

A CENTURY OF RUSSIAN MARTYRDOM
A Selection of the Lives of the Holy New Martyrs
and Confessors of Russia

Volume 2

Compiled by Vladimir Moss

© Copyright Vladimir Moss, 2021. All Rights Reserved.

CONTENTS

51. HOLY HIEROMARTYR HILARION, BISHOP OF PORECH (+1937)	4
52. HOLY HIEROMARTYR SINESIUS, BISHOP OF IZHEVSK (+1937)	6
53. HIEROMARTYR NICETAS, BISHOP OF NIZHNE-TAGIL (+1937)	8
54. HOLY HIEROMARTYR AMPHILOCHIUS, BISHOP OF KRASNOYARSK (+1937)	10
55. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PETER, METROPOLITAN OF KRUTITSA (+1937)	13
56. HOLY HIEROMARTYR THEODORE, ARCHBISHOP OF VOLOKOLAMSK (+1937)	31
57. HOLY HIEROMARTYR JOSEPH, METROPOLITAN OF PETROGRAD (+1937)	73
58. HOLY HIEROMARTYR CYRIL, METROPOLITAN OF KAZAN (+1937)	91
59. HOLY HIEROMARTYR EUGENE, BISHOP OF ROSTOV (+1937)	102
60. HOLY HIEROMARTYR JOASAPH, BISHOP OF CHISTOPOL (+1937)	106
61. HIEROMARTYR ALEXIS, BISHOP OF VORONEZH (+1937)	118
62. HOLY HIEROMARTYR NICHOLAS, ARCHBISHOP OF VLADIMIR (+1937)	138
63. HIEROMARTYR MACARIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF YEKATERINOSLAV (+1937)	162
64. HIEROMARTYR PORPHYRIUS, BISHOP OF SIMFEROPOL (+1937)	174
65. HIEROMARTYR BENJAMIN, BISHOP OF STERLITAMAK (+1937)	175
66. HOLY HIEROMARTYR DAMASCENE, BISHOP OF GLUKHOV (+1937)	185
67. HOLY HIEROMARTYR ARCADIUS, BISHOP OF LUBNY (+1937)	205
68. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PROCOPIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF ODESSA AND KHERSON (+1937)	216
69. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PARTHENIUS, BISHOP OF ANANIEV (+1937)	241
70. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PAUL OF BELORUSSIA (+1937)	246
71. HOLY HIEROMARTYR MARK, BISHOP OF SERGIEV POSAD (+1938)	252
73. HOLY MARTYR JOHN OF MOSCOW (+1938)	272
74. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS SERGIUS (1930), NICHOLAS (+1930) AND JOHN (+1938) OF PETROGRAD	283
75. HOLY HIEROMARTYR NICHOLAS, BISHOP OF AKTAR (+1939)	292
76. HOLY MARTYR AGATHA OF BELORUSSIA (+1939)	304
77. HOLY MARTYR MELANIA OF STAVROPOL (+1940)	316
78. HOLY CONFESSOR ABBESS SOPHIA OF KIEV (+1941)	317

79. HOLY HIEROMARTYR SERGIUS OF MOSCOW (+1941) AND BLESSED XENIA OF RYBINSK (+1940)	327
80. HOLY HIEROCONFESSORS SERAPHIM (+1931) AND SERAPHIM (+1942) OF MOSCOW	338
81. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR ANTHONY, SCHEMA-ARCHBISHOP OF TAURIS (+1942)	353
82. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS ALEXIS OF ROVNO (+1943), MANUEL OF BELOTSEKOV' (+1942) AND PANCRATIUS OF BELGOROD (+1942)	357
83. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR BASIL, BISHOP OF KINESHMA (+1945)	359
84. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS SERAPHIM AND GREGORY OF BELORUSSIA (+1946)	379
86. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR TIKHON, BISHOP OF KIRILLOV (+1955)	385
87. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR PETER, SCHEMA-BISHOP OF NIZHEGOROD (+1957)	389
88. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR BARNABAS, BISHOP OF PECHERSK (+1963)	439
89. HOLY HIEROMARTYR MICHAEL, SCHEMA-BISHOP OF CHISTOPOL (+1974)	451
90. HOLY HIEROCONFESSORS SERAPHIM (+1943), SERAPHIM (+1955) AND NAZARIUS (+1975) OF KHARKOV	455
91. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR THEODORE OF BELARUS' (+1975)	478
92. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR ANTHONY (GALYSNKY-MIKHAILOVSKY), ARCHBISHOP, OF KIEV (+1976)	491
93. HOLY NUN-CONFESSOR HELENA OF SUKHUMI (+1977)	504
94. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR ALEXANDER OF OMSK (+1977)	510
95. HOLY CONFESSOR VARENKA OF SERGACH (+1980)	519
96. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS ISHMAEL (+1937) AND MICHAEL (+1988) OF PETROGRAD	527
97. HOLY CONFESSOR PELAGIA OF BEREZOVO (+1990)	536
98. HOLY MARTYR JACOB OF THE ALTAI (+1991)	541
99. HOLY CONFESSOR SCHEMA-ABBESS JOANNA OF SUZDAL (+1998)	558
100. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR NECTARIUS OF JERUSALEM (+2000)	565

51. HOLY HIEROMARTYR HILARION, BISHOP OF PORECH (+1937)

Bishop Hilarion (in the world Ivan Ivanovich Belsky) was born on March 20, 1893 in the family of a Petrograd protopriest in Olonets province. He finished his studies at Olonetsk theological seminary in 1915 and from 1917 was serving in a theological school in Petrozavodsk. Then he went to Petrograd and joined the brotherhood of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, being tonsured into the mantia with the name Hilarion on August 12 (or July 3), 1919. According to one source, he also entered the Saint Petersburg Theological Academy. On July 13, according to one source, he was ordained to the diaconate. In 1922 he was ordained to the priesthood, and served in the church of SS. Boris and Gleb, while carrying out the duties of administrator of the affairs of the Lavra's spiritual council and steward of the Lavra. He showed great firmness in the struggle against renovationism in Petrograd, and at the beginning of June, 1922 he was arrested in connection with the case of the "Brotherhood" of Religious Organizations. He was also accused of hiding **Hieromonk Lev** (Yegorov). However, the case was closed on September 13, and he was released. By October, 1924 he was an igumen of the Lavra and rector of the church of SS. Boris and Gleb on Kalashnikov naberezhnye.

On October 1/14, 1924 Patriarch Tikhon consecrated him Bishop of Kargopol, a vicariate of the Olonets diocese, although he was only 30 years old. From 1924 he was in exile in Smolensk. On April 12, 1925 he signed the act transferring leadership of the Church to Metropolitan Peter. In 1925 he was transferred to Smolensk with the title of Bishop of Porech, a vicariate of the Smolensk diocese, and administered the affairs of the Smolensk diocese. According to another source, this took place for one year and eight months from 1926 to 1927.

On February 5, 1927 he was arrested "for links with active members of the Sychevka monarchical grouping". On August 29 he was sentenced to ten years in the camps and sent to Solovki. By the beginning of 1928 he was on Solovki.

On March 4, 1928 Bishop Hilarion and **Bishop Nectarius of Yaransk**, the future hieromartyr, declared their separation from Metropolitan Sergius, and joined the branch of the Catacomb Church led by Bishop Victor of Glazov. On Solovki he was one of those who were forbidden from working in their speciality, and had to do the heaviest manual labour. He took part in secret services with the Catacomb bishops on Solovki from January to October, 1928, and in 1928, according to one (dubious) source, signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church through the priest Anthony (Elsner?). However, on October 1, under pressure from the sergianist bishops, he served in the cemetery church, commemorating the name of Metropolitan Sergius.

What happened next was described by Hieromartyr Nectarius, Bishop of Yaransk, his fellow-prisoner on Solovki, who heard it from Vladyka Hilarion himself: "Shortly before this [service in the cemetery church], he had a very frightening dream. It was as if he trampled the Smolensk Hodigitria icon of the Mother of God under foot. And what then? After serving the liturgy with the sergianist bishops, instead of receiving spiritual consolation and joy, he began to feel terrible pangs of conscience and depression of spirit, 'and the sergianist apostasy,' he told me, 'became quite clear to me - I had turned out to be a participator in the sergianist crimes against the Orthodox Church.' And what then? At that very moment he declared to the sergianist bishops that he was leaving them and returning to his former ecclesiastical position with Bishops Victor, Nectarius, Demetrius and the others."

At the end of 1930 Bishop Hilarion was sent to Anzer, and in September, 1931, he, together with Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich and Archbishop Pachomius of Chernigov, were sent to work on the White Sea canal. In 1933 he was released on amnesty, and settled in Kozmodemyansk in the Mari autonomous republic. He was arrested on May 24 (or April 25), 1934 for being "a participant in a counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen, the followers of the True Orthodox Church". On July 13 the case was shelved for lack of material, and he was released from prison. However, on August 24 he was again arrested, and released on October 13 after signing that he would not leave. On October 17 the case was shelved for lack of evidence of a crime. From 1935 to 1937 he was in exile in Kosmodemyansk, where he served in secret. He did not recognize the sacraments of the sergianists, and used to repeat the sacraments of baptism and marriage performed by sergianists. In the summer of 1937 he visited Bishop Sergius (Druzhinin) in exile and urged him to remain faithful to Orthodoxy. On August 25 he was arrested, and on August 28 was sentenced to be shot. The sentence was carried out on August 31, 1937 (new style) in Yosh-kar-Ola.

52. HOLY HIEROMARTYR SINESIUS, BISHOP OF IZHEVSK (+1937)

Bishop Sinesius, in the world Sergius Grigoryevich Zarubin, was born in the village of Panino, Saltykovskaya volost, Moscow province in 1886. He finished art school, and from 1906 to 1917 was a teacher in a craft school in Irkutsk. He joined the Starogolutvin monastery and was tonsured with the name Sinesius. Later, in 1918, he was ordained to the priesthood, and served in Omsk, Tyumen, Irkutsk and Urazov. From 1917 he was teaching in theological schools. On October 4, 1922 he was arrested "for anti-Soviet agitation", but on November 1 the case was shelved and he was released. From the middle of the 1920s he was archimandrite of the Spaso-Golutvin monastery.

On May 31 / June 13, 1926, he was consecrated to the see of Ostrog, a vicariate of the Voronezh diocese, but in the same year he was renamed Bishop of Urazov, a vicariate of the same diocese. In December, 1926, he became Bishop of Kolyma, a vicariate of the Yakutsk diocese, and then Bishop of Yakutsk and Vilyusk. In 1928 he became Bishop of Izhevsk. He was disenfranchised.

After the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius he entered into opposition to him. In 1928, according to one (dubious) source, he signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church. He joined the Catacomb group led by Bishop Victor of Glazov, the future hieromartyr. On February 26, 1930, he retired, and lived in Izhevsk, not hiding his disagreement with, and separation from, Metropolitan Sergius. He continued to serve in the Assumption church without the permission of the ruling bishop. However, according to one source, in February, 1930 he was arrested in connection with the True Orthodox Church and sentenced to five years in the camps on the White Sea canal.

He was an original hierarch. He used to give two-to-three hour sermons, not noticing whether there was anybody in the church or not. Once it happened that he delivered a sermon, and the worshippers, tired of its length, all left the church. But he continued to talk. Finally, the church warden came up to him and said:

"Enough."

Only then did he, astonished by the words of the warden, finish his sermon in the empty church.

On May 9, 1930 he was banned by Metropolitan Sergius, and on June 4 was submitted to a hierarchical trial, but continued to serve, not considering himself to be a sergianist bishop.

As Metropolitan Sergius, relying on the Soviet authorities, increased the pressure on those who did not recognize him, Bishop Sinesius departed into

the catacombs. He took on the appearance of a wanderer. He travelled round what was once Holy Russia, but which was now fallen, full of sin, in bast sandals with a rope belt round his waist, his hair and beard sticking out in wisps, a knapsack on his back... Who would have thought that he was an archpastor! In these difficult conditions he taught and instructed Orthodox Christians on the way to salvation. He spoke about the Jesus prayer as a convenient and indispensable work... He also spoke about the external conditions of the persecuted Church:

"From now on don't go into the open churches. They are snares. There is no Orthodoxy there. Only the form without the content... There it is as the Lord said: 'Your house is left to you empty!' (Luke 13.35). The Lord has punished us for our sins. The Church of Christ is not there - only a sham appearance remains. The true pastors have been annihilated, imprisoned, exiled, put to flight. While the 'priests' that have remained are, as a rule, party members, atheists. And these priests are creating there what the Holy Gospel calls 'the abomination of desolation'. And we are told to 'flee into the mountains' from this 'desolation'. And this is the same as that which Revelation refers to as 'fleeing into the wilderness'... Flee by praying to God! He is the Most High, He will not leave us who hope on Him as orphans. He is powerful to defend us, to preserve us from all evil, from enemies visible and invisible... Save us!"

The Lord gave him the gift of clairvoyance, but he hid it by playing the fool. Because of his foolishness for Christ's sake, there were some who did not understand this feat and laughed at him.

His prophecies were sometimes realized many years later. Once he gave a nun some children's swaddling clothes. She was indignant:

"What's this?"

But he answered: "It will come in handy!"

And ten years later she was put in camp... And her swaddling clothes "came in handy"!

On May 24, 1931 he was arrested for being "the leader of the Udmurtia branch of the counter-revolutionary church-monarchist organization, the True Orthodox Church", and on January 26, 1932 was sentenced to ten years in the camps. He was sent to the camps on the Baltic-White Sea canal, arriving there on March 17. He was accused of inciting counter-revolutionary agitation among the prisoners, and on September 20, 1937 was sentenced to be shot by the Karelian NKVD. The sentence was carried out on September 27 in Sandormokh grove. According to another source, he was shot on October 15.

53. HIEROMARTYR NICETAS, BISHOP OF NIZHNE-TAGIL
(+1937)

Bishop Nicetas, in the world Theodore Petrovich Delektorsky, was born in 1876 in the city of Pokrov, Orekhovo-Zuyevo uyezd, Moscow province, in the family of a priest. He finished his studies at the Vladimir and Kholm theological seminaries, the latter in 1908. On August 3, 1898 he was ordained to the priesthood, and went to serve in the St. Nicholas women's monastery, Pereiaslavl, Vladimir province. He also taught the Law of God in lower educational establishments. In 1911 he entered the Moscow Theological Academy, graduating in 1915. He directed the Academy choir and was the author of the jubilee hymn for 1914. In 1915 he became assistant secretary of the Council and Administration of the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra. In 1917 he became rector of the Ss. Peter and Paul cathedral in Perm, being raised to the rank of protopriest in 1919. In 1922 he became superior of the Nativity of Christ cathedral in Alexandrov, Vladimir province.

On May 9, 1924 he was tonsured into monasticism by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) in the church of the Valaam podvorye, and on May 12 (or April 16/29) he was consecrated Bishop of Bugulma, a vicariate of the Samara diocese, by Archbishop Andrew of Ufa. The co-consecrator(s) is not known. In 1924 he was arrested in Bugulma together with a group of priests for "links with the Czechoslovaks". Within two months he was released for lack of evidence against him. By November, 1924 he was living in Moscow. In 1925 he was arrested in Melekess, Ulyanovsk province, for "carrying out a church service without a patent" and for "commemorating Patriarch Tikhon". After one-and-a-half months in prison he was released. In 1926 he was transferred to the see of Orekhovo-Zuyevo, Moscow province. On September 3/16, 1927 he was transferred to the see of Nizhne-Tagil, a vicariate of the Sverdlovsk diocese, where he remained until August 10/23, 1928.

He was an elder distinguished by extreme non-acquisitiveness, and was a fool-for-Christ.

In 1930 he was arrested in Moscow in the home of a certain Elizabeth, who gave refuge to wanderers and condemned clergymen, and was sentenced to three years' hard labour in the camps. He was sent to the building of DneproGAS, where he worked as a groom and watchman. By 1934 Vladyka was again living in Orekhovo-Zuyevo and serving in secret. In 1935 a warrant for his arrest was issued. For two years he lived under the pseudonym "Makarov", whose passport had been "stolen" by him during his captivity at DneproGAS. He earned his living by collecting and selling scrap. In 1936-37, without revealing his identity, he lived with the policeman Kraskov in a "saddler's shop" room. Vladyka was constantly hungry.

On October 13 (18), 1937 he was arrested in Orekhovo-Zuyevo. In the window of the cemetery church he had unwittingly left his real documents, not

those in the name of Makarov. These documents, which showed that he was a bishop, were brought to the police by local residents. He was transferred to Moscow on November 10 and was cast into the Taganka prison. At his trial, two priests, one from Orekhovo-Zuyevo and the other from Zagorsk, witnessed against him, calling him a monarchist and a slanderer of the Soviet state. He was indicted as "an illegal wandering bishop, an activist of the True Orthodox Church, conducted anti-Soviet agitation and was occupied with counter-revolutionary activity". On November 17, he was convicted of being "an illegal bishop of the 'True Orthodox Church'" and was sentenced to death in accordance with article 58-10. He was shot in Butovo on November 19, 1937. The authorities considered him so dangerous that shortly before his arrest they arrested and shot **Andreyev**, the choir-master of the cathedral in Orekhovo-Zuyevo, who had maintained links with him.

54. HOLY HIEROMARTYR AMPHILOCHIUS, BISHOP OF KRASNOYARSK (+1937)

and those with him

Bishop Amphilochius, in the world Alexander Yakovlevich Skvortsov, was born on February 17, 1885 in the family of a church reader of the village of Nurvash (or Norvashi), Tsivilsk uyezd, Kazan province. He graduated from the Kazan Theological seminary and Academy. He chose as his speciality Orthodox missionary work. On March 22, 1907 he was tonsured into monasticism. In 1908 (according to another source, 1907) he was ordained to the diaconate. In 1909, as a third-year student, he was sent during the summer holidays to the Astrakhan Kalmyk steppe to study the Kalmyk language and Orthodox missionary work. In 1910 he brilliantly defended his candidate's dissertation on a missionary subject, and was ordained to the priesthood in the same year.

In 1910-11 he attended lectures at the eastern faculty of the St. Petersburg University so as to study the Mongolian language and freely understand the sacred scriptures of Lamaism. From August 16, 1911 until 1917 he was a teacher in the faculty of Mongolian and Lamaism in the Kazan Academy. From August 15, 1912 to August 15, 1914 he went, at his own request, to Mongolia and Trans-Baikal to study the Tibetan language and the theological literature of Lamaism. He was raised to the rank of archimandrite. According to one source, he was also sent to China.

In 1922 he was consecrated bishop of Melekess, a vicariate of the Ufa diocese, by Archbishop Andrew of Ufa and, perhaps, Patriarch Tikhon. He remained there until 1923. He struggled with renovationism. In 1923 he was arrested, sentenced to three years' exile and sent to Krasnoyarsk region. In November, 1924 he was arrested for "participation in resistance to representatives of the authorities during the transfer of the cemetery church to a renovationist group". However, the case was shelved. In 1925, when invited to join a planned commission for reconciliation between Orthodoxy and renovationism and participation in the council of 1925, he wrote in reply: "We can be reconciled with you only when you renounce your errors and repent before the whole people."

In March or April, 1925, he became Bishop of Krasnoyarsk, and on July 14, 1926 he was arrested in the city of Tsivilsk in Chuvashia. On July 17, 1926 he was sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to Solovki, where he worked as a warehouseman. Also arrested with the bishop was **Eudocia Petrovna Zonova**, the daughter of a trader, who since 1922 had been in the community in Krasnoyarsk led by **Hieromonk Plato** (Shkarpitsky), who in 1925 came under the omophorion of Bishop Amphilochius. She was released after promising not to leave the city. On December 17, 1926 she was arrested again, and accused of "taking part in a monarchist-Black Hundredist counter-revolutionary grouping created around Bishop Amphilochius (Skvortsov)".

This was the group case, "The Case of the Monarchist-Black Hundredist Counter-Revolutionary Grouping of Bishop Amphilochius (Skvortsov), Krasnoyarsk, 1926". She was released for lack of incriminating evidence.

On February 17, 1928 Bishop Amphilochius' case was reviewed and quashed. On March 31 he was released early. In April, on returning from exile, he became bishop of the Don and Novocherkassk.

He rejected Metropolitan Sergius' declaration, and according to one (dubious) source signed the acts of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church in 1928. From 1929 to 1930 he was Bishop of Krasnoyarsk and Yeniseisk, but, disagreeing with Metropolitan Sergius' course, he left his see - according to one source, on the advice of Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan - and in 1931 went with a group of "non-commemorators" into the woods of Siberia, where he founded a skete. The skete consisted of ten nuns, and was situated in the village of Anzhul (or Antul), Tashtypsky region, Khakassia.

On April 30, 1931 Bishop Amphilochius, **Hieromonk Seraphim**, who lived in the village, and the skete-dwellers, who included Fr. Seraphim's daughter, **Nun Alexandra, Matrona Artamovicha Stepanova** (born in 1866 in Vyatka province) and **Athanasia Petrovna Lysova** (born in 1889 in Yeremakovsky region, Krasnoyarsk district), were arrested for "conducting anti-Soviet agitation", and cast into a prison in Minusinsk, Krasnoyarsk district. On November 16, 1931, in "The Case of Bishop Amphilochius (Skvortsov) and others, Khakassia, 1931", they were condemned for "anti-Soviet agitation" by the OGPU and were sentenced to five years' exile in Eastern Siberia. Bishop Amphilochius was sent to the Osinnikovo section of Siblag. At some stage he went to Barnaul area and lived next to his relative **Catherine Ivanovna Samonkina**. He struggled with the schismatics of Siberia, and once converted three Chinese to the faith.

In May, 1933 he was arrested again for being "a participant in a church-monarchist counter-revolutionary group, the True Orthodox Church", and on January 28, 1934 was sentenced to transfer to a punishment isolation cell for two years. By this time, according to Protopresbyter Michael Polsky, he was known throughout Siberia as a fearless rebuker of the deeds of Metropolitan Sergius. The people loved him. His sermons against atheism and the atheist authorities were so fierce that the people expected his arrest at any minute. One woman shouted during one of his sermons:

"Is that really possible? Well, then, they'll arrest you!"

"That's how it has to be, Catherine," he replied.

There are different accounts of his death. According to one source, he was imprisoned at Yaia station, where he was later shot. According to another, he was arrested in 1934, sentenced to five years in the camps, and shot on October

1, 1937 in the Mari camps in Western Siberia before being buried in an unmarked grave. According to yet a third source, he was arrested in camp in 1938, sentenced to death and shot. According to yet another source, he was arrested in the 1940s and died in 1946.

55. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PETER, METROPOLITAN OF
KRUTITSA (+1937)
and those with him

Metropolitan Peter, in the world Peter Fyodorovich Polyansky, was born on June 28, 1862 in the village of Storozhevoye, Korotoyansky uyezd, Voronezh province into the family of a village priest, Fr. Theodore Yevgrafovich Polyansky. His brother was Protopriest Basil Fyodorovich. He finished his studies at the Voronezh theological seminary in 1885, and then served as a reader in a village in Voronezh province for three years. In 1888 he entered the Moscow Theological Academy. On graduating in 1892 as a candidate of theology, Peter Polyansky remained in the Academy as the second assistant of the inspector. He also taught at the Zvenigorod theological school. Meanwhile he worked on a dissertation devoted to the first epistle of the holy Apostle Paul to Timothy. This major work, for which the author was awarded the degree of master of theology on March 4, 1897, is still considered one of the best works on the hermeneutics of the New Testament.

