, his pulse was normal; the patient peacefully fell asleep. When he woke up, he felt very much better. My daughter returned, we were both bewildered. What had happened? What had happened was this: soon after Zina had left [his place], Fr Philaret returned and went to the neighbours for a cup of tea. They told him about Zina’s visit. Immediately Batiushka jumped up from his place without finishing his tea, he quickly ran up the stairs to his apartment and began to pray. From what the neighbours reported it is evident that my son began to recover at the very same moment that Father Philaret prayed for him. His prayer is powerful!

14. O. Chistyakova (Australia): When I was in Harbin in 1955, in hospital I happened to be the witness of the healing from a nervous disorder of the sick T.M. The patient, a young woman, came down with a nervous disorder, and not only did she refuse to drink, but she even put the baby at her breast in the wardrobe! They committed her to hospital, and Father Philaret prayed for her. She improved gradually so that, meeting her some years later, one could only say that she was a normal young woman. Whether Archimandrite Philaret prayed for her in the hospital or at his place in the House of Kindheartedness, I cannot say. Members of her family are still alive, although she herself has died of a completely different illness.

15. Abbess Alexandra (Chernyavskaya), Monastery of St John: I became acquainted with Vladyka Philaret in my student days, and he became my spiritual father. The first miracle of Metropolitan Philaret is bound up with my family life. In 1967, I was expecting a second child and the doctor said that it was highly probable that the baby would be stillborn. I was totally desperate, and in my grief I went to Vladyka Philaret. Vladyka calmed me down, saying that everything was in God’s hands. After this, he anointed me with holy oil and blessed me. By turning to prayer, Vladyka saved my baby. The power of his prayer was such that shortly thereafter I safely gave birth to a healthy child. Just as the doctor on duty said, this was a manifest miracle.

16. The Nun Ioanna (Karlova), Monastery of St John: I was not well acquainted

with Metropolitan Philaret's legacy, but nonetheless, I was in two minds about whether he was a holy man. Then the thought would come to me that one could place him in the same rank as such a luminary as Vladyka John of Shanghai and San Francisco, in whose honour I was tonsured. On 14th December [n.s.], 2007, on the nameday of Vladyka Philaret, I was standing by the table in my cell and looking at the church calendar, and doubtful thoughts about the sanctity of Metropolitan Philaret again came into my head. Suddenly for no apparent reason I started to fall backwards. Behind my back there was a chair, which was then pushed over and turned on its side. Nothing was hurt, I fell onto the rug, lying alongside the bed. This was a very felicitous fall: physically I suffered nothing, but somehow at that very time the Lord showed me that Vladyka Philaret was indeed a saint. After this with reverence and with greater interest I read through his sermons.

17. Protodeacon Christopher Birchall (Canada): This story was told to me by Lydia Mikhailovna Klar, the wife of Evgenii Iosifovich Klar, the dean of the Seminary at Jordanville. In 1994, it became known that their daughter-in-law, Irina Klar, had contracted cancer. Her husband, Michael, a doctor by profession, was desperate. He prayed fervently for her recovery, and in time it appeared that the disease had departed. However, in 1997, there was a severe deterioration. Lydia Mikhailovna gave the pious wife a undershirt, which had belonged to Metropolitan Philaret and which she had been given by the holy hierarch's cell attendant, Protodeacon Nikita Charikov. Irina put it on, and immediately she smelled a strong fragrance; she thought that someone in the premises had given up their soul. Irina and Michael prayed fervently all the evening, and at last Irina fell asleep still wearing this undershirt. Next morning she felt significantly better, and went to the hospital for a check-up. The result of the examination showed that the size of the cancerous tumour had diminished by 70 (!) times. There was no rational explanation for this, and the hospital staff were at a loss. At the end of 1998, Irina's cancerous tumour began to grow again. After this, when the remains of Metropolitan Philaret had been uncovered and found to be incorrupt, Archimandrite Luke from Jordanville started to gather information about the miracles. Irina decided that she ought to tell of her healing, and she felt that she had been wrong when, earlier, she had been silent about this. After she had told father Luke about what had happened, she began to feel better again. Until now (a year has passed) she continues in good health. The cancerous tumour has not disappeared completely, but it has diminished to such an extent that Irina is able to carry on a normal life and dedicate herself to the upbringing of her children.

18. Elena Kudryavtseva (Moscow): In our little boy signs of an allergy appeared, which grew stronger and stronger day by day. The doctors could not give a clear reason for the rashes which broke out all over his body and, in places, developed into hard scabs. The medicine they prescribed gave hardly any alleviation, and taking these tablets was often noxious for the child. We did not know what was to be done, or what to do. An acquaintance of ours, a pious and sincere man, who revered

Vladyka Philaret (Voznesensky), told the story of what had befallen a seriously ill patient in the clinic, whom the doctors already had no hope of curing. The sick man took a photo of the hierarch, and with faith placed it on the bad place. In a short time he came to recovery, an operation was not necessary, and he was healed of his severe infirmity. Remembering this story, we took a photograph of the hierarch Philaret, taken not long before his demise by Archpriest Constantine Fedorov, and placed it over the infant's cot. On the next day, the scabs on the child's legs began to come off, the rash diminished, and within a short time all signs of the allergy completely disappeared.

19. Archimandrite Alexis (Pobjoy). In 1970, a small group of seminarians from Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary in Jordanville, myself included, went to the Kursk Root Icon Hermitage at Mahopac, N.Y., over the Thanksgiving weekend, to help despatch some books on the Coronations of the Russian Tsars, which had been published by the Russian Youth Committee. At that time a nun was staying at the Hermitage, and she greatly revered Metropolitan Philaret and told us that he knew the Four Gospels off by heart. She also told us that for many years she had suffered from very severe headaches, which at that time I did as well, which made me pay attention to what she had to say. She reported that on one occasion, she had a particularly bad headache and asked the Metropolitan to pray for her that she might be delivered from it. Out of humility, he said that he could not do such a thing, and so in desperation she fell at his feet and said she would not let him go until he did. He prayed, and not only did her headache leave her immediately, but from that day until the time she told us her tale she had not suffered another one.

St. Philaret was canonized by the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church in Suzdal on May 1, 2001, and by the Sacred Council of the Russian True Orthodox Church in Odessa on November 1, 2008.

Holy Father Philaret, pray to God for us!

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