In 1896 (1897) Peter Fyodorovich was appointed supervisor of the Zhirovitsky theological school. It was in this period that he met the future Patriarch Tikhon. On July 15, 1906 (1909), considering his work at the Zhirovitsky school to be exemplary, the Holy Synod invited him to work in the rank of state councillor on the Educational Committee of the Holy Synod, where he served as inspector of the theological educational institutions until the revolution. In this capacity, Peter Fyodorovich travelled to many dioceses and became well-known among the professors and senior clergy. Intelligent, full of life and sociable, tactful but firm, he greatly influenced the development of theological education in Russia.

In 1917-18, Peter Fyodorovich was a delegate to the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, and on September 20, 1918 he was appointed to work in the secretariat of the Holy Synod. He also worked as manager of the factory "Bogatyr". In 1920 Patriarch Tikhon suggested that he accept monastic tonsure, the priesthood and the episcopate and become his helper in the administration of the Church. On coming home he said: "I cannot refuse. If I refuse, I will betray the Church. But when I agree, I know that I will be signing my death warrant." On October 8, 1920, after being tonsured into monasticism by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), he was consecrated Bishop of Podolsk, a vicariate of the Moscow diocese, by Patriarch Tikhon.

Almost immediately after his consecration he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison, where he remained for two months. He was exiled for three years to Velikij Ustyug, where he lived with a priest. Then he moved to a lodge attached to the cathedral. He often served with the local clergy.

In 1923 the foreign journal Tserkovnye Vedomosti wrote: "Bishop Peter of Podolsk has been arrested several times, the last time on August 21, 1921."

In the second half of 1923 he was released, whereupon Patriarch Tikhon raised him to the rank of archbishop. And after the arrest of Bishop Hilarion (Troitsky) the Patriarch made him his closest assistant, raising him to the rank of metropolitan of Krutitsa in the spring of 1924. Many years later Protopriest Basil Vinogradov recalled of that time: "No member of the Patriarch's administration, on going to work in the morning, could be sure that he would not be arrested for participating in an illegal organization, or that he would not find the Patriarch's residence sealed."

On April 7, 1925, his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon reposed in the Lord. On April 12, the deceased Patriarch's will dated January 7, 1925 was discovered and read out. It said that in the event of the Patriarch's death and the absence of the first two candidates for the post of patriarchal locum tenens, "our patriarchal rights and duties, until the lawful election of a new patriarch,... pass to his Eminence Peter, metropolitan of Krutitsa." At the moment of the Patriarch's death (as the rumour went, by poisoning), the first two hierarchs indicated by him as candidates of the post of locum tenens, Metropolitans Cyril of Kazan and Agathangelus of Yaroslavl, were in exile. Therefore the 59 assembled hierarchs decided that "Metropolitan Peter cannot decline from the obedience given him and... must enter upon the duties of the patriarchal locum tenens."

Almost immediately the renovationist schismatics, encouraged by the Patriarch's death, energetically tried to obtain union with the Orthodox Church in time for their second Council, which was due to take place in the autumn of 1925. Their attempts were aided by the Soviet authorities, who put all kinds of pressures on the hierarchs to enter into union with the renovationists. A firm lead was required from the head of the Church, and in his proclamation dated July 28, 1925 this is exactly what Metropolitan Peter provided. After protesting against the propaganda of the uniates and sectarians, which was diverting attention away from the main battle against atheism, he turned his attention to the renovationists: "At the present time the so-called new-churchmen more and more discuss the matter of reunion with us. They call meetings in cities and villages, and invite Orthodox clerics and laymen to a common adjudication of the question of reunion with us, and to prepare for their pseudo-council which they are calling for the autumn of this year. But it must be clearly recalled that according to the canonical rules of the Ecumenical Church such arbitrarily convened councils, as were the meetings of the 'Living Church' in 1923, are illegal. Hence the canonical rules forbid Orthodox Christians to take part in them and much more to elect representatives for such gatherings. In accordance with the 20th rule of the Council of Antioch, 'no-one is permitted to call a Council alone, without those bishops who are in charge of the metropolitan sees.' In the holy Church of God only that is lawful which is approved by the God-ordained ecclesiastical government, preserved by succession since the time of the Apostles. All arbitrary acts, everything that was done by the new-church party without the approval of the most holy Patriarch now at rest with God, everything that is now done without our approval - the

approval of the guardian of the Patriarchal Throne, acting in conjunction with all lawful Orthodox hierarchy - all this has no validity in accordance with the canons of the holy Church (Apostolic canon 34; Council of Antioch, canon 9), for the true Church is one, and the Grace of the Most Holy Spirit residing in her is one, for there cannot be two Churches or two Graces. 'There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one God and Father of all' (Eph. 4.4-6).

"The so-called new-churchmen should talk of no reunion with the Orthodox Church until they show a sincere repentance for their errors. The chief of these is that they arbitrarily renounced the lawful hierarchy and its head, the most holy Patriarch, and attempted to reform the Church of Christ by self-invented teaching (The Living Church, nos. 1-11); they transgressed the ecclesiastical rules which were established by the Ecumenical Councils (the pronouncements of the pseudo-Council of May 4, 1923); they rejected the government of the Patriarch, which was established by the Council and acknowledged by all the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchs, i.e., they rejected what all Orthodoxy accepted, and besides, they even condemned him at their pseudo-Council. Contrary to the rules of the holy Apostles, the Ecumenical Councils and the holy Fathers (Apostolic canons 17,18; Sixth Ecumenical Council, canons 3, 13, 48; St. Basil the Great, canon 12), they permit bishops to marry and clerics to contract a second marriage, i.e., they transgress what the entire Ecumenical Church acknowledges to be a law, which can be changed only by an Ecumenical Council.

"The reunion of the so-called new-churchmen with the holy Orthodox Church is possible only on the condition that each of them recants his errors and submits to a public repentance for his apostasy from the Church. We pray the Lord God without ceasing that He may restore the erring into the bosom of the holy Orthodox Church."

This epistle had a sobering and strengthening effect on many wavering clerics. As the renovationist Vestnik Svyashchennago Synoda was forced to admit: "Immediately after Peter's appeal came out, the courage of the 'leftist' Tikhonites disappeared." So at their council in the Church of Christ the Saviour in Moscow the schismatics planned their revenge. "Metropolitan-Evangelist" Vvedensky publicly accused Metropolitan Peter of involvement with an emigre monarchist plot. In support of this claim he produced a patently forged denunciation by the renovationist bishop of Latin America Nicholas, a very dubious person who had several times crossed into schism and back into the Church.

The Bolsheviks gave ready support to the renovationists in their battle against Peter. Thus Savelyev writes: "On November 11, 1925, Yaroslavsky, Skvortsov-Stepanov and Menzhinsky were discussing Tuchkov's report 'On the future policy in connection with the death of Tikhon'. A general order was given to the OGPU to accelerate the implementation of the schism that had been planned amidst the supporters of Tikhon. Concrete measures were

indicated with great frankness: 'In order to support the group in opposition to Peter (the patriarchal locum tenens...) it is resolved to publish in Izvestia a series of articles compromising Peter, and to use towards this end materials from the recently ended renovationist council.'.. The censorship and editing of the articles was entrusted to the party philosopher Skvortsov-Stepanov. He was helped by Krasikov (Narkomyust) and Tuchkov (OGPU). This trio was given the task of censuring the declaration against Peter which was being prepared by the anti-Tikhonite group. Simultaneously with the publication in Izvestia of provocative articles against the patriarchal locum tenens, the Anti-Religious commission ordered the OGPU 'to initiate an investigation against Peter'."

Meanwhile, Tuchkov initiated discussions with Peter with regard to "legalizing" the Church. This "legalization" promised to relieve the Church's rightless position, but on the following conditions: 1) the issuing of a declaration of a pre-determined content; 2) the exclusion from the ranks of the bishops of those who were displeasing to the authorities; 3) the condemnation of the émigré bishops; and 4) the participation of the government, in the person of Tuchkov, in the future activities of the Church. However, Metropolitan Peter refused to accept these conditions and also refused to sign the text of the declaration Tuchkov offered him. And he continued to be a rock in the path of the atheists' plans to seize control of the Church. For, as he once said to Tuchkov:

"You're all liars. You give nothing except promises. And now please leave the room, we are about to have a meeting."

Metropolitan Peter must have foreseen his fate. For on December 5 (6), 1925 he composed a will concerning the transfer of ecclesiastical authority, and wrote: "I expect toil and the speedy, if not always merciful, condemnation of men. I do not fear toil - I have loved it and love it now, and I do not fear the condemnation of men - their disdain has been experienced by incomparably better and more worthy persons than myself. I fear only one thing: mistakes, omissions and involuntary injustices... If the distinguishing mark of the disciples of Christ, according to the word of the Gospel, is love, then it must penetrate the whole activity of the servant of the altar of the Lord, the servant of the God of peace and love. May the Lord help me in this! I ask you to carry out with love, as obedient children, all the rules, decrees and resolutions of the Church... I, the unworthy pastor, will pray that the peace of God many dwell in our hearts throughout our lives."

On December 9, the Anti-Religious Commission (more precisely: "the Central Committee Commission for carrying out the decree on the separation of Church and State") met and approved of the activities of the OGPU in inciting the Church groupings against each other. They also determined the timing of Metropolitan Peter's arrest. And on the night from December 9^h to 10 he was placed under house-arrest by a certain Kazansky. The order was signed by G. Yagoda.

Metropolitan Peter was taken to the inner prison at the Lubyanka. At the same time a group of bishops living in Moscow whom the GPU considered to be of like mind with him were also arrested: Archbishops Nicholas of Vladimir, Pachomius of Chernigov, Procopius of the Chersonese and Gurias of Irkutsk, and Bishops Parthenius of Ananiev, Damascene of Glukhov, Tikhon of Gomel, Barsanuphius of Kargopol and others. About forty people in all were arrested, including the layman A.D. Samarin, the former over-procurator. This was called the case of "The Danilovite Synod" because the conservative wing of the Russian Church gathered around its leader, Archbishop Theodore, the superior of the Danilov monastery.

The events that followed Peter's arrest and imprisonment are not at all clear. We know that a struggle for power took place between Archbishop Gregory (Yatskovsky) of Yekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk) and a group of bishops, on the one hand, and Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod (Gorky), on the other, which Sergius eventually won. The most widely accepted version of events goes something like this.

On December 14, although unable to leave Nizhni-Novgorod at the time, Metropolitan Sergius announced that he was taking over the Church's administration in accordance with Metropolitan Peter's instruction. However, Metropolitan Sergius was prevented by the OGPU from coming to Moscow, and on December 22, 1925, a group of nine bishops led by Archbishop Gregory of Yekaterinburg gathered at the Donskoy monastery. The Gregorians, as they came to be called, then declared that since Metropolitan Peter's activity was counter-revolutionary, and since with his arrest the Church was deprived of direction, they were organizing a Higher Temporary Church Council. This organization was legalized by the authorities on January 2.

On January 14, Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Archbishop Gregory demanding an explanation for his usurpation of power. Gregory replied on January 22, saying that while they recognized the rights of the three locum tenentes, "we know no conciliar decision concerning you, and we do not consider the transfer of administration and power by personal letter to correspond to the spirit and letter of the holy canons."

Sergius wrote again on January 29, impeaching Gregory and his fellow bishops, banning them from serving and declaring all their ordinations, appointments, awards, etc., since December 22 to be invalid. On the same day, three Gregorian bishops wrote to Metropolitan Peter claiming that they had not known, in their December meeting, that he had transferred his rights to Sergius, and asking him to bless their administration. The free access the Gregorians had to Peter during this period, and the fact that Sergius was at first prevented from coming to Moscow, suggests that the OGPU, while not opposing Sergius, at first favoured the Gregorians as their best hope for dividing the Church.

Fearing anarchy in the Church, Metropolitan Peter went part of the way to blessing the Gregorians' undertaking. However, instead of the Gregorian Synod, he created a temporary "college" to administer the Church consisting of Archbishop Gregory, Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov) of Vladimir and Archbishop Demetrius (Belikov) of Tomsk, who were well-known for their firmness. This resolution was made during a meeting with the Gregorians in the GPU offices on February 1. Tuchkov, who was present at the meeting, was silent about the fact that Nicholas was in prison. He agreed to summon Demetrius from Tomsk, and even showed Peter the telegram. But he never sent it. When Peter, feeling something was wrong, asked for the inclusion of Metropolitan Arsenius (Stadnitsky) in the college of bishops, Tuchkov again agreed and promised to sign Peter's telegram to him. Again, the telegram was not sent.

Now it has been argued by Regelson that Metropolitan Peter's action in appointing deputies was not canonical (as the Gregorians also implied), and created misunderstandings that were to be ruthlessly exploited later by Metropolitan Sergius. A chief hierarch does not have the right to transfer the fullness of his power to another hierarch as if it were a personal inheritance: only a Council representing the whole Local Church can elect a leader to replace him. Patriarch Tikhon's appointment of three locum tenentes was an exceptional measure, but one which was nevertheless entrusted to him by - and therefore could claim the authority of - the Council of 1917-18. However, the Council made no provision for what might happen in the event of the death or removal of these three. In such an event, therefore, patriarchal authority ceased, temporarily, in the Church; and there was no canonical alternative, until the convocation of another Council, but for each bishop to govern his diocese independently while maintaining links with neighbouring dioceses, in accordance with the Patriarch's ukaz no. 362 of November 20, 1920.

In defence of Metropolitan Peter it may be said that it is unlikely that he intended to transfer the fullness of his power to Metropolitan Sergius, but only the day-to-day running of the administrative machine. Thus in his declaration of December 6, 1925, he gave instructions on what should be done in the event of his arrest, saying that even a hierarchical "college" expressing his authority as patriarchal locum tenens would not be able to decide "the principal questions affecting the whole Church, whose realization in life could be permitted only with our blessing". He must have been thinking of Patriarch Tikhon's similar restrictions on the renovationists who tried to take over the administration in May, 1922.

Moreover, he continued to insist on the commemoration of his name as patriarchal locum tenens in the Divine services. This was something that Patriarch Tikhon had not insisted upon when he transferred the fullness of his power to Metropolitan Agathangelus. The critical distinction here is that whereas the patriarchal locum tenens has, de jure, all the power of a canonically elected Patriarch and need relinquish his power only to a canonically convoked Council of the whole local Church, the deputy of the locum tenens has no such

fullness of power and must relinquish such rights as he has at any time that the Council or the locum tenens requires it.

Why, then, did Metropolitan Peter not invoke ukaz no. 362 and bless the decentralization of the Church's administration at the time of his arrest? Probably for two important reasons. (1) The restoration of the patriarchate was one of the main achievements of the Moscow Council of 1917-18, and had proved enormously popular. Its dissolution might well have dealt a major psychological blow to the masses, who were not always educated enough to understand that the Church could continue to exist either in a centralized (though not papist) form, as it had in the East from 312 to 1917, or in a decentralized form, as in the catacomb period before Constantine the Great and during the iconoclast persecution of the eighth and ninth centuries. (2) The renovationists - who still constituted the major threat to the Church in Metropolitan Peter's eyes - did not have a patriarch, and their organization was, as we have seen, closer to the synodical, state-dependent structure of the pre-revolutionary Church. The presence or absence of a patriarch or his substitute was therefore a major sign of the difference between the true Church and the false for the uneducated believer.

Let us now return to the sequence of events. On February 4, 1926, Metropolitan Peter, fell ill and was admitted to the prison hospital. A war for control of the Church now developed between the Gregorians and Sergius. The Gregorians pointed to Sergius' links with Rasputin and the "Living Church": "On recognizing the Living Church, Metropolitan Sergius took part in the sessions of the HCA, recognized the lawfulness of married bishops and twice-married priests, and blessed this lawlessness. Besides, Metropolitan Sergius sympathized with the living church council of 1923, did not object to its decisions, and therefore confessed our All-Russian Archpastor and father, his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, to be 'an apostate from the true ordinances of Christ and a betrayer of the Church', depriving him of his patriarchal rank and monastic calling. True, Metropolitan Sergius later repented of these terrible crimes and was forgiven by the Church, but that does not mean that he should stand at the head of the Church's administration."

However, these arguments, well-based though they were, were not strong enough to maintain the Gregorians' position, which deteriorated as several bishops declared their support for Sergius. Yaroslavsky, Tuchkov and the OGPU had already succeeded in creating a schism between Metropolitan Sergius and the Gregorians. They now tried to fan the flames of schism still higher by releasing Metropolitan Agathangelus, the second candidate for the post of patriarchal locum tenens, from exile and persuading him to declare his assumption of the post of locum tenens, which he did officially from Perm on April 18. They also decided, at a meeting in the Kremlin on April 24, to "strengthen the third Tikhonite hierarchy - the Temporary Higher Ecclesiastical Council headed by Archbishop Gregory, as an independent unit."

On April 22, Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Peter at the Moscow GPU, as a result of which Peter withdrew his support from the Gregorians, signing his letter to Metropolitan Sergius: "the penitent Peter". It would be interesting to know whether Sergius knew of Metropolitan Agathangelus' declaration four days earlier when he wrote to Peter. Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky) claims that Agathangelus did not tell Sergius until several days later - but the evidence is ambiguous. If Sergius already knew of Agathangelus' assumption of the rights of locum tenens, then his keeping quiet about this very important fact in his letter to Metropolitan Peter was dishonest and misleading. For he must have realized that Metropolitan Agathangelus, having returned from exile (he arrived in his see of Yaroslavl on April 27), had every right to assume power as the eldest hierarch and the only patriarchal locum tenens named by Patriarch Tikhon who was in freedom at that time. In fact, with the appearance of Metropolitan Agathangelus the claims of *both* the Gregorians *and* Sergius to first-hierarchical power in the Church collapsed. But Sergius, having tasted of power, was not about to relinquish it so quickly. And just as Metropolitan Agathangelus' rights as locum tenens were swept aside by the renovationists in 1922, so now the same hierarch was swept aside again by the former renovationist Sergius.

The chronology of events reveals how the leadership of the Russian Church was usurped for the second time. On April 30, Sergius wrote to Agathangelus rejecting his claim to the rights of the patriarchal locum tenens on the grounds that Peter had not resigned his post. In this letter Sergius claims that he and Peter had exchanged opinions on Agathangelus' letter in Moscow on April 22 - but neither Sergius nor Peter mention Agathangelus in the letters they exchanged on that day and which are published by Gobunin. Therefore it seems probable that Peter's decision not to resign his post was based on ignorance of Agathangelus' appearance on the scene.

On May 13, Agathangelus met Sergius in Moscow (Nizhni-Novgorod, according to another source), where, according to Sergius, they agreed that if Peter's trial [for unlawfully handing over his authority to the Gregorians] ended in his condemnation, Sergius would hand over his authority to Agathangelus. However, Sergius was simply playing for time, in order to win as many bishops as possible to his side. And on May 16, he again wrote to Agathangelus, in effect reneging on his agreement of three days before: "If the affair ends with Metropolitan Peter being acquitted or freed, I will hand over to *him* my authority, while your eminence will then have to conduct discussions with Metropolitan Peter himself. But if the affair ends with his condemnation, you will be given the opportunity to take upon yourself the initiative of raising the question of bringing Metropolitan Peter to a church trial. When Metropolitan Peter will be given over to a trial, you can present your rights, as the eldest [hierarch] to the post of Deputy of Metropolitan Peter, and when the court will declare the latter deprived of his post, you will be the second candidate to the locum tenancy of the patriarchal throne after Metropolitan Cyril." In other words, Sergius in a cunning and complicated way rejected Agathangelus' claim to be the lawful head of the Russian Church, although this

claim was now stronger than Metropolitan Peter's (because he was in prison and unable to rule the Church) and much stronger than Sergius'.

On May 20, Agathangelus sent a telegram to Sergius: "You promised to send a project to the Bishops concerning the transfer to me of the authorizations of ecclesiastical power. Be so kind as to hurry up." On the same day Sergius replied: "Having checked your information, I am convinced that you have no rights; [I will send you] the details by letter. I ardently beseech you: do not take the decisive step." On May 21, Agathangelus sent another telegram threatening to publish the agreement he had made with Sergius and which he, Sergius, had broken. On May 22, Sergius wrote to Peter warning him not to recognize Agathangelus' claims (the letter, according to Hieromonk Damascene, was delivered personally by Tuchkov). However, Peter ignored Sergius' warning and wrote to Agathangelus, congratulating him on his assumption of the rights of patriarchal locum tenens and assuring him of his loyalty. At this point Sergius' last real canonical grounds for holding on to power - the support of Metropolitan Peter - collapsed. But Agathangelus only received this letter on May 31. The (OGPU-engineered?) delay proved to be decisive. For on May 24, after Sergius had again written rejecting Agathangelus' claims, the latter, according to Regelson, wrote: "Continue to rule the Church. For the sake of the peace of the Church I propose to resign the office of locum tenens."

On the same day Sergius, savagely pressing home his advantage, wrote to the administration of the Moscow diocese concerning the handing over of Agathangelus to a trial by the hierarchs then resident in Moscow. On June 9 Metropolitan Peter wrote to Metropolitan Agathangelus that if Agathangelus refused to take up the position, or was unable to do so, the rights and duties of the locum tenens would revert to him, Metropolitan Peter, and the deputyship to Sergius. However, on June 12 Metropolitan Agathangelus wrote to Peter renouncing the post of locum tenens. The way was now open for Sergius to resume power.

In June, 1926 Metropolitan Peter was transferred from Moscow to a solitary cell in the political isolator in the Spaso-Yefimiev monastery in Suzdal. Then, in November, he was transferred from Suzdal to the inner prison of the OGPU in the Lubyanka. On November 5 he was convicted by the OGPU of "being an assistant and concealer of a blackhundredist church organization that has set as its aim the use of the Church for consolidating the reactionary element and conducting anti-Soviet agitation..." The indictment read: "A blackhundredist church grouping was created in Moscow which strove to ignite and support a constant state of tension between the Church and Soviet power, in the hope of obtaining foreign support in defence of the former or for an intervention." This grouping was called "The Sergievo Samaritan Grouping" after the surname of the former over-procurator, A.D. Samaritan, who supposedly headed it, including the so-called "former people" - the inhabitants of the town of Sergiev Posad, P.B. Mansurov, P.B. Istomin and others. Samaritan and another former over-procurator, Vladimir Sabler, were supposed to have control over the bishops, influencing them to make "counter-revolutionary decisions", such as

the one to leave Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) in his see in Kiev. Metropolitan Peter was condemned for the supposed fact that, "having submitted to the leadership of the monarchists, he conducted his activity in administering the Church in accordance with their orders and decrees, striving to move the Church into the position of an illegal anti-soviet organization". On November 5, in accordance with article 68, Metropolitan Peter was sentenced to three years' exile in Abalak in the Urals. This was "The Case of Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky) and others, Moscow, 1926".

In December Tuchkov proposed that that he renounce his locum tenancy. Peter refused, and then sent a message to everyone through a fellow prisoner that he would "never under any circumstances leave his post and would remain faithful to the Orthodox Church to death itself". Then he was transferred from Moscow via Vyatka, Perm and Sverdlovsk to the closed monastery of Abalak in Tobolsk province, arriving in February, 1927. On January 1, while in prison in Perm, he confirmed Sergius as his deputy. Apparently he was unaware of the recent changes in the leadership of the Church. In any case, he was to have no further direct effect on the administration of the Church, being subjected, in the words of Fr. Vladimir Rusak, to "12 years of unbelievable torments, imprisonment, tortures and exile beyond the Arctic Circle."

Fr. Vladimir tells the following story about Metropolitan Peter when he was on his way to exile in Siberia. One dark night "he was thrown out of the railway carriage while it was still moving (apparently more than one bishop perished in this way). It was winter, and the metropolitan fell into a snow-drift as if into a feather-bed, so that he did not hurt himself. With difficulty he got out of it and looked round. There was a wood, and snow, and no signs of life. For a long time he walked over the virgin snow, and at length, exhausted, he sat down on a stump. Through his torn rasson the frost chilled him to the bone. Sensing that he was beginning to freeze to death, the metropolitan started to read the prayers for the dying.

"Suddenly he saw a huge bear approaching him.

"The thought flashed through his mind: 'He'll tear me to pieces'. But he did not have the strength to run away. And where could he run?

"But the bear came up to him, sniffed him and peacefully lay down at his feet. Warmth wafted out of his huge bear's hide. Then he turned over with his belly towards the metropolitan, stretched out his whole length and began to snore sweetly. Vladyka wavered for a long time as he looked at the sleeping bear, then he could stand the cold no longer and lay down next to him, pressing himself to his warm belly. He lay down and turned first one and then the other side towards the beast in order to get warm. Meanwhile the bear breathed deeply in his sleep, enveloping him in his warm breath.

"When the dawn began to break, the metropolitan heard the distant crowing of cocks: a dwelling-place. He got to his feet, taking care not to wake up the

bear. But the bear also got up, and after shaking himself down plodded off towards the wood.

"Rested now, Vladyka went towards the sound of the cocks and soon reached a small village. After knocking at the end house, he explained who he was and asked for shelter, promising that his sister would pay the owners for all trouble and expenses entailed. They let Vladyka in and for half a year he lived in this village. He wrote to his sister, and she arrived. But soon after her other 'people' in uniform also came..."

In March, 1927, Metropolitan Sergius was released from prison. He immediately formed a "Synod" of twelve of the most disreputable bishops in Russia. And then, in July, he issued his famous declaration in which he placed the Church in more or less complete submission to the atheists.

From February to April, 1927, Metropolitan Peter was in exile in the closed Abalak monastery. He cooked his own food, put wood in the stove and cleaned his clothes. While he was in Abalak, his cell-attendant came to him, and Metropolitan Peter asked him whether he had come with the knowledge of the authorities. On receiving a negative reply, he told him to go and inform the authorities of his arrival. For this, both Metropolitan Peter and his cell-attendant were arrested and thrown into prison in Tobolsk.

While there, he heard that they wanted to issue a decree stopping the commemoration of his name in the churches. "It is not wounded self-love," he said, "nor resentment which forces me to be anxious about this, but I fear that if my name ceases to be commemorated it will be difficult to distinguish between the Tikhonite and renovationist churches." He added that the investigator Tuchkov was in charge of church affairs, which was impermissible, and that he would remain alone like St. Athanasius.

On July (August) 9, Metropolitan Peter was exiled along the river Ob to the Arctic settlement of Khe, which was in the tundra two hundred versts from Obdorsk. There, seriously ill and deprived of the possibility of communicating with the world, he was doomed to a slow death. His only communications were with three renovationist priests, who persecuted him. On September 11, he suffered his first attack of angina and from that time never left his bed. He was taken to Obdorsk, where he was advised to petition for a transfer to another place with a better climate. But his petition was refused, and he remained in Khe for the time being. Then he was transferred to Tobolsk prison, where Tuchkov offered him his freedom if he would renounce his locum tenancy. Metropolitan Peter refused and on May 11, 1928 he was returned to Khe, with the period of his exile extended by two years.

According to the Sergianist Metropolitan Manuel (Lemeshevsky), during his exile Metropolitan Peter composed a moleben for the suffering world and a short blessing of the water with a special prayer.

On January 22, 1928 Metropolitan Peter expressed his opinion on Metropolitan Sergius' notorious declaration of July, 1927 in a letter to a certain N.: "For a first-hierarchy such an appeal [as Sergius' declaration] is *inadmissible*. Moreover, I don't understand why a Synod was formed from (as I can see from the signatures under the appeal) unreliable people. Thus, for example, Bishop Philip is a heretic... In this appeal a shadow is cast upon me and the patriarch, as if we had political relations with abroad, whereas the only relations were ecclesiastical. I do not belong to the irreconcilables, I allowed everything that could be allowed, and it was suggested to me in a more polite manner that I sign the appeal. I refused, for which I was exiled. I trusted Metropolitan Sergius, and I see that I was mistaken."

There is evidence the Bolsheviks arranged a secret meeting between Metropolitan Peter and Metropolitan Sergius, during which the latter tried to persuade him to accept his Church "platform". But Metropolitan Peter refused. Then Metropolitan Sergius shouted at him:

"Well, then, you will rot in exile!"

To which the holy confessor replied:

"I will rot, but with Christ, and not with you, you Judas-traitor!"

According to Protopresbyter Michael Polsky, Metropolitan Peter wrote to Sergius, saying that if he did not have the strength to defend the Church he should hand over his duties to someone stronger. Similar information was provided by the Priests Elijah Pirozhenko and Peter Novosiltsev after they had visited Metropolitan Peter. In May, 1929, Bishop Damascene of Glukhov sent a messenger to Metropolitan Peter, and from his reply was able to write: "Granddad (i.e. Metropolitan Peter) spoke about the situation and the further consequences to be deduced from it almost in my own words".

On September 17, 1929, Protopriest Gregory Seletsky wrote to Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd on behalf of Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov): "I am fulfilling the request of his Eminence Archbishop Demetrius and set out before you in written form that information which the exiled Bishop Damascene has communicated to me. He succeeded in making contact with Metropolitan Peter, and in sending him, via a trusted person, full information about everything that has been taking place in the Russian Church. Through this emissary Metropolitan Peter orally conveyed the following:

"1. You Bishops must yourselves remove Metropolitan Sergius.

"2. I do not bless you to commemorate Metropolitan Sergius during Divine services.

"3. The Kievan act of the so-called "small council of Ukrainian bishops" concerning the retirement of 16 bishops from the sees they occupy is to be considered invalid.

"4. The letter of Bishop Basil (the vicar of the Ryazan diocese) gives false information. [This refers to a forgery concocted by the sergianists which purported to show that Metropolitan Peter recognized Metropolitan Sergius.]

"5. I will reply to questions in writing."

In December, 1929 Metropolitan Peter wrote to Sergius: "Your Eminence, forgive me magnanimously if by the present letter I disturb the peace of your Eminence's soul. People inform me about the difficult circumstances that have formed for the Church in connection with your exceeding the limits of the ecclesiastical authority entrusted to you. I am very sorry that you have not taken the trouble to initiate me into your plans for the administration of the Church. You know that I have not renounced the *locum tenency*, and consequently, I have retained for myself the Higher Church Administration and the general leadership of Church life. At the same time I make bold to declare that your remit as deputy was only for the management of everyday affairs; you are only to preserve the status quo. I am profoundly convinced that without prior contact with me you will not make any responsible decision. I have not accorded you any constituent right as long as I retain the *locum tenency* and as long as Metropolitan Cyril is alive and as long as Metropolitan Agathangelus was alive. Therefore I did not consider it necessary in my decree concerning the appointment of candidates for the deputyship to mention the limitation of their duties; I had no doubt that the deputy would not alter the established rights, but would only deputize, or represent, so to speak, the central organ through which the locum tenens could communicate with his flock. But the system of administration you have introduced not only excludes this: it also excludes the very need for the existence of the locum tenens. Such major steps cannot, of course, be approved by the consciousness of the Church. I did not admit any qualifications limiting the duties of the deputy, both from a feeling of deep reverence and trust for the appointed candidates, and first of all for you, having in mind at this point your wisdom. It is burdensome for me to number all the details of negative evaluations of your administration: the resounding protests and cries from believers, from hierarchs and laypeople. The picture of ecclesiastical division that has been painted is shocking. My duty and conscience do not allow me to remain indifferent to such a sorrowful phenomenon; they urge me to address your Eminence with a most insistent demand that you correct the mistake you have made, which has placed the Church in a humiliating position, and which has caused quarrels and divisions in her and a blackening of the reputation of her leaders. In the same way I ask you to suspend the other measures which have increased your prerogatives. Such a decision of yours will, I hope, create a good atmosphere in the Church and will calm the troubled souls of her children, while with regard to you it will preserve that disposition towards you which you deservedly enjoyed both as a Church figure and as a man. Place all your hope on the Lord, and His help

will always be with you. On my part, I as the first-hierarchy of the Church, call on all clergy and church activists to display, in everything that touches on the civil legislation and administration, complete loyalty. They are obliged to submit unflinchingly to the governmental decrees as long as they do not violate the holy faith and in general are not contrary to Christian conscience; and they must not engage in any anti-governmental activity, and they are allowed to express neither approval nor disapproval of their actions in the churches or in private conversations, and in general they must not interfere in matters having nothing to do with the Church..."

On February 26, 1930, after receiving news from a certain Deacon K. about the true state of affairs in the Church, Metropolitan Peter wrote to Metropolitan Sergius, saying: "Of all the distressing news I have had to receive, the most distressing was the news that many believers remain outside the walls of the churches in which your name is commemorated. I am filled with spiritual pain both about the disputes that have arisen with regard to your administration and about other sad phenomena. Perhaps this information is biased, perhaps I am not sufficiently acquainted with the character and aims of the people writing to me. But the news of disturbances in the Church come to me from various quarters and mainly from clerics and laymen who have made a great impression on me. In my opinion, in view of the exceptional circumstances of Church life, when normal rules of administration have been subject to all kinds of distortion, it is necessary to put Church life on that path on which it stood during your first period as deputy. So be so good as to return to that course of action which was respected by everybody. I repeat that I am very sad that you have not written to me and have confided your plans to me. Since letters come from other people, yours would undoubtedly have reached me..."

After this letter was published, the authorities again tried to force Peter to renounce the locum tenancy and become an agent of the OGPU. But he refused.

On August 17, 1930, he was arrested in Khe and cast into solitary in Tobolsk prison. In November he was moved to prison in Yekaterinburg in solitary confinement with no right to receive parcels or visitors. In the same month a new case was started against him. He was accused that, while in exile, he conducted "defeatist agitation among the surrounding population, talking about an imminent war and the fall of Soviet power and the necessity of struggle with the latter, and also tried to use the Church to conduct a struggle with Soviet power". Vladyka Peter completely rejected these accusations, and continued his martyric path. In prison the crowns of his teeth broke, but the authorities paid no attention to his request for a dentist. As a result, all eating became for him a real torment. His health, which had once been strong, was undermined. He lay down to sleep at night wondering whether he would wake up the next day. He would have fainting spells and lie for a long time on the prison floor.

On March 11, 1931, after describing the sufferings of his life in Khe (which included the enmity of three renovationist priests), he posed the following

question in a letter to "comrade J.B. Polyansky", who had suggested that he renounce the locum tenancy: "Will not a change in locum tenens bring with it a change also in his deputy? Of course, it is possible that my successor, if he were to find himself incapable of carrying out his responsibilities directly, would leave the same person as his deputy - that is his right. But it is certain, in my opinion, that the carrying out of his duties by this deputy would have to come to an end at the same time as the departure of the person for whom he is deputizing, just as, according to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, with his departure the synod created by him would cease to exist. All this and other questions require thorough and authoritative discussion and canonical underpinning... Be so kind as to bow to Metropolitan Sergius on my behalf, since I am unable to do this myself, and send him my fervent plea that he, together with Metropolitan Seraphim and Archbishop Philip, to whom I also bow, work together for my liberation. I beseech them to defend an old man who can hardly walk. I was always filled with a feeling of deep veneration and gratitude to Metropolitan Sergius, and the thought of some kind of worsening of our relations would give me indescribable sorrow."

This letter suggests a softening of Metropolitan Peter's attitude to Sergius and his synod. However, this is not necessarily the case. Knowing that there was no way that he could remove Metropolitan Sergius from his post while he, Metropolitan Peter, was still in prison, he may have been appealing to their humanity in order to get him released first. Then, having arrived in Moscow, he could have taken the reins of the administration of the Church into his own hands again. However, it seems that the Bolsheviks saw through his ruse, because they (and Metropolitan Sergius) continued to show him no mercy, did not allow him to return to Moscow and continued to insist on his renouncing the locum tenancy.

On March 27, 1931 Metropolitan Peter wrote to B.P. Menzhinsky: "I was given a five-year exile which I served in the far north in the midst of the cruellest frosts, constant storms, extreme poverty and destitution in everything. (I was constantly on the edge of the grave.) But years passed, and there remained four months to the end of my exile when the same thing began all over again - I was again arrested and imprisoned by the Urals OGPU. After some time I was visited by comrade J.V. Polyansky, who suggested that I renounce the locum tenancy. But I could not accept such a suggestion for the following reasons which have a decisive significance for me. First of all I would be transgressing the established order according to which the locum tenens must remain at his post until the convening of a council. A council convened without the sanction of the locum tenens would be considered uncanonical and its decisions invalid. But in the case of my death the prerogatives of the locum tenens will pass to another person who will complete that which was not done by his predecessor. Moreover, my removal would bring in its wake the departure also of my deputy, Metropolitan Sergius, just as, according to his declaration, with his departure from the position of deputy the Synod created by him would cease to exist. I cannot be indifferent to such a circumstance. Our simultaneous departure does not guarantee church life from various possible

frictions, and, of course, the guilt would be mine. Therefore in the given case it is necessary that we discuss this matter together, just as we discussed together the questions relating to my letter to Metropolitan Sergius dated December, 1929. Finally, my decree, coming from prison, would undoubtedly be interpreted as made under pressure, with various undesirable consequences."

Of course, Metropolitan Peter was right, from a strictly canonical point of view, that with his departure or death, Metropolitan Sergius' rights would disappear. But he also knew - as did, of course, the Bolsheviks - that de facto his position would become much stronger, in fact unassailable. That is why he did not want to resign, but wanted rather to return to Moscow to reassume the reins of power. And that is why the Bolsheviks were determined not to let him return. For they knew, from his letter of December, 1929, that he was still an anti-sergianist. So the stalemate continued, with Peter refusing to resign and the Bolsheviks refusing to let him return to Moscow...

In the spring of 1931 Tuchkov suggested to Metropolitan Peter that he work as an informer for the GPU, threatening to give him another term in prison if he refused. On May 25, Metropolitan Peter wrote to Menzhinsky that "such an occupation is incompatible with my calling and is, besides, unsuited to my nature." And again he wrote to Menzhinsky: "In our weakness we fall more or less short of that ideal, that truth, which is enjoined upon Christians. But it is important not to be burdened only by earthly matters and therefore to refrain from violently murdering the truth and departing from its path. Otherwise it would be better to renounce God altogether... In this matter one would come up against two completely contradictory principles: Christian and revolutionary. The basis of the former principle is love for one's neighbour, forgiveness of all, brotherhood, humility; while the basis of the latter principle is: the end justifies the means, class warfare, pillage, etc. If you look at things from the point of view of this second principle, you enter upon the revolutionary path and hurl yourself into warfare, and thereby you renounce not only the true symbol of the Christian Faith and annihilate its foundations - the idea of love and the rest, but also the principles of the confession of the faith. There is no need to say how this dilemma - between love for one's neighbour and class warfare - is to be resolved by a seriously believing person who is, moreover, not a hireling, but a real pastor of the Church. He would hardly know any peace for the rest of his life if he subjected himself to temptation from the direction of the above-mentioned contradictions."

Metropolitan Peter's sufferings after the visits of Tuchkov were so acute that for some days his right arm and leg were paralyzed. And Tuchkov fulfilled his threat: on July 23, 1931, the OGPU condemned Metropolitan Peter to five years in a concentration camp "for stubborn struggle against Soviet power and persistent counter-revolutionary activity". Immediately after this sentence had been passed, OGPU agents Agranov and Tuchkov sent the administration of the Yekaterinburg prison a note recommending that Metropolitan Peter be kept under guard in the inner isolation-cell. Later, they moved the metropolitan to an isolation cell in a prison of special assignment in Verkhneuralsk.

In the summer of 1933 they increased the pressure on the metropolitan still more: they substituted his walks in the common courtyard with walks in a tiny, separate courtyard which was like a damp cellar whose floor was constantly covered with pools of rain-water and whose air was filled with smells from a latrine just next to the courtyard. When Vladyka saw this place he had an asthma attack and barely made it to his room. Soon the prison administration told him that the money which had been given for him had been spent and that they would no longer be providing him with additional food from the refectory. Vladyka was strictly isolated. The doctor's assistant who was in the room next to him was strictly forbidden to enter into any kind of relations with him, and his request to meet the local bishop was refused.

In August, 1933, Vladyka wrote to the authorities: "In essence, the locum tenancy is of no interest to me personally. On the contrary, it constantly keeps me in the fetters of persecution. But I am bound to reckon with the fact that the solution of the given question does not depend on my initiative and cannot be an act of my will alone. By my calling I am inextricably bound to the spiritual interests and will of the whole Local Church. So the question of the disposal of the locum tenancy, not being a personal question, cannot be left to my discretion, otherwise I would turn out to be a traitor of the Holy Church. By the way, in the act [of my entry into the duties of locum tenens] there is a remark to the effect that I am bound not to decline from fulfilling the will of Patriarch Tikhon, and consequently the will of the hierarchs who signed the act..., as well as the will of the clergy and believers who have been in communion of prayer with me these last nine years."

Metropolitan Peter's heroic refusal to renounce his post as locum tenens, or sign a pact with the authorities on the lines of Metropolitan Sergius' declaration, meant that the official Russian church did not lose its last links with the true apostolic succession until his death in 1937 - or Metropolitan Sergius' illegal assumption of the locum tenancy and the see of Kolomna in 1936.

Protopresbyter Michael Polsky cites the words of one witness that Metropolitan Peter had secret links with Metropolitan Joseph, who was in exile in Chimkent. Polsky also writes that Peter was freed for a short time in 1935. This fact was confirmed by the Paris newspaper Vozrozhdenie, which said that Peter refused to make concessions in exchange for the patriarchal throne and was again exiled. Another Paris newspaper, Russkaya Mysl' wrote that Peter demanded that Sergius hand over the locum tenancy to him, but Sergius refused.

More light on this crucial meeting has been cast by Protopriest Lev Lebedev, who writes: "In 1935 there came to an end the term of exile of the lawful locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne, Metropolitan Peter, to whom Sergius was obliged to hand over the administration of the Church... All now depended on how and what Sergius would choose. Sergius chose. He wrote a letter to the NKVD (its text was published on television not so long ago), in which he said

that if the administration were transferred into the hands of Metropolitan Peter 'the building (of cooperation of the Church with Soviet power), which had been constructed with such labour (!), would collapse'. The suggestion was understood and accepted. After a few days Metropolitan Peter was arrested and sent to a new place of imprisonment in Magnitogorsk... There are some basic data to the effect that Vladyka Peter even returned from exile, lived in Kolomna and came to Sergius in Moscow, so as to take over the administration. But Sergius did not hand over the administration, and wrote this same letter to the NKVD."

Vladyka was again transferred to the special purpose Verkhne-Uralsk prison, put in an isolated cell and given the number 114 instead of being given a name, so that no one should know about the fate of the locum tenens.

On the evening of August 2, 1936, Metropolitan Peter asked to have a talk with the head of the prison Artemyev. On the next day, Artemyev made a report in which his deputy Yakovlev called for Metropolitan Peter to be brought to trial on the grounds that he "made an attempt to establish links with the outside world". Then Artemyev and Yakovlev declared that Metropolitan Peter was an "irreconcilable enemy of Soviet power and slanders the existing state structure..., accusing it of 'persecuting the Church' and 'her workers'!. He slanderously accuses the NKVD organs of acting with prejudice in relation to him... He tried to make contact with the outside world from prison, using for this person the medical personnel of the prison, as a result of which he received a prosthesis as a sign of greeting from the clergy of Verkhne-Uralsk."

On August 25 (July 9), 1936 he was given another three-year term. From this time the conditions of his imprisonment became still stricter, he hardly saw anyone except the head of the prison and his deputy.

On September 11, 1936 an official announcement falsely declared the death of Metropolitan Peter. On December 27 Metropolitan Sergius assumed the title of locum tenens of the patriarchal throne and Metropolitan of Krutitsa - although, as he himself had admitted, the rights of the deputy of the locum tenens ceased immediately after the death of the locum tenens himself, and as Metropolitan Peter had written in 1931, "*my removal would bring in its wake the departure also of my deputy, Metropolitan Sergius.*"

But Metropolitan Peter was not dead. His execution came later: "On October 2, 1937, the troika of the UNKVD for Chelyabinsk region decreed the execution by shooting of Peter Fyodorovich (Polyansky), metropolitan of Krutitsa. The sentence was carried out on October 10, 1937 at 16.00 hours. Head of the UGB of the UNKVD, security forces Lieutenant Podobedov." He was buried in Magnitogorsk.

**56. HOLY HIEROMARTYR THEODORE, ARCHBISHOP OF
VOLOKOLAMSK (+1937)**

and those with him

Early Years (to 1905)

Archbishop Theodore, in the world Alexander Vasilyevich Pozdeyevsky, was born on March 21, 1876, in the village of Makaryevskoye, Vetyluzhsky uyezd, Kostroma province (according to another source, Nizhegorod province) in the family of the priest Basil Pozdeyevsky. The church in which Protopriest Basil served has remained to this day - the church of St. Macarius of Unzhensk. Fr. Basil died in the 1930s. He was buried near the church. There still exists a house that was built with funds provided by Vladyka Theodore when he was rector of the Moscow Theological Academy. Vladyka Theodore had seven sisters and one brother.

Once, shortly after Alexander's birth, there was an all-night vigil in the church in Makaryevskoye. When the clergy came out for the polyelei the local "fool", whom the villagers considered to be blessed, entered the church and during the magnification cried out: "You're praying here, but there a Vladyka has been born." And he prophesied that the Vladyka would be a pillar of Orthodoxy. And so it turned out...

In 1896, on graduating from Kostroma theological seminary, he entered the Kazan Theological Academy.

If in Moscow at this time the true spirit of the Church was as it were buried in the depths of the people's consciousness, while on the surface, amidst the intelligentsia, there ruled quite a different spirit - an antichristian, anti-Church spirit, the spirit of people who had lost the true faith, in distant Kazan, by contrast, a true and living faith had been preserved. The Kazan Theological Academy had been founded in 1841 with the aim of sending spiritual workers out into Eastern Russia and Siberia. And so apart from the usual theological subjects, it also had two missionary sections. It was in this grace-filled atmosphere that the youth Alexander came to maturity.

Vladyka Theodore's instructors during his years in the Kazan Academy included the outstanding elder, Schema-Archimandrite Gabriel (Ziryanov) of Seven Lakes Monastery, and the rector of the Academy, Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky).

Of the Elder Gabriel one of Vladyka Theodore's closest friends, the future **Hieromartyr Symeon** (Kholmogorov), wrote: "At this time the greater part of the Elder's visitors were students from the Kazan Theological Academy, primarily monks. They had long needed such a guide in the spiritual life, one who was full of love, unsophisticated and experienced, and now with eagerness they came to the Seven Lakes Monastery. However, as Father Gabriel

himself later recalled, they often came to him out of sheer curiosity and left believers. Many of them hadn't even believed in God! But after their conversion they would sometimes begin to give themselves over to despair because of their former way of life and over their future salvation. Beneath the weight of their sins they now lost hope in forgiveness and salvation. Father Gabriel comforted them and strengthened them in every way possible, and his words about God's measureless love and kindness were the testimony of a reliable witness who had personally experienced the depths of the loving-kindness of Christ. His words unexpectedly penetrated the darkest corners of men's hearts, kindling the bright ray of hope for salvation which would begin to awaken the soul by the touch of Christ's grace. And the sinner, forgetting himself, would see only the all-forgiving Face of Christ, and yearn for Him and begin to live and breathe together with Him."

Later, when Vladyka Theodore was rector of the Moscow Theological Academy, and the Elder Gabriel would visit him, he would gather together all the monks to meet him. And the meeting with the grace-filled Elder would leave an ineradicable imprint on the lives of them all.

No less a powerful an influence on the students was the young rector, Bishop Anthony, who educated a whole generation of outstanding bishops, priests and religious teachers. He placed particular emphasis on pastoral theology in the system of higher theological education, and his devotion and love effected a gradual change in the system of education in the direction of a closer and more constant spiritual and moral intercourse between teachers and taught. Almost every day after supper he would arrange tea-parties with the students in his rooms. "On a long table," writes one of the participants, "there stood a samovar and ten to fifteen glasses, with sugar and jam. One of the students would pour out the tea. Over tea a conversation would begin and perplexities would be resolved. Sometimes quarrels would arise. But in general, there were all sorts of people present, and one could learn much."

Another of the Academy's graduates, Bishop Metrophanes (Abramov) writes: "A beautiful choir was organized under the direction of the rector. No other academy could rival it, for Vladyka Anthony attracted all the young people who had firmly decided to dedicate themselves to the service of the Church in the priestly or monastic ranks. There were as many as 40 such students (priests and monks). The sacristan of the academy church was the humble and meek youth, Peter Kedrov from Vyatka diocese, who later became [the hieromartyr] Archbishop Pachomius of Chernigov. The staff-bearer was the likeable Vitya Ryashentsev from the Tambov high school, who later became the bishop of Gomel [and hieromartyr Archbishop Barlaam of Perm]."

A third major influence on Vladyka Theodore in the Kazan Academy was the brilliant young philosopher, Professor V.I. Nesmelov. Although his lectures were difficult, and he was harsh in his criticism of the students' written course work, his thinking was deep and highly appreciated by Vladyka Anthony, who wrote with reference to one of his works: "The true nature of philosophy

consists in its finding clear, positive formulations of the unclear intuitions of human consciousness as a whole, in consciously penetrating into its syllogism so that anyone could joyously cry out: 'Yes, that's exactly it! Yes, I recognize the same in myself!' The philosopher is not he who communicates to mankind some unexpected marvels, but he clarifies man to himself. The main thought of the author," continues Vladyka Anthony, "is that philosophizing attains its goal, the recognition of truth, only when it attends, not to the investigation of the things surrounding us, but to man himself ('know yourself' is the foundation of spiritual life), and, moreover, not to man's material composition or to the structure of his logical modes of thought, but to the investigation of the meaning of his existence and reality. From this point of view, the mind can successfully tackle only those subjects of philosophical thought which are bound up with the questions: 'Why do I live?' 'How can I fulfil the demands of my own moral consciousness?'"

In 1900 Vladyka Theodore was tonsured into monasticism. The rite of monastic tonsure was always celebrated by Bishop Anthony accompanied by Elder Gabriel. One eye-witness describes it as follows: "The procession with the novice who was about to be tonsured was particularly majestic. In front walked the universally venerated Elder, Schema-Archimandrite Gabriel, who reverently marked the path of the novice with the sign of the cross. The tonsure usually took place during the All-Night Vigil, after the Great Doxology. At the end of the service our Rector-Bishop always gave an edifying sermon to the newly-tonsured monk. Then the whole brotherhood accompanied him to his cell, where the rector blessed him with an icon."

In the same year of 1900 Vladyka Theodore graduated from the Academy with the degree of candidate of theology, and on July 24 was ordained to the priesthood. In 1901 he was appointed a teacher in the Kaluga theological seminary, and in 1902 - inspector of the Kazan theological seminary. From July 3, 1902 to 1903 he was inspector of the Kaluga theological seminary. On October 13, 1903 he was awarded the degree of master of theology. His thesis was entitled "The Ascetic Views of St. John Cassian". On February 4, 1904 he was appointed rector of the Tambov theological seminary with the rank of archimandrite.

Fr. Symeon Kholmogorov

One of Vladyka Theodore's friends from Kazan was Michael Mikhailovich Kholmogorov, who was born on September 29, 1874 in Kungur, Perm province, the son of a priest. He went to a theological school and a theological seminary before entering Kazan Theological Academy in 1899.

Concerning his childhood and learning years he wrote: "At home I did not study, but only played with the cats. But then the time came for me to enter the theological school. They baked some apple pies for me and took me away. Well, what was I to do! I wept and wept, then ate a little apple pie, then studied, then

again wept, again ate a little apple pie and again studied. And so I came out as the first student, and entered the Kazan academy..."

Schoolmates and the godmother of Fr. Symeon related about him: "He was tall, with broad shoulders and dark blond hair, a beautiful voice – a soft bass, quite handsome, very joyful, loved to be at parties, and was an excellent singer and dancer."

Once three friends, all students in the Kazan academy, came to Elder Gabriel of Seven Lakes Desert for spiritual advice. One of them was the future Bishop Stephen (Znamerovsky) of Vologda, then there was Alexis Stepanov - the future Archbishop and Hieromartyr Gurias, and Michael Kholmogorov - the future Archimandrite and Hieromartyr Symeon.

Vladyka Stephen described the visit as follows: "Batyushka elder was always welcoming, he loved to joke and could not stand gloomy monks. He had been seriously ill for a long time, as a result of which illness he became fat. He met the students with the words:

"You probably thought you would be seeing a schemamonk who was always weeping and thin. But look, you see how fat and constantly jolly I am."

The elder spoke for a long time with Stephen and Gurias, while it was as if he did not even see Michael. He did not ask him any questions, nor did Michael ask him anything... He gave the students tea and suggested that they stay the night. But they were in a hurry to return to the academy.

When the elder was blessing Michael, who was the last to come up, he said to him:

"You receive the tonsure."

"Give the blessing," replied Michael, and they left.

The future bishops were amazed by the elder's words, and said:

"How could you reply: 'Give the blessing.' You know, you have never even talked about monasticism, you like society, and worldly singing, music and parties. We could have expected it from anyone, but not from you."

Michael replied with complete calmness:

"But you don't know what's in my heart."

And soon he was tonsured as a monk, receiving the name Symeon in honour of St. Symeon of Verkhoturye. In 1902 he was ordained to the priesthood.

In 1903 he graduated from the Kazan Academy, and on August 15 was granted a professorial scholarship in the faculty of patrology. On August 10, 1904 he was appointed a teacher in Orenburg theological seminary, teaching homiletics, liturgics and practical guidance for pastors.

On January 31, 1905 Fr. Symeon was appointed inspector of the Tambov theological seminary, becoming archimandrite on November 19, 1906. He immediately renewed his friendship with Archimandrite Theodore, with whom he had studied in Kazan. They served together for a little more than a month...

At that time Tambov was one of the most revolutionary cities. The local revolutionary party had composed a list of people whom they were to kill: the governor, the vice-governor, the chief of police, the rector of the seminary and other highly-placed people. On April 7, 1907 a student attempted to kill Archimandrite Theodore. Fr. Symeon succeeded in shielding him with his body, and the bullet struck a vertebra at his waist, paralyzing the lower part of his body permanently. From that moment Vladyka Theodore never left his "saviour," visiting him every day and fulfilling his smallest request.

On August 19, 1906, Archimandrite Theodore was appointed rector of the Moscow theological seminary, and from August 19, 1909 - rector of the Moscow Theological Academy. On September 14, 1909, he was consecrated bishop of Volokolamsk, a vicariate of the Moscow diocese, by the future hieromartyr, Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow, and other hierarchs.

Meanwhile, Fr. Symeon at first went to live with the elder Gabriel in Pskov. For a long time he was only able to lie face down, and suffered terribly. Later, they were able to lift him, seat him in a chair and carry him to church. This was also painful, and he suffered pain for the rest of his life.

During the first year of the war Fr. Symeon lived in Pskov in the Metochion of the Eleazar Monastery of the Saviour. Here he was taken seriously ill, and through the intervention of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, was taken into a Red Cross hospital in Pskov where the chief nurse was Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna. She wrote that "he bore his infirmity with great patience and simplicity and preserved an astonishing buoyancy of spirit. This even-tempered, gentle and gay man turned in his suffering entirely to spiritual interests, yet refrained from forcing these interests on other people. He was one of the few persons I have ever known in whom a genuine spiritual loftiness did not seem, at times, oppressive.

"He had epysipelas when he came to our hospital, and to receive him was against all the rules; but my aunt's influence prevailed. I had him isolated from the rest of the patients in a large room adjoining the apartment of the directress, in which I lived.

“For some days he lay at the point of death, then slowly recovered. I went to see him quite often, for Aunt’s sake, but when he was convalescing, we both felt constrained and my visits were short. For my early youth, ever since the time Uncle Serge had appointed the red-haired priest to teach us religion, I had retained for all the clergy an instinctive dislike. To me they did not seem to be men, but some kind of vague creatures always uttering the same words, and thinking always the same identical and servile thoughts. One had to speak a different language with them and to conduct oneself differently, with a pretence of almost inhuman virtue. A clergyman, it seemed to me, was supposed constantly to maintain authority without probing its essence, for all power came from God. This sounded to me false, and falsity I despised.

“But Fr. Michael’s [Fr. Symeon’s] simplicity quickly disarmed me. He never uttered the stilted phrases proper to various occasions, as I had expected him to; and I came to see him not as a priest but as a man, and a very unusual one. His embarrassment, mainly produced by the feeling that a woman had somehow penetrated into his monastic way of thinking, disappeared little by little, and he began to show interest in me as a human being.

“Thus began our friendship. My short visits were lengthened, our conversations became more and more interesting. We discussed everything, from newspaper reports to the most trifling details of everyday life. This contact filled a certain void in my life. Having worked all day long among people, I used previously to spend my evenings alone in my room reading or writing, but now after supper I went to see Fr. Michael.

“Dr. V.I. Tishin, who was in charge of Fr. Michael’s case, often joined us... It would be difficult to imagine people more different at first glance than Fr. Michael, Dr. Tishin and myself. One was a monk, the son of a provincial priest, a man of high spiritual standards and culture, who had suffered great moral affliction and withdrawn from life. The second, an intellectual, born of a poor family and brought up on pennies, who had won his way solely because of his own capability and energy, a man honest and sincere, but an unbeliever, indifferent to ideas which did not correspond to his own. Finally, I, brought up in all the traditions, all the prejudices of my milieu, which still constituted my outlook, inexperienced and naïve, with unformed opinions, but avid of every escape into other worlds. There grew up between the three of us, in spite of all these differences, a friendship which remained unmarred during the two and a half years that we were together. This friendship left a deep impression on me and affected all my future life. When by the turn of events we were forced in different directions, with little probability of ever meeting again, I felt that I was parting with people very dear and close to me. They gave me what no one else had ever given me – they gave me a chance to grow – and prepared me, each in his way, for what was to happen later. Without them, I do not know what means should now have to live.

“Fr. Michael gave an inner meaning and beauty to spiritual beliefs and teachings which formerly were but empty sounds to me. From childhood I had

seen in the religion of those surrounding me either superficial sentimentality, or official pompousness or disciplinary measures for the safe conduct of both private and social life. The insincerity of such a religion had always irked me. But the talks that I had with Fr. Michael showed clearly that Orthodoxy was a part of the Russian soul, that it was closely connected with the psychology of the people, that it was broad in its viewpoint and full of a poetry both simple and profound. Under his guidance I began a new study of Orthodoxy from this point of view, and imbibed its true spirit. We read together the works of the fathers of the Church and studied the regulations of the Church services and the Bible. Religion became alive to me. Fr. Michael accompanied these readings with explanations and stories from his own experiences; he described to me life in the monasteries and told me of the touching and curious customs of the Russian clergy... “

In 1915, when the elder Gabriel, shortly before his death, left the Saviour-Eleazar Desert in Pskov and went to Kazan, Fr. Symeon remained where he was. One can well imagine the grief he felt on being parted from his beloved elder. However, at this point Vladyka Theodore, who could not forget the man who had saved his life and who was so close to him spiritually, invited him to live with him in Sergiev Posad when Vladyka was rector of the Moscow Theological Academy.

The Moscow Academy (1906-1917)

The religious life of Moscow in the decade before the revolution was quite different from that of provincial Kazan. The 80s and 90s of the nineteenth century had been a time of social weariness and depression, but at the beginning of the twentieth century there was a return to the faith in some intellectual circles. However, this return was often sickly and mixed with deceptions, and many members of the intelligentsia became infected with unbelief. As one church writer put it: "It is not the flesh, but the spirit that has been corrupted in our time, and men pine away to the point of despair."

In his work The Meaning of Christian Asceticism, Vladyka Theodore wrote: "Many contemporary renovators of Christianity think it unnecessary to take account of the true attitude of Christianity towards man, his nature and the meaning of life. They create their own ideal of life and judge Christianity in accordance with that ideal. They want to bring in Christianity as the most suitable, so to speak, most vital factor contributing to the realization of their ideal. The most important thing, the question of sin, is completely ignored by them, and they have no idea what it is. That is why, for example, Merezhkovsky, who accuses Christianity of the split between flesh and spirit that destroyed the pagan world, has no explanation of where this split appeared among the pagans or why they lived by affirming the flesh. But Christianity says that this destructive split and disharmony in the nature of man was not imposed on man from without, but lives within him, as a consequence of sin... This is the corruption, illness and servitude of man to the flesh, and in order to understand what happened in the soul of man through

sin it is necessary to penetrate into the psychology of sin. One should point out that, among the representatives of that part of the intelligentsia which is thinking of going along the path of Christianity, this path is indeed new, because, far from wanting to accept Christianity as it is and always was, historically speaking, they want to find - or, better, invent - in this same Christianity certain new ways of incarnating it in life and, through it, of renovating human life... For the man who is used to living in accordance with the ideals of the new philosophy of life, or in accordance with the moods revealed by the philosophy of Nietzsche and the wild heroes of the works of Gorky, L. Andreyev, etc., it is of course not easy immediately to accept Christianity in its historical integrity, and such people find much in the teaching of the Christian Church that is as strange as it is incomprehensible. The Apostle Paul said that the preaching of Christ crucified appeared as very strange and difficult to accept: for some it was simply a deception, and for others - sheer madness... This same teaching about Christ, crucified and suffering, this demand that man should crucify his passions and lusts, this Christianity imbued with the spirit of compunction and the suppression of the carnal principle in the name of spiritual interests - in a word: the ascetical spirit of Christianity has disturbed the new pagans who seek in the Christianity the truth of life (as they understand it, of course) and has become a stone of stumbling and fall in the task of following Christ. Open the pages of any work of Merezhkovsky, Minsky or Rozanov, and you will see that their articles are mainly occupied with a criticism of monasticism, which is identified with asceticism. This strange phenomenon is the result of the fact that a part of the intelligentsia which is seeking God has approached Christianity with the very definite aim of reforming it, which is nothing other than the same decadence applied to the religious life...

"The proponents of the idea that ascetics should do public service make the direct demand that the antiquated institution of monasticism should be reformed by turning monasteries into associations and congregations with a predominantly practical significance. Among secular writers, Merezhkovsky, for example, in his article 'The Last Saint', directly states that 'the whole of ancient eastern and Russian asceticism is imbued with the spirit of hatred and disdain for society'. Berdyaev for some reason represents asceticism as rejoicing in the existence of diabolical evil in the world, for if this evil did not exist, where would ascetics go in their search for reasons to suffer? This is an example of the contemporary misunderstanding of the nature and meaning of Christian asceticism..."

In opposition to this worldly spirit, Vladyka Theodore gathered round him a group of zealots for Church truth, which included the well-known church publisher and publicist Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, who became the secret Bishop Mark and died in exile for the faith, V. Kozhevnikov, O. Yezerskij, A.D. Samarin and Paul Mayesurov. This group of lay theologians were convinced that the true voice of Christian truth came from the teaching of the elders, who had preserved intact the genuine path of Orthodoxy.

From 1909 to 1914, Vladyka Theodore took an active part in the publication Theological Herald, turning it into one of the best of the theological journals. He attached an appendix to the journal devoted to the writings of the Holy Fathers. And he wrote: "Glory and honour to the great and holy Fathers of the Church, in that they defended the purity of Christian consciousness, and in good time overthrew those ideas - mere products of the human mind - which were introduced by false teachers as tares among the wheat into the enclosure of Christian Church consciousness. However, the historical path of the growth of the Church and the Kingdom of God will never be free from these tares. And since the Councils, the field of the Kingdom of God has been zealously seeded, especially 'while we slept', by tares of all kinds, both from the dogmatic and the moral aspects. We think that the whole process, lasting many centuries, of the assimilation of Christianity and its principles by the historical life of man has been at the same time a constant process, a constant attempt, a constant historical tendency on the part of mankind *to counterfeit Christianity*, to assimilate it to its purely human demands and tastes, that is, in the language of theology, in accordance 'with the spirit of this world'."

However, in spite of the great advance that Vladyka Theodore made in reorganizing theological education on a strictly patristic basis, the opposite, renovationist trend took the upper hand after the February revolution of 1917. At that time, in the same Theological Herald, there was published an article entitled "The New Theology" by a teacher of the Moscow Academy, M.M. Tarayev, in which the teaching of the Holy Fathers was reduced to gnosticism, and gnosticism and asceticism were declared to be "inveterate enemies of the Russian genius"!

Fr. Sergius Sidorov tells a story of his meeting Vladyka Theodore in Sergiev Posad which shows that his image as a strict, unsmiling rigorist was misleading: he was in fact a man of great compassion and humility. He writes: "The first time I saw Vladyka Theodore was in the late autumn of 1915 in Sergiev. Mists wrapped the Assumption cathedral and metropolitan's residence in a white cloud. The all-night vigil had just ended in the Academy church. The worshippers were hurrying towards the gates, sliding over the wet snow. I had stopped by the grave of I. Aksakov, and was waiting for my companions, when a tall monk wearing glasses and a velvet skull-cap came up to me and said: 'Have you not come from M.A. Novoselov?' 'Yes, I know him.' 'Please, I beg you, give him this. The address is: N. Street, house 10, flat 7... Only don't look to see what's in this bundle and envelope and don't say that it's from me.' 'Vladyka, how glad I am' - I heard the voice of Durylin coming up to us. He introduced me to Bishop Theodore, who invited us to his room and gave us an excellent supper.

"After visiting Vladyka, I carried out his request. Number 10 housed the unfortunate family of a paralytic, who lived in terrible filth and hunger. I do not know what was in the bundle Vladyka gave to the unfortunates, but when I handed over the envelope, they opened it and 200 rubles fell out of it. From that evening I became a frequent visitor of the renowned at that time head of

'the reactionary clergy', Bishop Theodore, the rector of the Moscow Theological Academy, and I became his fervent admirer. I did not share many of his views, but on seeing his genuine kindness which was hidden from many, and on listening to his wise speeches imbued with a burning love for God's creatures, I recognized in his cell the essence of genuine Orthodoxy.

"After 1917, Vladyka Theodore was retired to the Danilov monastery, where his glory, the glory of the first righteous man protecting the Church from rebellious secular movements, began. In 1918 I was attending a theological course on which Bishop Theodore was teaching.

"Once I was accompanying Vladyka to the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour. He had to take a tram. It was spring and the weather was hot. The rays of the sun burned on the cupolas of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, and they seemed to be incandescent globes passing the burning heat onto the noisy bustle of Moscow. On the fiery pavements lines of people were waiting for bread - a famine was raging. A shaven old man with pitiful tufts of grey hair and staring, protruding eyes was greedily looking on as the bread was being handed out. Vladyka had a loaf, and he gave it to him. The old man pounced to kiss the hand of his Eminence Theodore, but Vladyka forcefully pulled it away, while the old man bowed almost to the ground in front of him before merging into the queue. I asked Vladyka whether he knew him. 'Of course, that's the mad official Peter Fyodorovich Spitsyn, I know him well. He has long been playing the fool in Moscow. You know, in order to understand the essence of Orthodoxy, it is necessary to study it, not in books and learned works, but in close contact with people who are forgotten and despised by the world, with fools and wanderers and madmen, even with criminals. This contact is especially useful for pastors. When he has come to know those who have been rejected by the world better, the pastor will understand that in fact these people are closer to Christ than he is, because sinners who are conscious of their fall love the Lord Who forgives and has mercy on them. Orthodoxy is the religion of compassion and humility, one must pity sinners and recognize one's own sins. And this feeling is given to one when one comes into contact with the world of the poor and outcast.'

"While listening to the words of Bishop Theodore, I recalled Metropolitan Philaret, who also loved to look for, and found, people who had been forgotten by life; and the spiritual countenance of Vladyka became closer to me. Besides respecting his mind and his heart, I felt the trembling of his soul - a radiant, pure soul attached to the sources of the Orthodox Faith.

"I was struck by the humility of Vladyka Theodore, this masterful administrator of the Moscow Theological Academy, a man who influenced a whole series of hierarchs in our time."

Revolution and Imprisonment (1917-1922)

On March 2, 1917, the Tsar abdicated, and with his fall the great building of Orthodox Russia began to totter. The time of suffering had begun, and Vladyka Theodore wrote about this suffering as follows: "One must remember that from the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit the Church entered the world as a new organization that was different from human societies and even opposed to them. That is why the representatives of Roman statehood persecuted the Christians. They saw what a threat Christianity represented for their public structures. The beginning of the organization of the Church, of a holy and pure society, was the beginning of another order. In the Church the spirit of man is transfigured, he becomes different. It is impossible to unite the Church (for it is spirit) with the State, but it is also impossible to disunite them. In order to separate the Church from the State it is necessary to make it composed completely of unbelievers. Then the separation would take place of its own accord. Juridical rights are not so important for the Church - the work of spiritual perfection can take place in external conditions that are very oppressive for Christians. Christianity calls man to salvation, but one must enter on this path freely, for the Truth makes man free.

"The new atheist religion calls man to slavery, to the worship of a new Idol. There is no choice in it, only complete slavery of spirit and body. A man suffers punishment not only for his acts, but also for his thoughts, and it is demanded that he slander and denounce others. In other words, this new ideology, this new religion demands the complete slavery of a man's soul and body....

"The Bible speaks of a constant battle between good and evil and sin. But people understand this battle only in the sense of a struggle of certain external economic, historical or social laws of life. They forget or reject the living soul of man. Now they do not speak about moral evil, but about that which is useful and harmful, fitting or unfitting, etc. Only in salvation from sin can all these difficult questions of life be resolved."

In April, 1917 Vladyka Theodore was forced out of his post in the Moscow Theological Academy.

Fr. Sergius Sidorov writes: "In 1923 I became superior of the church of Saints Peter and Paul in Sergiev Posad, and the problems of my parish often forced me to visit Vladyka and ask his advice. Once, in order to console me, who had been hurt by a slander, his Eminence Theodore told me about the events that led up to his expulsion from the Moscow Theological Academy. These events shed a particularly vivid light on the inner nature of the persecutions raised against him by the liberal press and professors in 1917. This is his story:-

"There are an exceptional number of demon-possessed people in Sergiev. Many of them are brought up to the Holy Chalice. Once, when I was serving the Liturgy in the church of the Academy, I noticed that someone was staring at me malevolently. And when the communicants began to come up to the Holy Chalice, among them came up a girl of about twenty, and I recognized her as the daughter of an old resident of Sergiev. When I had returned home

and had started my usual rule of prayer, I could not pray. An inner voice ordered me to save the unfortunate girl from the evil spirit, which, as I had become clearly convinced in the church, dwelt in her. My conviction was based only on the special dull, cold look in the eyes of the girl. In the church she behaved with decorum. The next day I visited her parents and learned that their daughter really was ill. When she prayed she could not read the "Virgin Theotokos, Rejoice!", and she was overwhelmed by despondency at Holy Communion. This information convinced me that the girl was demon-possessed, and I began to pray strongly for her and performed the rite of exorcism over her. On the day that I performed this rite over her, a striking change took place in her attitude towards me. Before, she had acted towards me with complete trust and love. But after the service she stopped visiting me and hid in a distant room when I visited the house of her parents... Rumour had it that she was planning to leave Sergiev, and this, in my opinion, could have destroyed her, since she was under the special protection of St. Sergius.

"Once, as I was travelling along Pereyeslavka, I saw her carrying a suitcase and heading for the station. I ordered the carriage to stop, got out, told her to get into the carriage with me, and took her home. On the way she asked me why I was not letting her go to the station, and declared that I had been in her house in the morning and had tried to persuade her to leave Sergiev. At that time I took her words for the ravings of a clearly sick person. But hardly had I crossed the threshold of her room when I heard laugh and a voice saying: 'I've outwitted you, don't fight with me, otherwise I'll drive you out of here.' I understood that this was the voice of a dark spirit, and, sprinkling the room with holy baptismal water, I forced it to be quiet. However, I could not sleep the whole of that night. I was thinking about the unfortunate girl the whole time, and I began to work out that her words saying that I had been in her house were not the ravings of a sick person, but the action of a dark power. The next morning I put a part of the relics of St. Sergius into my panagia and set off for the sick girl. The door into their flat was open, no-one met me in the hall, and I went straight into her room. She was sitting on the bed, and opposite her sat my double, who was trying to persuade her to leave Sergiev without delay. Thunderstruck, I halted on the threshold. The double turned to me and, pointing to me, said to the girl: 'Don't believe him, it's the devil.' 'You're lying,' I said, and touched it with my panagia. My double suddenly disappeared and did not trouble the girl any more. She made a complete recovery from the mental illness that had tormented her since the age of seven. And two months later I was expelled from my post as rector of the Academy and from Sergiev! When I moved to Danilov I heard a voice in the night: 'I expelled you from Sergiev. Don't save my girls.'"

"'Why, Vladyka,' I asked, 'are there so many possessed people in Sergiev?' 'I think,' he replied, 'that the distinguishing trait of St. Sergius' exploit was his struggle with the demons. True, his life contains no reference to the way in which he struggled with them, but there is some indication that this struggle was long and stubborn. The saint chose a place inhabited by the dark powers to glorify God, and before building the monastery he destroyed the demons.'

But you know what the dark places are like. They become still more terrible and dark when the holy thing restraining it wavers."

Together with Fr. Symeon Kholmogorov, whom he had invited to stay with him in Sergiev Posad, Vladyka now moved to the Danilov monastery, where he was appointed superior on May 1, 1917.

This appointment, as A. Flovsky writes, "was providential; for it allowed him to gather around the monastery all that was best, most alive and most Orthodox in the Church, resolving all doubts in a manner that unquestionably furthered the purity of Orthodoxy and uncompromisingly sweeping away all innovations and novelties that undermined the purity of the canons." The "Danilovites", as Vladyka Theodore's circle came to be called, included many future martyr-hierarchs, priests and monks, and was recognized by all as the foremost bastion of uncompromising Orthodoxy in the face of the Soviet Antichrist.

Fr. Symeon had quite a large, stuffy cell, filled with the smell of geraniums. It contained a narrow sofa on which he lay with his head covered (he often had migraine). Vladyka Theodore would sit in a white cassock in a high armchair under a small window.

As **Abbess Juliana** recalls, he "lived in a rather large cell. Next to him lived his cell-attendant Fr. Nicholas. Fr. Nicholas had been an orderly in a hospital where Fr. Symeon had lain after he was wounded, and Fr. Nicholas came to look after him. Fr. Nicholas loved Fr. Symeon so much that he didn't leave him until after his death. He was tonsured a monk and died in the rank of hieromonk.

"The entrance to Fr. Symeon's cell was just opposite the grave of Gogol. He would lie on his back in his cell so that he could move his hands freely. He always lay in a grey cassock, partially covered with a blanket, facing the icon corner. Everything was specially arranged for him. He could turn off the electric lights while lying down, and take books from a bookstand next to him. When tea was served he would pour it himself. From the specially made shelf next to the bedstead, he would take medicine by himself. He liked to give people medicine, and I can say from my own experience that Fr. Symeon always gave the right one. But whether it was the drug which helped them or his prayers, I don't know.

"If he felt well, then his cell attendant would let visitors come to see him. The Elder lay on his side with his back to the door. While not having seen the one who entered, by only hearing, he always welcomed visitors in a very loving way, saying, 'Please come in!'

"He had only a few spiritual children, not more than fifteen. He accepted some of them by himself, but with the blessing of Vladyka. At times his older spiritual children would come to visit him; sometimes the former spiritual

children of Elder Gabriel would come, and at other times Vladyka Theodore would send someone to see him. In these cases, it was up to Fr. Symeon to let the person whom Vladyka sent come back, or to refuse to allow him admittance.

“Those who were sent by the Bishop he always confessed; to several he would say after confession, ‘Come back in two weeks.’ He confessed all of his spiritual children once every two weeks. To another he would say, ‘Forgive me. Today I confessed you according to the wish of the Archbishop, but my state of health won’t permit me to do so in the future.’

“Confession was a special ceremony in itself for the Elder. When one would enter, he would put on his epitrachelion while lying down in bed and would turn off the lights. One was to kneel next to the bed, according to the general monastery procedure. One vigil lamp burned in the icon corner. Fr. Symeon would read all the prayers before confession from memory and would begin confession by enumerating all the sins of which he was guilty before the penitent and ask forgiveness, as his spiritual father. Then he would begin to ask questions in a very general way; he asked about matters in which the person had sinned. He would never ask specific questions, as many other confessors and elders do, such as ‘Did you slander anyone?’ but he would ask, ‘Did you hurt someone, perhaps, even by the expression of your face?’ He did not ask, ‘Did you tell a lie?’ but he put the question thus: ‘Did you add something, perhaps, while speaking, either in your favour or in order to make your words more interesting?’ If a person were ill, he did not ask, ‘Did you murmur against God?’, but ‘Were you ill? Did you give thanks to God?’

“It is impossible to enumerate the different questions he would ask.

“At the end of confession, one found oneself amidst such a multitude of sins that all self-opinion that one might have had disappeared, and one suddenly remembered yet more sins than the elder enumerated.

“Fr. Symeon’s cell attendant would dress him, seat him in a wheelchair and take him to church to the choir. His beautiful voice, in spite of his terrible physical condition, remained with him in all its beauty. To this day I remember the sound of his voice when he sang the special melody for *Lord, I have cried* on the feast of the Protection of the Most Holy Theotokos. They had a side altar dedicated to the Protection, and therefore (and perhaps in memory as well of the Moscow Academy) on Fridays they would sing the Akathist to the Protection and chant several stichera with the final words, *Rejoice, thou who didst receive tidings of joy, the Lord is with thee*. If the choir director was late, Fr. Symeon would lead the choir.

“Fr. George of the Danilov monastery once said: ‘We are so accustomed to Fr. Symeon not moving and never saying anything about his condition, that we think his state of health is perfectly normal.’

“Fr. Symeon demanded that his spiritual children never boast on any account, that they never talk about any miracles that happened with him or any of them, and that they never take opportunities to display their seeming righteousness before anyone.

“Once on the feast of the Nativity of Christ, Fr. Symeon gave me a commentary by Bishop Theophan on the Epistle of the Galatians, and I told him that this book made me especially happy because I had the commentaries by Bishop Theophan on all the epistles except this one. One would have had to see how the Elder was alarmed that I might ascribe clairvoyance to him, and he sternly forbade me to speak about this to anyone.

“It is possible that many people noticed similar incidents, but never ventured to speak of them. Now, after the repose of both Vladyka Theodore and Fr. Symeon, when much could be recounted, there are no longer any witnesses. All the same, I know of two interesting examples.

“Once, when I was returning on a streetcar from the Danilov monastery with a certain lady, she began to tell me what she thought about Fr. Symeon.

“She was the spiritual daughter of another Elder, who was very revered in Moscow – Fr. Vladimir Bogdanov. She once asked a certain question which her Elder was not able to answer. He told her to pray and he promised to pray as well. Within a short time she had what appeared to be a strange dream. She said that she was entering a room to see a certain Elder whom she knew, and that instead of seeing a monk or a priest, she saw a man lying on a bed. He was dressed in grey, half-covered by a blanket, and before him were icons and lamps burning. She, however, was unable to speak to him and didn’t even want to talk to him because she thought he was ill. In any case, this dream made a deep impression on her, and she spoke of it to Fr. Vladimir. He was not in the least surprised, and said at once, ‘Yes, that is Fr. Symeon. I go to him for confession. I will write him a letter, and he will receive you and will be able to answer all your questions.’ And so it happened.

“After returning from Solovki, I lived near St. Daniel’s monastery with several aunts. One day I went with one of them to Fr. Symeon for Unction. The Elder, seated in a chair, would celebrate the Mystery of Unction three times a year, during the Great Fast, the Dormition Fast and the Nativity Fast. He gave Unction to his spiritual children and anointed himself as well. Outsiders didn’t come to the service of Unction.

“We were just about to leave to see Fr. Symeon when a young man arrived, the brother of one of the nuns. A very beautiful young woman was with him, dressed in very contemporary fashion. He took his sister, the nun, into the other room and began telling her something quietly while the young woman remained with me. She asked me, ‘Is the Danilov monastery close by here?’ ‘Yes, very close.’ ‘Alyosha (the brother of the nun) told me that Gogol is buried there. I would like to have a panikhida served at his grave.’ She then began to

tell me about Gogol, expressing some interesting ideas. I then encouraged everyone to leave for the Danilov monastery. I did not mention that Unction would be celebrated there. A few minutes later, we left.

“On the way Alyosha explained to me what was going on. This young woman he had brought was the daughter of a recently departed and well-respected Moscow archpriest. The family was well educated; all her brothers were well known as professors of history, literature, archaeology, and young people were always gathering in their home, reading their dissertations. Nadya was the youngest, and the only daughter. She was spoiled and had fantastic whims which the brothers were always trying to fulfil. They all lived together with their mother, who was a very respected matushka.

“On this day, Alyosha had come to see them. He often came. Nadya came to the door and said that her brothers and mother were not at home, and suggested to Alyosha that they go to drink in a café. Alyosha saw that she was disturbed, and asked her what the problem was. Nadya told him that she didn’t know what to do until eleven o’clock in the evening, since at eleven she would move to the apartment of an engineer who had left his wife for her. She said that in the morning she was going with this engineer to the Crimea.

“Alyosha went with Nadya to the café, but thought all along the way there how he might save her. He decided to convince her to go with him to the Danilov monastery with the intention of taking her there to see Fr. Symeon. But he did not know how to do this, or if it were even possible. Fr. Symeon knew Alyosha well, but he might not be in good enough health to receive him. This was all quite risky, so he went beforehand to ask his sister’s advice. Now he was hoping he could speak with the elder before Unction, and so we all entered the cell together.

“Fr. Symeon was already seated next to a table prepared for the Sacrament of Unction and was ready to begin, but suddenly he turned and saw Alyosha and said, ‘Ah, Alyosha, come in! Fr. Nicholas, give Alyosha the Epistle. He will read it.’ Finding herself in such a situation, Nadya, coming from a deeply religious family, was confused. Alyosha went up to the Elder to receive his blessing. Nadya followed him and also asked for his blessing. The Elder, not expressing the least surprise upon seeing her, blessed her and asked, ‘What is your name?’ ‘Nadezhda.’ ‘Take your place in line. We will begin now.’

“When Nadya came for a blessing at the end of the Mystery of Unction, Fr. Symeon said very kindly, ‘Would you like to receive Communion tomorrow morning? I will confess you right now.’

“After Confession, as it was late, Alyosha escorted Nadya home, and so it was that her romance ended. After this, she remained the spiritual daughter of Fr. Symeon, and afterwards visited us often. Remembering her deliverance from sin and the grief it would have caused her family, and not understanding how all this had happened – that is, how Alyosha had brought her to the Elder

- she ascribed it to the prayers of her late father. But the reception that Fr. Symeon gave her impressed us all very much..."

A few words about the author of these reminiscences. After passing through exiles and concentration camps, Matushka Juliana (Ushakova) took shelter in Maly Yaroslavl, 100 kilometres from Moscow, where another Danilovite, **Hieromonk Paul** (Troitsky), lived. When the Germans came they invited her to be an interpreter, and she went with them almost as far as Moscow. After the defeat of the Germans she appeared in Munich. There a community was formed. Her writings on the destiny of the Church in Russia have remained unknown, although she belonged to circles well-acquainted with church life. She died of cancer in the winter of 1946-47.

In July, 1917, a congress of learned monastics took place in the Holy Trinity - St. Sergius Lavra in Sergiev Posad. The congress was opened by Metropolitan Tikhon, the future patriarch, who immediately handed the presidency over to Vladyka Theodore, in spite of the fact that Vladyka had just been relieved of his post as rector of the Moscow Academy "at the unanimous demand of the council of professors and students of the Academy", as the newspapers put it. Metropolitan Tikhon's action was a clear indication of his firm support for Vladyka Theodore's confessing position, which became increasingly isolated and heroic as the revolution spread and deepened.

After the October revolution of 1917, the Bolshevik government openly declared that it would persecute the Orthodox "for exciting the masses against Soviet power on a religious basis". It announced the separation of Church and State and freedom of conscience for all believers and non-believers. However, "separation of Church and State" in fact meant persecution of the Church *by* the State, and "freedom of conscience" meant freedom *from* conscience and the license to commit all kinds of brutalities without fear of punishment.

As I.M. Andreyev wrote: "The militant atheist-materialist ideology of the Soviet State could not be reconciled with the existence of the Church and strove by all means to annihilate her as its principal ideological adversary. Soviet power openly and actively fought against religion and the Church, wishing to destroy her completely. The word 'Christian' became equivalent to 'counter-revolutionary'."

Seeing this clearly, the Local Council of the Russian Church, led by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, anathematized Soviet power in January, 1918, forbidding the members of the Church to have any communion whatsoever with the Bolsheviks. In the years that followed, under the almost unbearable pressure of the State organs, this uncompromising position was at times softened by the leadership of the Church. However, one hierarch who never softened his position, and continually exhorted others to remain uncompromising, was Vladyka Theodore. A great ascetic and an expert on patristic theology and canon law, he warned the patriarch against making too great concessions to the authorities and against any negotiations with the

renovationists. Although this sometimes brought him into conflict with the patriarch, the two holy hierarchs never lost their love and respect for each other and communion between them was never broken.

Vladyka Theodore's zeal for the faith was combined with great humility. This is illustrated by an incident related by Fr. Sergius Sidorov, who once visited Vladyka Theodore and Fr. Symeon Kholmogorov in the Danilov monastery in order to tell them of a certain V. Sladkopevtsev's conversion to Catholicism: "Sladkopevtsev was a friend of Vladyka Theodore and a spiritual son of Archimandrite Symeon. His Eminence Theodore was very upset by my news. He began to condemn the Catholics sharply, calling them papists. I remember the circumstances of my discussion with Vladyka to this day. The cell was stuffy and filled with the fragrance of geraniums. Archimandrite Symeon was lying with his face covered on a narrow sofa. Vladyka Theodore was sitting in a white cassock in a big armchair under a small window. 'Tell V.V. from us,' he said, 'that we do not commend his passion for Catholicism and consider the Catholics to be heretics.' Vladyka had hardly uttered these words when the curtain dividing the little room into two was noisily pushed aside and a small, wrinkled, beardless man with severe eyes appeared and shouted to Vladyka: 'Don't you dare revile other faiths, fear God, don't be proud!' 'Well, don't worry. I admit I did get a bit carried away,' replied his Eminence equably. 'You see how strict he is,' said Vladyka to me, pointing to the dwarf. [The dwarf was Hieromonk Ignatius Bekrenev, a graduate of the Moscow Theological Academy.] The dwarf smiled and kissed the hand of Vladyka, who blessed him and left the cell. When he had gone out, Archimandrite Symeon said: 'You see, you can learn humility from Vladyka. He never objects with even a word when people rebuke him and point out his mistakes.'"

Vladyka Theodore was a delegate to the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1917-18, being elected by the monastics. However, he did not agree with several decisions of the Council.

In July, 1918 Patriarch Tikhon transferred him from the see of Volokolamsk to that of Perm. However, Vladyka did not move to Perm, but remained in the Danilov monastery with the right to administer it. In this period, according to a book published by the Danilov monastery in 1988, the children of the Church who came to the monastery were served by Archimandrites Symeon (Kholmogorov), Polycarp (Soloviev), Seraphim (Klimkov) and Stephen (Safonov). Among the brothers who had previously struggled in Optina monastery were Archimandrite George (Lavrov) and Hieromonk Peter (Drachev).

From 1919, Vladyka Theodore, foreseeing that he would probably be sent to prison soon, appointed his deputies in the Danilov monastery. In 1920, with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon, he organized a higher theological school in the Danilov monastery, its purpose being, as he wrote, "to study theology on a strictly ecclesiastical, patristic basis and to prepare pastors".

Vladyka Theodore was arrested for the first time in June 15, 1920, and on July 12 was sentenced to the camps "until the end of the Civil War" for anti-Soviet agitation. He served his term in the Butyrki and Taganka prisons. On October 25, 1920 his term was shortened in accordance with the amnesty to five years.

V.F. Martsinovsky describes a meeting with Vladyka and other imprisoned hierarchs in Taganka prison in the spring of 1921: "In the prison while I was there were Metropolitans Cyril [of Kazan] and Seraphim [of Warsaw], Archbishop Philaret of Samara, Bishops Peter, Theodore of Volokolamsk, Gurias [of Kazan], Igumens John Zvenigorodsky and George Meshchevsky, some priests, the Procurator of the Holy Synod A.D. Samarin, Professor Kuznetsov...

"In accordance with the will of the prisoners, Divine services were permitted, and a schoolroom in the prison was set aside for them. It was a small, well-lit hall with school benches and some portraits on the side walls: on the left - Karl Marx, on the right - Trotsky. There was no iconostasis in this improvised church... But there was a table covered with a white cloth, and on it stood a chalice for the celebration of the Mystical Supper, a cross and a Gospel... A seven-branched candlestick had been made of wood by some prisoners. Everything was simple, as it was, perhaps, in the catacombs of the first Christian centuries.

"The usual celebrant was Metropolitan Cyril, tall, with his majestic figure, regular features and wide grey beard. Bishops Theodore and Gurias concelebrated with him. Also standing there were Igumen Jonah with his concentrated, somewhat severe face, and the simple and serious Fr. George. The choir was directed by the former Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod, **A.D. Samarin**. And how they chanted! Only suffering could give such life to the hymn-singing... Many of those present also chanted. How much feeling and profound experience is in the words of the Gospel: 'Blessed are they that weep, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.' As for those who suffer, not for the Faith, but only for their sins and crimes, their brokenness of heart is poured out in the prayer: 'Lord, have mercy', or in the penitential sigh of Great Lent: 'Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me'.

"Behind the small table, Professor Kuznetsov was selling candles. The prisoners loved to light them. In their quiet flicker they felt a warm, prayerful atmosphere which was reminiscent of the sketes of ancient piety, of the monastic life.

"Pascha was approaching. It was the first year that I had not fasted in preparation for Communion in the Orthodox Church. The thought occurred to me that I should receive Communion. But dogmatically speaking I was not quite convinced about something... So I put a trial question, as it were, to

Metropolitan Cyril when I met him on the way to church. He invited me to come to him... The room looked inviting and clean. In the window bouquets of flowers stood out beautifully in the sun. They were offerings of admirers (the people did not forget their beloved pastors). From them they also received parcels of food, which many of the prisoners shared in, of course. Metropolitan Cyril was sitting on his cot at the back of the room, under the window. On his left was Bishop Theodore, and on his right - Bishop Gurias. The metropolitan spoke to me in a kind, fatherly tone; the two other bishops, who were a little younger, evaluated my views in a more theological manner. 'All this is sectarian pride,' Bishop Theodore said to me dryly and severely. Bishop Gurias had a tendency for polemical argument, but he spoke more gently: 'It is a great sin that you should despise the sacrament of Baptism which was performed on you in your childhood. You must repent - and only after that can we allow you to come to Communion.' I expounded my views to the bishops. They shrugged their shoulders, but did not change their demand. 'As far as I know the canons, you could allow me to receive Communion. There is a rule which permits the giving of Communion to people of other faiths if they ask for it in extreme need, danger of death, etc. And we are all in just such a situation here...' 'No, this rule cannot be applied to the present situation,' said Metropolitan Cyril. 'God has punished you for your heresy by imprisoning you,' one of the bishops suddenly said hotly. 'And mark my word: you will not get out of prison until you repent.'

"In the following days this bishop would often start talking to me during exercise periods. 'Vladyka,' I asked him once, 'have you looked through the passages from the Holy Scriptures which I referred to in my report?' 'Yes, I have looked through them... If you want, we can now discuss each of them.' And he began to go through them in order. Mark 16.16: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved." Well, yes: first faith and then baptism. And in Matthew faith comes first, too... Yes, you're right. But this is your mistake: you have forgotten that the Church has the fullness of grace, and in consequence she has changed the order in accordance with the demands of the time - and has begun to demand, first baptism, and then faith...' A loud voice announced the end of the exercise period. As he walked in the crowd towards the door of the prison, the bishop whispered to me the reproach: 'It is Satan who has deceived you into going against Church tradition.'

"The next day he met me again on the staircase and gave me a big bouquet of lilac. It was obvious that he wanted to soothe the pain which his words of the day before had caused me.

"Pascha in prison. March-April, 1921. Pascha night... The whole of Moscow, the heart of Russia, was trembling from joy... The dense waves of the copper church bells' booming poured through the prison (which was on a hill). Paschal Mattins should have started at 12 midnight, but it was postponed for fear of escape-attempts. Only at six in the morning, when it had begun to dawn, did they begin to lead us out of our cells. Moscow was booming no longer, only our bodyguards' bunches of keys tinkled in the corridors. As always happens at Pascha, there were many people in the church. Those in freedom had sent

hierarchical paschal vestments flashing with silver and gold. Metropolitan Cyril, all shining in heavy brocade, was doing the censuring, sending in all directions not only incense, but also puffs of flame that burst out of the censer. In his hand he held red paschal candles... 'Christ is risen!' 'He is risen indeed!' voices boomed under the vaults of the prison corridors. Many had tears in their eyes, although most of them were severe men who were used to much. The celebrated paschal sermon of St. John Chrysostom was read, greetings were sent to all, both those who had fasted and those who had not fasted, both those who came at the first hour and those who came at the last, eleventh hour... There were cakes and eggs, which had been brought from there, from freedom... I am moved to tears when I remember the great love which burned especially on that day in the prison and which embraced its cold, dark walls in a brotherly, tender caress. They were bringing things all through Holy Saturday - eggs, cakes, pascha made of cheese, flowers, candles - and all at a time when Moscow was starving... Perhaps they brought the last that they had, so as to cast some paschal joy even there, within the dank, dark casemates..."

The Struggle against Renovationism (1922-1924)

On March 18, 1922 Bishop Theodore was released from prison. In May, 1922, Patriarch Tikhon was arrested, and the so-called "Temporary Church Administration" of the renovationist heretics, supported by the communist authorities, seized control of the Church's administrative machinery. Soon those hierarchs and priests who rejected the renovationists' "Living Church", and remained faithful to the patriarch and Orthodoxy, were being sent into prison and exile. In Moscow almost everyone deserted the patriarch; among the very few who did not were the Danilov monastery led by Bishop Theodore and the St. Nicholas on "Maroseika" parish led by the renowned elder and priest, Fr. Alexis Mechev.

Fr. Alexis had the greatest respect for Bishop Theodore, calling him a pillar of Orthodoxy. He asked him to ordain his son Sergius, the future hieromartyr, which he did on April 4, 1919 in the Danilov monastery. One of Vladyka's spiritual daughters recalls: "It was winter [1920]. In the three main prisons languished between seven and ten archpastors, and three to four metropolitans. We, the sisters of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, attended to their needs. We encountered many difficulties and dangers; there were some unpleasant situations. But I had nobody to turn to for advice, since my spiritual director, Archbishop Theodore, was in the Taganka prison... I often met Fr. Alexis, and we talked about charitable works. Once, when we were parting in somebody else's house, batyushka said to me: 'Are you going to accompany me?' 'No, forgive me,' I said, 'I can't.' 'Well, how can I compare with your cathedral protopriests!' But our hosts commented: 'You're not joking, are you, batyushka? Shouldn't you rather be asking about the bishops?' 'Who, then? Vladyka Hilarion? No. Vladyka Bartholomew? No. Who, then?' 'His Eminence Theodore.' 'Ah well, there it would be wrong to joke. Vladyka is a bishop among bishops.'"

When Fr. Alexis was ill he wrote a will saying that there should be no speeches at his burial, and that they should read out what he had written. And he not only asked, but *besought* Vladyka Theodore to celebrate the Liturgy and the rite of burial, although Vladyka had been arrested on March 14, 1923 in Kostroma province. The Lord heard the prayer of his faithful servant, and on March 27 Vladyka Theodore was deported to Moscow before being released on June 20. On June 15 he buried Fr. Alexis in accordance with his desire. At the burial there arrived Patriarch Tikhon, who had also just been released from prison.

Archbishop Leontius of Chile, who stayed in the Danilov monastery during this period, recalls: "The whole Orthodox episcopate and people venerated him [Vladyka Theodore] for his principled, uncompromising and straight position in relation to Soviet power. He considered that until the Orthodox Church received the right to a truly free existence, there could be no negotiations with the Bolsheviks. The authorities were only deceiving them, they would fulfil none of their promises, but would, on the contrary, turn everything to the harm of the Church. Therefore it would be better for his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon to sit in prison and die there, than to conduct negotiations with the Bolsheviks, because concessions could lead, eventually, to the gradual liquidation of the Orthodox Church and would disturb everyone, both in Russia and, especially, abroad. [He said this] at a time when his Holiness the Patriarch had been released from prison. Archbishop Theodore honoured and pitied his Holiness, but was in opposition to him. In spite of the persistent request of his Holiness that he take part in the administration of the patriarchate, he refused.

"He did not receive those bishops who had discredited themselves in relation to the 'Living Church'. He had little faith in their repentance. Only firm bishops were received in the Danilov monastery, and lived there often. Sometimes there were as many as ten or more. All those who had been released from prison or were returning from exile found refuge there. The brotherhood consisted of principled and highly cultured people. Not a few of them became confessor-bishops. The strict spiritual school of Vladyka Theodore left a special imprint on the monastery. With the exception of two novices the whole brotherhood of the Danilov monastery carried their confessing cross in a staunch and worthy manner. In those years the monastery churches of the Danilov, Donskoy and Simonov monasteries were always full of people. As were the parish churches. But one could already feel that this situation was coming to an end... And when his Holiness came out of prison the arrests of bishops did not cease."

On coming out of prison, in the summer of 1923, the patriarch convened a Council of Bishops, known as "the Little Council", in the St. Michael's church of the Donskoy monastery to discuss the question of the expediency of the patriarch's administering the Church after his release from prison, since he was due to appear as a defendant in the civil courts. It was argued that he should be kept away from the administration until the trial. This discussion led to a direct attack on him: one of the bishops claimed that his Holiness had

compromised himself as head of the Church by showing himself incapable of averting in a timely manner the appearance of the renovationist rebellion and by allowing this catastrophic disintegration of the Russian Church.

However, several "Danilovite" hierarchs expressed themselves clearly and forcefully in defence of the patriarch, declaring that his activity had been blameless and without spot. As a result, the rebellion against the patriarch was suppressed, and the Council officially declared its filial obedience and gratitude to his Holiness for the burdens he had undertaken for the Church. Moreover, he was asked not to abandon his post, but to continue bearing the cross of leadership. Later the patriarch sent a letter to Bishop Theodore thanking him for the line the "Danilovite" bishops had taken at the Council.

But the pressure on the patriarch to make concessions continued, even from those bishops closest to him. Thus in Moscow in August, 1923, his assistant, Bishop Hilarion, expressed the following pro-Soviet sentiments: "A change of landmarks is taking place. The Church is also changing the landmarks. She has definitely cut herself away from the counter-revolution and welcomes the new forms of Soviet construction."

It was inevitable that another confrontation would soon take place between the "left wing" of the Patriarchal Church, represented by Bishop Hilarion and Archbishop Seraphim (Alexandrov), and the "right wing" represented by Vladyka Theodore. The confrontation duly took place when the patriarch convened a meeting to discuss a renovationist proposal for the re-establishment of unity. The price the heretics demanded was the patriarch's voluntary abdication from his patriarchal rank...

"In spite of the insulting tone of the [renovationists'] epistle," writes Protopriest Vladislav Tsytkin, "the patriarch was ready to enter into negotiations with the renovationists for the sake of the salvation of those who had gone astray and church peace. In this he was supported by the Temporary Patriarchal Synod. Archbishops Seraphim (Alexandrov), Tikhon (Obolensky) and Hilarion (Troitsky) opened negotiations with the pseudo-metropolitan Eudocimus concerning the conditions for the restoration of church unity. [But] the former rector of the Moscow Theological Academy and superior of the Danilov monastery, Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, was decisively opposed to such negotiations..."

"At the end of September, 1923, 27 Orthodox bishops met in the Donskoy monastery to discuss the results of the negotiations with the pseudo-metropolitan Eudocimus concerning the dissolution of the schism. Archbishop Theodore did not appear at the meeting, but many of his supporters who believed as he did participate in it..."

Bishop Gervasius of Kursk wrote about this Council: "At the end of his short report, Archbishop Seraphim (Alexandrov) remarked that it would be very desirable to have the presence of Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) at the

meeting, since he was a learned bishop who was popular in Moscow. An official invitation was given to the archbishop, but he did not reply and did not appear himself at the assembly. But if Archbishop Theodore was not there, his fervent supporters and admirers were.

Thus Bishop Ambrose, formerly of Vinnitsa, a vicariate of Podolsk [and in 1923 bishop of Podolsk and Bratslav], who admired and held the same views as Archbishop Theodore, gave a speech which touched on the essence of Archbishop Seraphim's report. He began his speech approximately as follows: 'I am surprised why you, your Eminence, should call Eudocimus a metropolitan. Do you recognize him to be a lawful hierarch?' A secret ballot was taken on the project for reconciliation and union with the renovationists, and by a majority of votes the project was defeated and the assembly was dissolved."

Bishop Gervasius continues: "Archbishop Theodore lived at that time, as was well known, in the Danilov monastery, which was the residence of several extremely conservative and staunch bishops of the school of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Bishop Pachomius and others. Constant visitors at the monastery included Archbishop Seraphim (Samoilovich) of Uglich [the future hieromartyr], Archbishop Gury (Stepanov) and Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov)... Archbishop Theodore severely criticized Bishop Hilarion and told me that he would destroy Patriarch Tikhon and the Church, and that in the patriarch was all salvation. If there were no Patriarch Tikhon, then the authorities would abolish the patriarchate completely, and without the patriarchate there would be disaster for the Church..."

Although the patriarch jokingly called the "Danilovites" "the clandestine Synod", he continued to express his warm appreciation for their stand. Thus in August, 1923, he raised Vladyka Theodore to the rank of archbishop, and in October offered him the see of Petrograd. However, Vladyka Theodore declined this offer, preferring to remain within the boundaries of the Moscow diocese. The Patriarch showed his appreciation of Vladyka in another way. He placed his will in an envelope and wrote on it: "In the case of my death or lengthy imprisonment I ask that this envelope be handed to the superior of the Danilov monastery Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) immediately he asks for it". This showed that Vladyka knew about the will. The envelope still exists.

When Patriarch Tikhon briefly accepted the new calendar, Archbishop Theodore immediately broke communion with him, declaring that the new calendar was uncanonical. So when the brothers of the monastery served with the patriarch, Vladyka sent them penances from prison, and the serving brothers made many prostrations in front of the reliquary of St. Daniel of Moscow. But when, eight months later, the patriarch returned to the Julian calendar, the two hierarchs were reconciled and the patriarch gave Vladyka a set of vestments as a sign of their unity.

Again, when the Patriarch was about to receive Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) back into the True Church from renovationism, Archbishop Theodore pleaded with him not to receive him in his existing rank, citing the canon of St. Athanasius of Alexandria on the reception of the leaders of heresies and schisms. Unfortunately for the whole history of the Russian Church, the Patriarch did not follow this advice.

However, when important questions of Church life arose, the patriarch continued to consult with Archbishop Theodore. He said that the Danilov brotherhood were more Tikhonite than Tikhon himself. On August 30 / September 12, 1924 he came to the Danilov monastery on to celebrate the feast of the holy Prince Daniel of Moscow for the last time before his martyrdom in the following year. The roll-call of bishops who were invited to concelebrate with him by Archbishop Theodore read like a list of all the major confessing bishops who were in freedom at that time: Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky) of Krutitsa, Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov) of Leningrad, Archbishop Procopius (Titov) of Odessa and the Chersonese, Bishop Hilarion (Troitsky), vicar of the Moscow diocese, Bishop Valerian (Rudich) of Smolensk, Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh) of Ananyev, vicar of the Odessa diocese, Bishop Damascene (Tsedrik) of Glukhov, vicar of the Chernigov diocese, Bishop Ignatius (Sadkovsky) of Belev, vicar of the Tula diocese, Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky) of Vinnitsa, and other bishops.

The Struggle against Sergianism (1924-1931)

On April 16, 1924 Vladyka Theodore was arrested again "for anti-Soviet agitation", and was cast into Butyrki prison. He was released on October 18 after agreeing not to leave the city. On December 15, 1924 he was arrested again, and on June 15, 1925 he was condemned according to articles 59 (relations with foreign states) and 73 (the spreading of false rumours and unsubstantiated information for counter-revolutionary purposes) to three years' exile in Kazakhstan. From 1925 he was in exile in Turgaj in Kirgizia (according to another source, Aulie Ata, Kazakhstan). After his release on November 4, 1927 he settled in Vladimir. (According to one source, from 1928 to December, 1930 he was living in Orsk, Orenburg province.)

In the protocol of his interrogation on July 25, 1937, it is mentioned that between 1920 and 1924 Vladyka Theodore was arrested twice, was condemned for counter-revolutionary activity three times, and was in concentration camp and exile continuously from 1925. In that period he continued to rule his monastery from prison by means of messengers and letters.

After Metropolitan Sergius' Declaration of July, 1927 Vladyka Theodore ceased to commemorate him.

Seeing the defeat of renovationism, the "Soviet Orthodox Church Mark I", the Bolsheviks started to plan the creation of a "Soviet Orthodox Church Mark II" which would be more canonical in appearance and therefore more likely to

attract the masses of the people. The preparations for this new and more subtle deception began with the imprisonment and attempted "working over" of some of the most prominent hierarchs. Thus in 1924 Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, and both Archbishop Hilarion and Vladyka Theodore, the leaders of the "left" and "right" wings of the Patriarchal Church respectively, were imprisoned or exiled. Later, after the martyric death of the patriarch in March, 1925, it was the turn of Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, the patriarchal locum tenens, to suffer this treatment. And after him, his deputies Metropolitan Joseph of Leningrad, Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich and Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod.

Finally, the Bolsheviks attained their goal with Metropolitan Sergius... In July, 1927, he issued a scandalously pro-Soviet and neo-renovationist "declaration", which placed the Church in more or less unconditional submission to the militantly atheist government. Immediately the Church split along the lines that had been foreshadowed by the quarrels of the 1923 Councils. Thus Archbishop Hilarion supported Sergius, becoming the leader of the sergianist bishops in the Solovki concentration camps; while Vladyka Theodore became a leader of those who broke communion with him and considered the sacraments of him and his priests invalid.

In a document attributed to Vladyka Theodore, which was entitled "A Letter from a Bishop who has Departed [from Metropolitan Sergius] to a Bishop who has not Departed" and published abroad in 1933, the author writes: "The Russian Orthodox Church, by the Providence of God, has been placed, of necessity, to live in a realm of an entirely unusual sort (Revelation 2.13) which is initiating a new culture and civilization, is founding a new political and socio-economic order, a new way of life, a new understanding of family, a new and extraordinary personality on an atheistic and materialistic foundation... Enigmatic words of the Old and New Testaments which have hitherto been obscure have been rendered concrete before our eyes with marvellous clarity; and I, sinful as I am, make so bold as to maintain, on the bases of exegeses of the Holy Fathers which relate to passages from the Word of God, that on the territory of the Soviet Union the Orthodox Church has entered the era of the 'falling away' - the apostasy (II Thessalonians 2.3), the sphere of influence of the harlot of the Apocalypse (Revelation 17) who is awakening to the universal activity at the end of the iron-clay period of the final human kingdom (Daniel 11.40-43).

"The recent past confirms our conviction and indicates that even now the time draws nigh when, for the good of the Church, we will have to renounce the legalization even of ecclesiastical communal organizations and return to the pre-Nicaean forms of Church life, when Christian societies were organized and united, not by administrative institutions, but by the Holy Spirit... [In the iconoclast period] the Orthodox Church was found in deserts, caves, tombs (St. Methodius), prisons, exile and grievous labors. And such tribulations for the Orthodox continued not for ten years, as now, but for one hundred and twenty years, with brief intervals of respite for Orthodoxy. And side by side with the

impoverished Orthodox Church, legality and prosperity were enjoyed by the harlot-church which, through lawless obedience to the legal authority, obtained for herself a tranquil and undisturbed life."

The following document has also been attributed to Archbishop Theodore, although this attribution is not certain. The author begins by quoting some of his notes of March 3/16, 1924: "Perhaps in a short while we shall find ourselves a tiny island in an ocean of profanity... The scenario of church relations can undergo a change like in a kaleidoscope. The renovationists may rise as the ruling 'Church Party' in Russia and face very limited opposition if the overt renovationists and covert traitors will find a modus vivendi with each other and jointly disguise themselves under the cover of canonicity."

The next paragraph, he writes, is from his notes of January 14/27, 1925: "The difficulty of our time for an Orthodox is... that the contemporary life of the Church demands of him a high spiritual self-discipline in personal life. He cannot rely on guidance from the official pastors (bishops and presbyters). The church canons cannot be formally applied to problems arising in church life. Altogether, a juridical attitude is insufficient; it is necessary to have a spiritual intuition to show the way of Christ among the multitude of paths made by wolves in sheep's clothing. Life has posed questions that can be solved in a truly churchly manner only by bypassing mores, forms, regulations and being led by senses trained to recognize virtue from evil. Otherwise it is easy to defile the sacredness of one's soul and to allow one's conscience to disintegrate through a legalistically regulated reconciliation with fraud and profanity, brought into the Church by the bishops themselves. By means of laws it is possible to reconcile oneself even with the devil."

This is followed by his comments of October 22 / November 4, 1927: "Aren't the latest events a confirmation of the above premonitions? Hasn't the horror that the soul sensed already two to three years ago come so close to us after Metropolitan Sergius' return to administer the Church? Hasn't Sergius' declaration, which has caused varied and fully justified negative reactions, thrown the church organization, headed by him, into the loathsome, adulterous embraces of the atheistic, blasphemous and Christomachistic power, and hasn't it introduced a frightening profanity into the bosom of our Church? Please note that this declaration appeared not from the hands of the schismatic renovationists... [it came] from a canonical, lawful, apparently Orthodox hierarch. The main assertions of the declaration are based on scriptural texts (although, occasionally, with the help of their misinterpretation...) and on the historical experience of the ancient Church, as if it were similar to the current one. On the other hand, the declaration hopes to quench the essential thirst of believers exhausted by persecutions, for it promises them peace and quiet. And hence multitudes, especially from the clerical ranks, are sympathetically responding to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod.

"This symphony between the theomachistic power and the regular Orthodox hierarchy has already produced some 'blessings': some bishops

(although not the best ones and not the most 'guilty' ones) are returning from exile (not from a very distant one, however) and are being appointed to dioceses (not to the same ones from they had been deported, however);... Metropolitan Sergius has a Synod (which is more like the office of the Over-Procurator) which consists of regular hierarchs (alas, with questionable reputations owing to their long and solid cooperation with the GPU...); Metropolitan Sergius' name is being elevated as that of the captain of the Church, but, alas, this name is but a forgery, because the real master of the destiny of the Russian Church and her bishops, both those in positions as well as the persecuted ones... is the current 'Overprocurator' of the Russian Orthodox Church, Eugene A. Tuckov.

"Everybody with ears to hear and eyes to see knows that contrary to the decree on the separation of Church and state, the Orthodox Church has entered into a close alliance with the state. And what state?... a state whose government aims at the destruction of any religion on the face of the earth, and the Orthodox Church before all the others, because it justly sees in her a basic world foundation of religious faith and a first-class fortress in the struggle against materialism, atheism, theomachism and satanism (practised, according to hearsay, by some members of the contemporary powers that be)..."

Quotations from Revelation (17.3, 5, 6; 12.6; 18.2) are cited and followed by a comparison of the current church situation with the apocalyptic scenario of the whore sitting on a red beast.

The situation is particularly tragic, he says, because "it is not a lawless, schismatic woman who saddles a beast with profane names, but a faithful woman having an image of genuine piety. In this is the chief frightening aspect of that which has been occurring before our eyes, which affects the most profound spiritual interests of the church flock. The consequences are impossible to assess even approximately; but their significance is of a global character... for now the forces of Hades are attacking [the Church] with unprecedented power... How should we behave in these terrible moments of a new threat, advancing by Satan's counsel upon our mother, the holy Orthodox Church?"

He quotes Revelation 18:1-2 and 4, on the coming of an angel, whereupon Babylon and the great whore fell down. But he warns the recipient of the letter that he is not mechanically asserting that the present reality is the fulfilment of these apocalyptic prophecies: "I only trace a dotted line between the apocalypse and the contemporary church developments, which involuntarily direct our thoughts toward these prophetic images. Even in the Old Testament one can see how in some cases prophecies at first were fulfilled on a small scale only to be later expressed in a loftier and final fulfilment... Neither scholarship of the broadest possible scope, nor the deepest natural intelligence, nor the finest powers of mysticism can satisfactorily grasp God's secrets. [In the present Russian church developments] we come into contact with the final secret of the terrestrial existence of the Church and of mankind..."

"... In the words of Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov,... whoever does not obtain the Kingdom of God within oneself will not recognize the Antichrist, and will inevitably... become his follower; he will not recognize the coming of the end of the world... Obscured by its terrestrial reasoning mankind will refuse to believe in the second coming of Christ altogether...

"There is no doubt whatsoever that the 'dark power' dominating today thinks, argues and acts in the style of such blasphemers... But isn't it possible that the contemporary *churchmen*... having entered into a relationship with the blasphemers of this world,... will treat the thoughts of my soul as nothing but 'madness, worthy of contempt'?

"Recently a bishop supporting Sergius' orientation threatened... that Sergius' opponents would become such a small minority as to be eventually reduced to one of a multitude of small sects. How pitiful is such an argument in defence of the newly born 'Soviet Orthodox Church'!... Has the bishop forgotten the multitude of apostolic prophecies on the reduction of faith and the dissemination of all sorts of false teachings in the latter days?...

"Pluralism and majorities are necessary for parliaments and parties but not for God's Church, which is the pillar and foundation of faith, independently of the above categories and even in contradiction of them.

"... Some two or three weeks ago... a blessed woman, when asked about Metropolitan Sergius and reminded that he was not a heretic, said: 'So what?... He is worse than a heretic. He has bowed to the Antichrist, and, if he does not repent, his destiny is in hell together with the satanists.'

"All this... forces the living faithful souls to be on the alert and to watch the picture of the woman saddling the beast with great attention. These people sense a new and unprecedented danger for Christ's Church and, naturally, ring the alarm bell. Most of them are in no hurry to make a final break with the church 'adulterers' in the hope that their conscience has not entirely burned out... God grant that it be so, but in the depth of my soul I have deep doubts, and yet avoid dotting the i's. Let... the Lord do this. And let Him also protect us from superficial haste as well as from a criminally indifferent sluggishness in this *terrifyingly* responsible situation into which we have been placed by the will of God's Providence."

However, not all of Vladyka's disciples accepted his position in relation to Metropolitan Sergius. When he first instructed the brotherhood of the monastery not to commemorate Sergius in 1927, a part of the brotherhood were under the influence of the spiritual father Archimandrite George (Lavrov), a man of unquestionably lofty spiritual life, but who through his simplicity did not see the hidden danger for the moral condition of the children of the Church that proceeded from the actions and ideology of Metropolitan Sergius. And so by 1929 the brotherhood was divided into "commemorators" and "non-

commemorators", and they did not serve together but took turns in the church with the relics of St. Daniel standing in the middle of the church and dividing them from each other. However, the disobedient part of the brotherhood still continued to recognize the authority of Vladyka Theodore and humbly made the prostrations which Vladyka prescribed as penances for those continuing to commemorate Sergius.

In 1928, according to Metropolitan Eleutherius of Vilnius, Vladyka Theodore was living in Samara or Saratov province, being forbidden to enter Moscow. It was in this year, according to one (dubious) source, that, through Hieromonk Nathaniel, he signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church, which took place in various places between March and August, 1928.

It was at this time that the first traitors appeared in Vladyka Theodore's own circle.

"In 1929," writes Archbishop Leontius, "as I was returning to Kiev, I again visited Metropolitan Sergius in Moscow on behalf of the leadership of the [Kiev Caves] Lavra. He was still more restricted in his activities. At that time Archimandrites Pitirim and Sergius (Voskresensky) attended on Metropolitan Sergius. Archimandrite Sergius was a pupil of Archbishop Theodore. But now he was with Metropolitan Sergius in spite of the evident displeasure of Archbishop Theodore. Archbishop Theodore did not want him to remain in that circle, which was so abhorrent to him in all respects. But Archimandrite Sergius did not listen to the voice of his spiritual father from prison and preferred the Moscow Patriarchate. Here, as was only to be expected, he immersed himself head over heels in the whole complex, unsavoury system of church administration, and also took part in contacts with the Soviet authorities in relation to church matters, which had a disastrous effect on the susceptible, ardent and gifted, but still not sufficiently morally grounded nature of Archimandrite Sergius..."

In 1929 Vladyka Theodore was arrested in Vladimir and sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to Lodeinoye Polye, Svirlag.

On September 25, 1930 the authorities closed the Danilov monastery. After the closure of the Danilov monastery those brothers who remained in freedom moved from the monastery church of the Fathers of the Seventh Ecumenical Councils to the parish church of the Resurrection of the Word. Praskovya Emelyanova Machkina recalls: "Once, when the monks were already praying in the church of the Resurrection of the Word, the superior ordered that the authorities be commemorated. The warden, a simple woman, objected: 'Vladyka [Theodore] does not allow this.' 'That is no concern of mine,' said the priest; 'I am the superior here.' They decided to go to Vladyka, who ordered them not to commemorate the authorities, otherwise they were no longer to call him their superior. But when Vladyka learned that the brothers were not

obeying him, he sent them a penance: forty days of prostrations before the reliquary of Prince Daniel."

Since the supporters of Metropolitan Sergius gradually gained the upper hand in the church of the Resurrection, Vladyka ceased to consider it as "his". So when he secretly came to Moscow from Vladimir to say goodbye to the relics of St. Daniel, and was invited by the parishioners to serve, he said that they would first have to ask the permission of Metropolitan Sergius since this church was under his influence. Naturally, Vladyka did not want to secretly enter the church and start a service without the permission of the "masters", since this would more than likely end with his being denounced and arrested.

In this period, Vladyka Theodore emerged as one of the most clear-eyed and determined opponents of Metropolitan Sergius. He considered Sergius to be deprived of the grace of sacraments, and until his death himself sent the Holy Gifts to his spiritual children.

Vladyka Theodore wrote: "If the whole history of the life of man on earth from its cradle could by some miracle be unfurled like a huge scroll before our eyes, then each of us would, of course, see the words: 'Weeping, groaning and sorrow' written in fiery and bloody letters. And so this is the time when 'WEEPING, GROANING AND SORROW' have passed throughout the country."

And the sorrow was made incomparably deeper by the knowledge that the official Russian Church, in the person of its leader, Metropolitan Sergius, had betrayed the spiritual freedom and dignity of the Church for a mess of pottage. Nor was he to be moved from his position by the weeping and groaning of those who wrote to him from the prisons and exile. And so, writes I.M. Andreyev, "after all those who openly protested had been 'liquidated' by the punitive organs of the God-fighting state, the True Orthodox Church went into the catacombs."

The Path to Golgotha (1932-1936)

After being released from camp, Vladyka Theodore lived secretly near Kashira, before returning to Vladimir. From there Vladyka summoned Archimandrite Symeon, who was living with the Gorbunov sisters in Moscow. Fr. Symeon's cell-attendant Michael Karelin remembers life in Vladimir: "Fr. Symeon had a cell-attendant, Nun Seraphima (Lydia Sergeevna). We often took batyushka out into the garden. The Danilovites came to us: Fr. Polycarp (**Archimandrite Polycarp** (Soloviev)) and Fr. Stefan (**Archimandrite Stefan** (Safonov)). Fr. Polycarp and Fr. Stefan served while Mother Hermogena [Karetnikova] and Fr. Symeon chanted. Batyushka Fr. Symeon was ecstatic – he was a great lover of chanting. Vladyka served in a very concentrated, serious manner. Between Fr. Symeon and Vladyka there was an exceptional agreement and mutual love... It was touching to see Vladyka talking with batyushka. They were as one soul..."

“Fr. Stefan had a cat, and played the fool a little. But Fr. Polycarp was always very inwardly collected. He knew the Holy Scriptures very well. It would happen that while Vladyka was talking with Fr. Symeon he would remember some passage in the Holy Scriptures or from the Holy Fathers...

“‘Abba,’ he would say, turning to Fr. Polycarp, ‘don’t you remember?’ And Fr. Polycarp would unfailingly reply...”

In January, 1933 Vladyka was arrested in connection with the affair of the “Party for the Regeneration of Russia” and on July 24 (or 26) was sentenced to three years in exile in Kazakhstan. However, in January, 1934 he was in Zarsk, where he was visited by **Bishop Parthenius** (Bryanskikh), and from where he had some correspondence with Archbishop Bartholomew (Remov). Then, late in 1934 or in January, 1935 he was sent to Arkhangelsk, where he lived in the flat of another exile, **Fr. Spyridon Pyunkov (or Pyunkovsky)**. They lived together there for about a month, after which Fr. Spiridon moved to another flat while Vladyka remained in his flat. But they continued to meet until May, 1935, that is, until the moment of Vladyka’s transfer to Syktyvar. In 1935 Vladyka was arrested and his term lengthened by another three years.

There is some evidence from the protocols that at the end of 1933 or 1934 there took place a “Little Council” of Catacomb bishops in Arkhangelsk in which Archbishop Theodore took part.

In May Vladyka was sent to Ust-Sysolsk (Syktyvkar), a region that had been converted to the faith by St. Stephen of Perm and had been blessed by an abundance of churches and monasteries, but which was now covered by a multitude of camps and stained with the blood of innumerable martyrs and confessors. It had a dry, continental climate with long, very cold winters and short, very hot summers. Vladyka lived in Tentyukovo village, Desyatkov sloboda, near Ust-Sysolsk in one house with **Alexandra Ipatyevna Karetnikova** and **Alexander Alexeyevich Alexeyev**. A.I. Karetnikova was his novice. A.A. Alexeyev worked as a stoker in a clinic; he was a believer and a humble man. Earlier, Alexander had been a novice in the Danilov monastery and a cell-attendant of Archimandrite Symeon. The latter sent him to help Vladyka Theodore from the city of Vladimir. Vladyka was also helped in by the Red Cross by his sister, **Elizabeth Vasilyevna Pozdeyevskaya**.

In the same village there lived Blessed **Alexander Sorvachev**, whom many people went to for advice, and of whom one eye-witness wrote: "The road to Verkhnij Chov went through Tentyukovo and at the end of the village turned into a forest. Along the forest road moved a column of prisoners with guards on horses on either side. And in the same direction there wound lines of women whose husbands were suffering in the camps. Many were not allowed to correspond with or meet their husbands, so that some of the women went to Chov on the off chance, not knowing even whether their husbands were there, or whether they were alive. The local authorities had issued an order that these

wandering women should not be given a place to sleep. The archives do not tell us where they spent the night, or beside what fires they shared their woes with each other. But during the nights legends were born concerning the contemporary fool-for-Christ, Blessed Alexander. He had the gift of prophecy, everybody knew that he could tell you the truth. He spoke about many things in an oblique way, but he always spoke definitively about the most important thing: whether a man was alive or not. And if some woman particularly pressed him, Alexander would be disturbed and almost wept: 'He is no longer alive, he has been killed!' - as if he saw the dead man with his own eyes."

Archbishop Leontius writes: "Archbishop Theodore lived among the free population with his **archdeacon, Ananius**. Knowing from his own experience all the torments of being interrogated by the GPU, he did not accept a single person, clerical or lay, including Bishop Herman [Ryashentsev], his former concelebrant at the Moscow Academy, Bishop Serapion [Shevalevsky] of Kozelsk, the Kievan ascetic, Schema-Igumen Luke, and other good pastors. He decisively refused to go anywhere or pray together with them. Unfortunately, his premonitions were proved justified. A priest who had been exiled to the same city with them, Fr. Hieron, turned out later to be an unwilling informer for the local GPU. Unable to withstand the reproaches of his conscience, he later, in the sight of many women who were washing clothes, hurled himself into the river and perished."

However, in 1936 Vladyka was visited by one of the Danilovite confessors, **Hieromonk Paul** (Belyaev).

An eye-witness writes: "I occasionally met his Eminence Theodore in the winter of 1935-36, sometimes on the street, at others in the post office in the town of Ust-Sysolsk - Syktyvkar in the Zyryansk language, where we all received letters addressed to us. Vladyka wore a tarpaulin dressing-gown-raincoat, not a *rasa*. He was distinguished from the surrounding population not only by the fact that he had a beard (his hair was hidden in his winter hat), but especially by his majestic and noble appearance. Outsiders took him for a university professor. One look was enough to inspire respect for him. When I say 'we', I mean a group of people exiled for the Church from various places. They included clergy, monastics and laity who were bound together by a feeling of comradeship. We went to church services, and talked with each other... His Eminence Theodore kept himself to himself. He had no contact with anyone. His sister, who was in freedom, looked after him."

Archbishop Theodore met **Bishop Herman** (Ryashentsev), who was also exiled to Ust-Sysolsk at least twice: at the post office and during a visit by Bishop Herman to Archbishop Theodore. However, when Bishop Herman sent his messenger to Vladyka (evidently with a letter), Vladyka Theodore did not receive him. In part this unwillingness to meet Bishop Herman and other clergy was explained by his very enclosed ascetic life. But we may suppose that another reason was the extreme right position occupied by Archbishop Theodore in relation to Metropolitan Sergius. Although Bishop Herman was

an opponent of Sergius, he did not separate from him formally – at least until 1935, when his meeting with Archbishop Theodore took place.

At their first meeting at the post-office, it seems that the two hierarchs spoke about how they had spent the time since their last meeting. They may also have spoken about Church life. 15 to 20 minutes later, so as not to attract attention, they parted. Soon Bishop Herman unexpectedly visited the archbishop. This took place on one of the Church feasts, after the service. Archbishop Theodore described this meeting in a letter to Archimandrite Symeon as follows: “Bishop Herman arrived... offended that we had not received his messenger. He said that he did not approve of M.S. [Metropolitan Sergius], but could not separate from him, etc.” Over a cup of tea they discussed Church matters and the possibilities of a reconciliation between the sergianists and the True Orthodox. As a result of the conversation Vladyka Theodore came to the conclusion that “a new page in the history of church life is being prepared... I had in mind the union of the Old Churchmen and the renovationists”.

It was probably after this meeting that Bishop Herman again visited Archbishop Theodore, as the protocols for June 2, 1937 witness. On the basis of the protocols for July 25, there are grounds for considering that Vladyka Herman later joined the antisergianist movement.

The protocols indicate that Vladyka Theodore and Archimandrite Symeon discussed a certain declaration made by Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, in which the latter called on Christians to confirm his candidacy as the lawful patriarchal locum tenens in the event of Metropolitan Peter’s death. This declaration was evidently composed in the middle of the 1930s. It again declared the metropolitan’s non-recognition of Metropolitan Sergius as a lawful recipient of Church power. Vladyka Theodore appears to have been not very enthusiastic about this declaration, evidently because of his views on the necessity of administrative decentralization of the Church in conditions of persecution. However, other sources indicate that Metropolitan Cyril rejected the offer of the locum tenancy.

Martyrdom (1937)

In the 1930s Vladyka’s disciples and friends were scattered over the face of Russia, but remained faithful to his spiritual testament. Thus in April, 1936 Archimandrite Symeon was forced to move from Vladimir to Kirzhach because of the arrests that were beginning in Vladimir. In Kirzhach there were three groups of Catacomb Christians led by Archimandrite Symeon, Bishop Nicholas (Parfenov) and Archimandrite Seraphim (Klimkov). Fr. Symeon’s group contained **Igumen Alexis (Selifanov)**, **Priest Vladimir Pobedinsky**, **Monk Michael** (M.P. Karelin), **Monk Anthony** (P.S. Korenchenko), **Nun Maura** (Bogatova), **Nun Seraphima** (Vinogradskaya), **Nun Olga** (Vasilyevna Khotyaintseva), **Novice Alexandra** (Fyodorovna Tulovskaya), **S.A. Golubtsov**, **T.S. Dedyulina** and **A.P. Dedyulina**.

The authorities decided finally to liquidate the "Danilovites". About twenty people were arrested at the end of December, 1936 and the beginning of January, 1937, and were tried in Vladimir and Ivanovo. On December 29, 1936 Archimandrite Symeon was arrested together with Monk Michael, Nun Seraphim, Novice Alexander and others, sixteen people in all. They were cast into prison in Vladimir, but almost immediately moved to Ivanovo.

According to Abbess Juliana, "when he was arrested, he was unable to sit in the truck which had been sent for him, so the GPU agents who arrested him had to drag him onto the truck, and the elder was very heavy. For a long time, the agents were unable to lift him, and when they finally lifted him, they shoved him onto the truck as hard as they could." He confessed to the creation of "an underground Church of the True Orthodox faith" with house churches and sketes, at whose head stood Archbishop Theodore. "We considered that Soviet power in an organized fashion destroys religion and insinuates atheism among the believers". Groups of three to five trusted believers gathered round one of the archimandrites or hieromonks of the Danilov monastery. They served in secret without commemorating Soviet power and without registering. They prayed for the exiled clergy, helping them with parcels and money. "So as to preserve and support Church cadres", the superiors of these communities carried out secret tonsures into monasticism. All this was evaluated by the Bolsheviki as counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet, and one court document, dated April 15, 1937, stated: "It has been established that on the territory of Moscow province and a series of regions of Ivanovo province, there has existed an underground, counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen and monastics, the so-called 'All-Russian Monastic Brotherhood', headed by Archbishop Pozdeyevsky and Archimandrite Kholmogorov with a group of those obedient to them from the former Moscow Danilov monastery on the basis of the counter-revolutionary platform of the exiled bishops, which is known as 'The True Orthodox Church'..." In Kalinin [Tver] province there were counter-revolutionary groups ('sketes') in Kalyazin and Kashin. In Moscow province there were counter-revolutionary groups headed by Archimandrites Polycarp Soloviev and Stephen Safonov and Hieromonk Troitsky in Maloyaroslavl and Zaraisk". Fr. Symeon was shot on September 9, 1937 in Ivanovo prison, and buried in the "Balino" cemetery.

Archbishop Theodore was arrested on March 4, 1937 (according to another source, in July). On October 22 he was convicted of "counter-revolutionary activity" and of "being the leader of an underground anti-Soviet organization of churchpeople and monastics, 'The Monastic Brotherhood of Prince Daniel'." "On the direct instructions of the leader of the organization [Archbishop Theodore] Pozdeyevsky in 1935 there was created a series of counter-revolutionary groups, cells of the organization, which were united into so-called 'illegal house churches' ('sketes', 'communities', etc.)... On the instructions of Pozdeyevsky, Kholmogorov and Korenchenko, new members were recruited into the counter-revolutionary organization of churchpeople, and secret tonsures were carried out... On questions of practical anti-Soviet activity he had conversations and gave instructions to the participants of the

organization Archimandrite Polycarp (Soloviev), the secret monk Korenchenko, Michael Karelin, the churchwomen Maria Gaizina, A.F. Tulovskaya and others who came to him in Syktyvkar from Moscow... He created in Syktyvkar an illegal counter-revolutionary group composed of A.A. Alexeyev and A.A. Karetnikova. The latter was his novice and worked in the organization carrying out his tasks in [creating] links... In 1936 he met Bishop Germanus (Ryaschentsev) when they were together in exile in Syktyvkar for counter-revolutionary purposes..."

Archbishop Theodore was sentenced to death on October 22, 1937 and shot in Ivanovo prison on October 23. Not long before his death he took the schema with the name Daniel.

*

Among Vladyka Theodore's disciples who suffered for the faith were:

Schema-Archimandrite Daniel, in the world Gregory Yuryevich Klimkov. He was born in 1839 in the village of Velkhovets, Lvov province. In 1917, after finishing his studies at Kharkov theological seminary, he was ordained to the priesthood and served in the church of the Nine Martyrs of Cyzicus in Moscow. In 1920 he was tonsured with the name Seraphim, and later was ordained to the priesthood. In 1924 he was raised to the rank of archimandrite, and served in the Danilov monastery. In 1927 he was arrested "for anti-Soviet agitation" and sentenced to five years' exile and sent to Obdorsk. In 1932 he was released and settled in Verey, later in the village of Dorokhovo, Moscow province. From 1942 to 1944 he was in the German-occupied zone in Zhitomir and visited his homeland of Lvov with Archimandrite Tikhon. In 1945 he was arrested and sentenced to ten years in the camps and sent to Kraslag. In 1955 he was released from camp and returned to Moscow. In 1960 he was tonsured into the schema with the name Daniel. On February 14, 1970 he died.

Archimandrite Tikhon, in the world Sergius Georgievich Balyaev. He was born in 1886 (or 1895) in Simbirsk in the family of a priest. In 1896 his father died. Sergius entered the Danilov monastery as a novice, and spent twelve years there. In 1914 he finished his studies at Simbirsk theological seminary, and in 1918 graduated from Moscow Theological Academy. From 1918 he was a home teacher, and from 1920 to 1922 - a clerk in the Voenkomat in Achinsk. From 1922 to 1923 he was chief clerk of the department for provisioning Yeniseisk district in Achinsk, and for several months was assistant secretary of the people's judge of the 26th district of Achinsk. From 1923 to 1924 he was chief clerk in UONO in Ulyanovsk. In 1925 he became a monk in the Danilov monastery, was ordained to the diaconate in 1928 and to the priesthood in 1929, becoming archimandrite and superior of the monastery in the same year. He was elected to this post by the brotherhood with the blessing of Archbishop Theodore. Fr. Tikhon was kind a meek, a strict ascetic. He had artistic abilities and was a fine sculptor. On October 28, 1929 he was arrested, and on November 23 was sentenced to three years' exile in "The Case of the Monastic Brotherhood

of Danilov Monastery Headed by Bishop Parthenius (Brynaskikh), Moscow, 1929". He was sent to Ufa, where he lived in a dugout. In 1935 he visited Archbishop Theodore in Syktyvkar. Before the war he moved to Verey, Moscow province, and at the beginning of the war was living with his fellow Danilov monk, Archimandrite Seraphim (Klimkov). When Fr. Seraphim decided to go to his homeland in Lvov, Fr. Tikhon decided to go with him. At the end of the war he went to Glinsk Desert and then near a secret women's monastic community in Kharkov, living in seclusion in an outbuilding on Cold Mountain. Two of the sisters were **Schewanun Seraphima** and **Nun Augusta**. He died on July 11, 1952 (or 1953), and was buried in the eighth city cemetery in Kharkov.

Fr. Tikhon was helped in the Danilov monastery by **Hieromonk Demetrian**, in the world Demetrius Vladimirovich Pereimitser von Frank, who was born in 1881 in Moscow into a noble family, the son of a colonel. He went to the Second Moscow Cadet Corpus, and then, on March 18, 1901 joined the Optina Desert. On March 18, 1905 he became a novice in the Smolensk Zosima Desert. On March 27, 1913 he was tonsured in the Zosima Desert. After 1917 he was ordained to the diaconate. In 1923 the Zosima Desert was closed, and Fr. Demetrian moved to the Danilov monastery, becoming a hieromonk in 1929. In the monastery he carried out obediences at the relics of St. Daniel. He played the fool for Christ a little. In 1933 he was arrested in connection with the Danilov brotherhood and was sentenced to ten (?) years in the camps and was sent to the Mariinsk camps, where he died.

One of Fr. Tikhon's disciples was **Hieromonk Gregory** (Gureyev), who was for a long time a novice in the Danilov monastery carrying out his obedience in the kitchen garden. He was arrested in Moscow and sent to the White Sea – Baltic canal. He was tonsured by Fr. Seraphim (Klimkov). He was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Juvenal (Maslovsky), and was linked with Bishop Ignatius (Sadkovsky) and Bishop Athanasius (Sakharov). He served for a time in the church of the women's St. Sergius community in Mikhailovsky proyezd, Moscow. However, toward the end of his life he returned to Fr. Tikhon in the Ukraine. He died in 1956 and was buried next to Fr. Tikhon in Kharkov.

Archimandrite Jason, in the world Ivan Triphonovich Smirnov, was born in 1875 in the village of Lapino, Khatunskaya volost, Serpukhov uyezd into a peasant family. He went to the village school, and entered the Danilov monastery as a novice on January 10, 1907, becoming a monk on August 24, 1908. He was ordained to the diaconate on July 26, 1909, and to the priesthood in 1914, being raised to the rank of igumen in 1923, and archimandrite in 1929. In September, 1930 he joined the parish of the Resurrection of the Word, and on December 28 was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison. On January 3, 1931 he was convicted, in accordance with article 58, with "anti-Soviet agitation" in "Archive Case N H-6656, Moscow, 1931". He died at the end of the 1940s in Moscow.

Hieromonk John (Fyodorovich Vorobiev). He was born in 1863 in the village of Loginovo, Bogorodsk uyezd, and was a widower. In 1921 he entered the Danilov monastery, and in 1930 was serving in the church of the Resurrection of the word. On December 28, 1930 he was arrested for “anti-Soviet agitation”, and on January 3, 1931 was sentenced in accordance with article 58-10 to three years’ exile in Kazakhstan. His was part of “Case N H-6656, Moscow, 1931”.

Hieromonk Daniel, in the world Michael Alexeyevich Kozyrev. He was born on November 7, 1892 in the village of Pozharye, Vesnyegonsky uyezd, Tver province into the family of a priest. He was the brother of Bishop Gregory (Kozyrev), and two other brothers were priests. In 1912 he finished his studies at Tver theological seminary, and then served as a reader before entering Moscow Theological Academy in 1915. His studies there were interrupted by illness, and he went to live in the village of Smerdvichi, Tver province, and then, in 1918, in the village of Kezodr. He taught and practised agriculture. In 1922 he entered the Danilov monastery and was ordained to the diaconate. In 1926 he was ordained to the priesthood. He was a man of great simplicity who sang bass on the cliros. In 1930 he was serving in the church of the Resurrection of the Word, but on December 28 he was arrested for “anti-Soviet agitation”, and on January 3, 1931 he was sentenced in accordance with article 58-10 to three years’ exile in the north, where he died. His was part of the group case, “The Archive Case N H-6656, Moscow, 1931”.

Hieromonk (or Archdeacon) Ananius. He was ordained to the priesthood in the Danilov monastery and was the cell-attendant (?) of Archbishop Theodore. In 1929 he was arrested in connection with the Moscow branch of the True Orthodox Church and sentenced to five years’ exile and sent to Komi-Zyryan district. In 1935 he was in exile in Syktyvkar. In 1937 he was arrested in a group case and in September sentenced to death. On September 15 he was shot.

*

More than twenty people were indicted in the group case, “The Case of the Monastic Brotherhood of Prince Daniel, Ivanovo, 1937”, including:

Archimandrite Polycarp, in the world Demetrius Andreyevich Soloviev. He was born on January 25, 1892 in the city of Zaraisk, Ryazan province into the family of a priest. In 1912 he completed his studies at Ryazan theological seminary, and in 1917 graduated from Moscow Theological Academy. In about 1916 he was tonsured into monasticism. After graduating from the academy, he went to Optina Desert to Elder Nectarius, and lived in the skete of the Forerunner, in obedience writing a chronicle of the skete’s life. Then he entered the skete of the Holy Spirit at the Holy Trinity – St. Sergius Lavra, but in July, 1918 he returned to Optina in the rank of hierodeacon. In January, 1919 he returned to Moscow, joining the Danilov monastery, where he became one of the outstanding spiritual fathers, being distinguished for his silence,

concentration and humility, as well as his brilliant theological education. In 1920 he became prior of the monastery. In 1922 he was arrested for “concealing the property of the monastery”, and in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 was sentenced to one year’s imprisonment in the Butyrki prison. He was amnestied, and returned to the Danilov monastery, where, in 1924, he was appointed superior of the monastery by Archbishop Theodore with the rank of archimandrite. Here he introduced the custom of arranging a feast for poor pilgrims on Sundays and feastdays, a custom which was retained until the closure of the monastery. On December 10, 1924 he was arrested for “anti-Soviet agitation”, was cast into Butyrki prison, and on June 19, 1925 was sentenced in accordance with article 73 to three years’ exile in the city of Aktyubinsk, Kustanai province, Kirgizia. At the end of his term, on March 9, 1928, he was forbidden to live in six major cities of the Soviet Union. He went to live in Turgai settlement, Akmolinsk province, Kazakhstan, and then (from September, 1929) in the city of Orsk, Orenburg province. In 1931 he moved to Zaraisk. On the way there he stopped in the Danilov monastery in Moscow. In 1932 he was arrested in connection with the Moscow branch of the True Orthodox Church, and was sentenced to five (?) years’ exile and was sent to Ivanovo province. In 1935 and again in the spring of 1936 Fr. Polycarp visited Vladyka Theodore in exile in Syktyvkar, and stayed with him for ten or eleven days. He was accompanied by **Nun Pionia**. In July, 1936 Fr. Polycarp settled in the city of Kashin, Tver province. On October 13-14, 1936, and again on December 27-28, 1936, he visited Archimandrite Symeon in Kirzhach. Then he moved to Kashin, where his “skete” was composed of: **Nun Pionia**, **Nun Polycarpia** (Pelagia Alexeyevna, a dressmaker), **Lyudmila Fominichna Balabushevich**, a nurse from Moscow), **Nun Anastasia** from Kashin, **Nun Agrippina** (Antonina Mikhailovna Baranova), **Eudocia**, a weaver from Moscow, **Olga Vasilyevna Timofeyevna**, a clerk, **Maria Rodionovna, Anastasia Andreyevna, Maria Leontyevna** and others from Moscow, **Martha Timofeyevna** from Zaraisk, **Elizabeth Belyaeva**, **Nun Euphrosyne** from Moscow, and others. On April (or October) 16, 1937 he was arrested in Kashin, and accused of being part of “a counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen and monastics” headed by Archbishop Theodore and Archimandrite Symeon. He was transferred to Ivanovo, and on October 22 he was condemned for being an active participant in the Brotherhood, for leading counter-revolutionary groups in Kashin and Moscow and for “defeatist fascist agitation in the flat of [Archimandrite Seraphim] Klimkov”. In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 he was sentenced to death. He was shot in prison in Ivanovo on October 27 (23).

Igumen Alexis, in the world Alexander Ivanovich Selifanov, was born on August 30, 1879 in the village of Mokroye, Bogulman uyezd, Simbirsk province into a peasant family. In 1914 he became a monk in the Sarov Dormition monastery, Temnikovsky uyezd, Tambov province, and in the same year became a chanter in the Danilov monastery in Moscow. In 1920 he was ordained to the priesthood in the Danilov monastery, and remained there until its closure on September 25, 1931. Then he moved to the church of the Resurrection of the Word, being the leader of the community that remained

faithful to the True Orthodox Church. On October 20, 1932 he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison. On November 28 he was convicted of “conducting active anti-Soviet agitation” and “spreading provocative rumours”. During his investigation he said: “I have ten spiritual children, I don’t remember their names. I categorically refuse to name those with whom I agree. I consider that at the present moment I am under the yoke of Soviet power.” In accordance with article 58-10 he was sentenced to three years in the camps in “The Case of Igumen Alexis (Selifanov) and Hierodeacon Macarius (Andreyev), Moscow, 1932”. He was sent to Lodeinoye polye, Svirlag, Petrograd province. In 1935 he moved to Kirzhach. On March 3, 1937 he was arrested. On September 9 he was convicted of “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda” and of “active participation in an illegal counter-revolutionary grouping of churchmen”. In accordance with article 58-10 he was condemned to death. He was shot on the same day in Ivanovo, and buried in “Balino” cemetery.

Priest Ivan Iosifovich Vasilyev. He was born in 1881 in Verkhne-Kundryuchinskaya stanitsa, Azov-Black Sea region. He went to a theological seminary, and served in Kirzhach, Vladimir province. He was married. On February 14, 1937 he was arrested and cast into Ivanovo prison. On June 15 he was convicted of being “an active participant in a counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen” and of “participating in illegal meetings of members of the organization” at which anti-Soviet agitation was conducted”. He was also accused of being in an underground group organized by Archimandrite Seraphim (Klimkov) in Kirzhach. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 1 and 58-11, he was sentenced to five years in the camps. Nothing more is known about him.

Monk Ignatius, in the world George Ioasaphovich Bekrenev, was born on April 21, 1891 in the village of Suntar, Nyurbinskaya volost, Vilyusky uyezd, Yakutsk province into a peasant family. He was a dwarf. From 1905 to 1914 he studied in Yakutsk theological seminary. In 1915 he entered Moscow Theological Academy, graduating in 1918. From 1919 to 1921 he worked as an accountant in the Red Army, then until 1923 lived in Moscow without fixed occupation. In 1923 he was tonsured into monasticism in the Danilov monastery. In 1929 he began serving in the church of the Resurrection of the Word. On December 28, 1930 he was arrested for “anti-Soviet agitation” and cast into Butyrki prison. On January 3, 1931 he was sentenced to three years’ exile to the north in accordance with article 58-10 in “Archive Case N H-6656, Moscow, 1931”. He was exiled to Pinega region. In 1933 he went to live in Kashira together with Archimandrite Seraphim (Klimkov), and in 1934 moved with him to Kirzhach, where they were joined by **Nun Eulampia** (Matveichenko). On December 30 (or 28), 1936 he was arrested and transferred to Ivanovo prison. On September 9, 1937 he was convicted of being “an active participant in a counter-revolutionary church and monastic organization”, and of “conducting fanatical defeatist agitation at illegal meetings”. In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death, and was shot on the same day, being buried in the “Balino” cemetery in Ivanovo.

Monk Michael (Petrovich Karelin). He was born in 1911 in the village of Selezni, Tambov province into a peasant family. In 1928, after dekulakization, he became a novice in the Danilov monastery. In 1930 he was arrested in connection with the Moscow branch of the True Orthodox Church and sentenced to three years' exile and sent to the north. In 1933, after his release, he was mobilized into the army and served in a communications unit in Vladimir. In 1936, after demobilization, he went to live in Kirzhach. In December he was arrested and sentenced to five years in the camps and sent to Sevvostlag (Kolyma). In 1942 he was released from camp, but remained there on free settlement. In 1959 after rehabilitation he returned to Moscow. In 1961 he was tonsured with the name Michael. Nothing more is known about him.

Schema-Nun Germogena, in the world Alexandra Ipatyevna Karetnikova. She was born on October 29, 1889 in Orenburg, and was the cousin of Archbishop Theodore, becoming his cell-attendant in 1924. She accompanied him in all his exiles. Thus from 1925 to 1927 she was with him in Aulie-Ata, from 1928 to 1930 in Orsk, from 1931 to 1932 in Vladimir, for five months in 1932 in the village of Voslinki, then in Vladimir, in Zaraisk until November, 1934, then in Arkhangelsk and Syktyvkar, where she and the archbishop lived with Hieromonk Ananius. On March 4, 1937 she was arrested and cast into prison in Ivanovo. On October 22, 1937 she was convicted of "participation in a counter-revolutionary group under the leadership of Bishop [Theodore] Pozdeyevsky" and "counter-revolutionary activity". She was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 to ten years in the camps. She was sent to the Yuryevetskiye camps in Ivanovo province. On March 31, 1943 she was released and went to live in Melenki, Vladimir province, where she died at the end of the 1960s or beginning of the 1970s.

Nun Pionia, in the world Pelagia (Polina? Apollinaria?) Ivanovna Lebedeva. She was born on May 3, 1893 in Moscow, and was a parishioner at the Danilov monastery. She helped exiles monks and priests by sending them parcels. From 1929 she worked in the children's Morozov hospital, and worked as a nurse for twenty years. On June 28, 1937 she was arrested in Moscow and sent to prison in Ivanovo. On October 22 she was condemned by the UNKVD for "counter-revolutionary activity, participating in a counter-revolutionary group of churchmen", and in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 was sentenced to ten years in the camps. Hers was part of She was accused of belonging to a "skete" of this brotherhood under the leadership of Archimandrite Polycarp. She refused to admit her guilt. She arrived in the Mariinsk camps in 1937, and was released on June 28, 1947. On November 24, 1949 she was arrested again. Nothing more is known about her.

Nun Olga (Vasilyevna Khotyaintseva). She was born in 1874 in Nizhni-Novgorod into the family of a bank clerk. She was secretly tonsured by Fr. Symeon and lived in Vladimir. She was arrested on February 9, 1937 and cast into Ivanovo prison. On June 15 she was convicted of being "a member of the counter-revolutionary organization, 'The All Russian Monastic Brotherhood", of "participation in illegal anti-Soviet meetings of the organization" and of

“giving material help to exiled clergy”. She pleaded not guilty. Nothing more is known about her.

Novice Alexandra (Fyodorovna Tulovskaya). She was born in 1895 in the village of Aminyevo, Moscow province into a peasant family. She was arrested on December 29, 1936 and cast into prison in Ivanovo. On June 15, 1937 she was convicted of being “a member of the counter-revolutionary organization, ‘The All Russian Monastic Brotherhood”, of “participation in anti-Soviet meetings”, of “spreading provocative rumours” and of being “the treasurer of a fund to help exiled clergy”. She was sentenced to five years in the camps in accordance with articles 58-10 part 1 and 58-11. She was released in June, 1942, and remained in the region as a voluntary worker until 1947, when she moved to Alexandrov. On December 13, 1948 she was arrested in Alexandrov and cast into prison in Vladimir. In 1939 she was convicted of “anti-Soviet activity” and sentenced to exile in a special settlement in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11. Nothing more is known about her.

Anna Pavlovna Dedyulina. She was born in 1876 in Moscow into a noble family, and was the daughter of a doctor and the wife of an officer in the tsarist army. She lived with (her daughter?) **Tatyana Sergeyevna Dedyulina**, who was born in 1903 in Moscow. In 1936 they were living in Kirzhach and belonged to Fr. Symeon’s group. They were cast into prison in Ivanovo on December 29, 1936, and on June 15, 1937 were sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 1 and 58-11 to five years’ exile in Kazakhstan. Nothing more is known about them.

**57. HOLY HIEROMARTYR JOSEPH, METROPOLITAN OF
PETROGRAD (+1937)**

and those with him

Metropolitan Joseph, in the world Ivan Semyonovich Petrovykh, was born on December 15, 1872 in Ustyuzhna, Novgorod province, in a lower middle class family. He finished his studies at the Ustyuzhna theological school and Novgorod theological seminary and then, in 1895, entered the Moscow Theological Academy. In 1899 he graduated from the Academy with the degree of candidate of theology and a professor's scholarship. On September 9, 1900 he was confirmed as lecturer of the Academy in the faculty of Biblical history. On August 26, 1901, he was tonsured as a monk by Bishop Arsenius (Stadnitsky), the rector of the Academy, in the Gethsemane skete. Bishop Arsenius' words at his tonsuring had a great significance for Fr. Joseph in his future life: "Now, when the name of God is blasphemed, silence is shameful and will be counted as pusillanimity or insensitive coldness with regard to the faith. May this criminal lukewarmness, which the Lord warns against, not be in you. Work burning with the Spirit of the Lord."

On September 30, 1901, Fr. Joseph was ordained to the diaconate, and on October 14 - to the priesthood. In February, 1903, he was awarded the degree of master of theology for his dissertation, "The history of the Jewish people according to the archaeology of Joseph Flavian". On December 9, 1903 he was made inspector and extraordinary professor of the Moscow Academy. On 18 January, 1904 he was raised to the rank of archimandrite.

While teaching Biblical history at the Moscow Academy, Fr. Joseph came up against a powerful anti-monastic tendency in the professorial body. "This polemic between the professors of the Academy and the steward of the Holy Trinity - St. Sergius Lavra, Archimandrite Nikon (Rozhdestvensky) began already in 1902 and unfolded on the pages of the journals *Soul-Profiting Reading* and *The Theological Herald*. The professors subjected monasticism in its contemporary form to sharp criticism and called on the monks to carry out in a practical way the commandment of love for one's neighbour in the form of social service. Archimandrite Nikon defended the contemplative character of monasticism. The articles on both sides were quite sharp in character. In March, 1904 Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow banned an article by the Academy Professor N.F. Kapterev, which was being prepared for the press as a reply to Archimandrite Nikon. On March 18 an extraordinary session of the Academy Council took place for this reason. The decision was taken to protest against the metropolitan's ban. Archimandrite Joseph did not agree with this decision, supported the ban on the publication and expressed himself against N.F. Kapterev's article because of its unbecoming and sharp attacks and even 'the poison of barbs, mockeries and insults directed not only against opponents but also against monasticism itself, but very well concealed under an external mask of objective scholarship'.

“For his words Archimandrite Joseph was publicly and coarsely reproached by the offended N.F. Kapterev, after which he left the meeting. The scene made a bad impression on everyone, but Fr. Joseph was not spared – it was considered that he had received his due for his conceit and his speech against the professorial corporation and one of its most senior members. Professor I.V. Popov in a letter of April 16, 1904 wrote: ‘Joseph set off straight from the meeting to the elders at the skete. There he wept and wrote a petition for his retirement...’ At Pascha a deputation from the professors was received by Metropolitan Vladimir, who also summoned Archimandrite Joseph. In spite of the warm reception and long conversation with the professors, the ban was not removed, and Kapterev’s article was not printed.”

On June 30, 1906 Fr. Joseph was appointed superior of the Yablochinsky St. Onuphrius monastery in Kholm diocese. The monastery was in a very poor, run-down condition, and the Orthodox in the area were surrounded by hostile Catholics. However, the young archimandrite succeeded in bringing the monastery into a flourishing condition.

In November, 1907 he was appointed to the Yuriev monastery in Novgorod diocese. In 1909 he wrote prophetically: “Now many are complaining about the hard times for the Church... Remembering the words of the Saviour with complete accuracy, we must expect still worse times for the Church... Without any exaggeration, she must truly live through a condition close to complete destruction and her being overcome by the gates of hell. Perhaps with us, exactly as in the land of freedom, America, they will drive the Name of Christ out of the schools. They will adapt prayer assemblies into ordinary meetings permitted by the police, as in that other land of freedom, France, and will convert the heritage of the Church, together with the very right of faith, into the property of the state. Perhaps the faith of Christ will again hide in the woods, the deserts, the catacombs, and the confession of the faith will be only in secret, while immoral and blasphemous presentations will come out into the open. All this may happen! The struggle against Christ will be waged with desperation, with the exertion of the last drop of human and hellish energy, and only then, perhaps, will it be given to hell and to mankind to assure us with complete obviousness of the unfailing power and might of the priceless promise of Christ: ‘I will build My Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against her’ (Matthew 16.18).”

On February 27, 1909 Fr. Joseph was appointed superior of the Spaso-Yakovlevsky monastery in Rostov. He did much for this monastery. In 1909 he consecrated a church in honour of the Tolga icon of the Mother of God, and restored the Conception church. At Pascha, April 1, 1912, he consecrated the church of the Resurrection of Christ, which had been built on his initiative. In 1913 Bishop Joseph met the Emperor Nicholas in the monastery, and a little later - Princess Elizabeth Fyodorovna. In 1916 he consecrated a chapel in honour of the Vatopedi icon of the Mother of God, and in 1917 - a church in honour of the Mother of God, "the Joy of all who Sorrow".

On March 15, 1909, Fr. Joseph was consecrated Bishop of Uglich, a vicariate of Yaroslavl diocese in the Holy Trinity cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra by Metropolitans Anthony of Petersburg, Vladimir of Moscow, Flavian of Kiev and others. He was in the see of Uglich for many years as the vicar of Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin), and from 1913 - of Archbishop Agathangelus (Preobrazhensky).

From August 25 to September 16, 1914 Bishop Joseph was temporary administrator of the Kostroma diocese. During this period, short though it was, he did much to help the Russian soldiers and their families at the beginning of the war. Bishop Joseph's influence persisted, for in 1946 the Moscow Patriarchate Bishop Anthony reported that "the Kostroma region is steeped in the Josephite spirit", and that "to uproot this it is necessary to open a series of churches that have been preserved".

Between 1905 and 1910 he published In the Embrace of the Father. The Diary of a Monk in 12 volumes (St. Petersburg). He wrote and published about 80 works in all. He very much loved the Liturgy and served every day. He was an expert in church chanting, and in 1911 went to Mount Athos in order to acquaint himself better with the subtleties of ancient church chant.

Bishop Joseph was a member of the Local Council of the Russian Church in 1917-18. From December 1, 1917 to January 20, 1918 he was temporary administrator of the Riga diocese.

On April 26, 1919 the relics of Saints Isaiah, Ignatius, Abraham, Euphrosyne of Polotsk and Demetrius of Rostov had been uncovered by order of the uyezd congress of soviets. Vladyka Joseph organised a cross procession to protest against the uncovering of the holy relics. On July 7, 1919 he was arrested for "breaking up the campaign to uncover the relics in his diocese by means of ringing of bells and cross processions". While he was in prison in Yaroslavl thousands of his admirers signed a petition for his release. On July 18 he was transferred to the inner prison of the Cheka in the Lubyanka in Moscow. He was released in August and the case was shelved for lack of evidence.

On January 22, 1920 Bishop Joseph was promoted to the rank of Archbishop of Rostov, a vicariate of the Yaroslavl diocese, and lived in the Spaso-Yakovlevsky monastery. In the same year he became temporary administrator of the Novgorod diocese (until 1925). On July 8 he was arrested for "anti-Soviet agitation", and on July 26 was sentenced to one year in the camps (conditional).

During the renovationist heresy, Archbishop Joseph shut himself up in the monastery and ruled his dioceses from there.

In May, 1922 he was arrested, and on June 19, 1922 the Yaroslavl revolutionary tribunal sentenced him to four years' deprivation of liberty for resisting the requisitioning of church valuables. He was released on January 5, 1923 on the orders of Kalinin and went to live in the Alexeyev monastery in

Uglich. From 1923 to 1926 he was unofficial administrator of the Yaroslavl diocese.

On May 21, 1924 Patriarch Tikhon appointed him a member of the Holy Synod. From the autumn of 1924 he was administering the Novgorod diocese. On April 12, 1925 he took part in signing the act transferring the leadership of the Church to Metropolitan Peter. On December 6, 1925 Metropolitan Peter appointed him third candidate for deputy patriarchal locum tenens after Metropolitan Michael (Yermakov) and Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky).

On August 26, 1926 he was appointed Metropolitan of Petrograd – in the words of the ukaz, “as a consequence of the insistent request of the believers”. He was living in Novgorod at the time, and was informed of his new appointment by Bishop Alexis of Khutyn, the future Soviet “patriarch”, who now became temporary administrator of the Novgorod diocese. Bishop Alexis had himself been considered for the Petrograd see, but had been passed over because of the people’s strong suspicion that “he could unite with the renovationists”.

Metropolitan Joseph accepted the appointment “out of obedience”, but objected to being called metropolitan “of Leningrad”, rather than the pre-revolutionary name of Petrograd. On September 11 he arrived in the city. That evening and the following morning, the feast of St. Alexander Nevsky, he celebrated services in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra.

Fr. Michael Cheltsov wrote: “there were no bounds to the jubilation and compunction, joy could be heard everywhere and could be seen on the faces. There were the most lively conversations and prayers of gratitude to God.” Metropolitan Joseph served with Bishops Alexis, Gabriel (Voyevodin), Nicholas (Yarushevich), Stefan (Bekh), Gregory (Lebedev), Sergius (Druzhinin) and Demetrius (Lyubimov). Of these, two (Alexis and Nicholas) became pillars of the post-war Soviet church, while all the others suffered martyrs’ deaths.

“The new metropolitan was tall, grey-haired, with glasses, serious-looking, somewhat unsociable, as if strict. He has something in common in his external appearance with Metropolitan Benjamin. He walks with something of a stoop. He doesn’t talk with anyone in the altar. He even sent a message through Bishop Gregory to one of the clergy who was ‘conversing’ in the altar that he should be ‘quieter’. The clergy and bishops immediately felt that the ‘master’ had arrived: they all pulled themselves together. His voice was high, quite tender, pleasant, with a pure diction. In general he created a good, pleasant impression.

“From a first glance at him, Metropolitan Joseph inspired trust and sympathy... The monk with the completely ascetic appearance attracted and pleased people; there was nothing affected in his serving: it was simple and prayerful... People spoke of him as of a true monk, a kind man, a fervent man of prayer who was responsive to the needs and woes of others; one wanted to

be near him and listen to him... And it seemed to us clergy that he was precisely the man we needed, that he was the man who could display that authority that compels to obedience, disperses opposition, teaches order and disciplines with a single glance – in a word, that real life would begin with him, that he would be Vladyka and Father amongst us.”

On September 13 in the evening Metropolitan Joseph left Petrograd for Moscow, leaving Bishop Gabriel as his vicar. But he never returned; for while in Moscow, he was summoned to the OGPU. On expressing a negative opinion concerning the planned legalization of the Church to the OGPU departmental head of the Church division, Eugene Tuchkov, he was sent to Rostov and forbidden to leave that city. The OGPU justified their action on the grounds that he was “a Johnnite”, who “secretly ordained people belonging to that sect”. As Fr. Michael Cheltsov put it more truly, “Soviet power couldn’t leave us with even a little well-being.”

Two weeks after his departure, the liberal clergy of Petrograd addressed Metropolitan Joseph with the following requests: “1) that he declare to the Administrative section concerning his agreement with our memorandum [about the convening of a diocesan congress]; 2) that he choose new vicars without a ‘past’ and acceptable for the authorities; 3) that he try to remain neutral among the clergy groupings; 4) that he leave his Eminence Alexis as vicar here; and 5) that he order that his name be commemorated as ‘of Leningrad’, which, apparently, the rightists are trying to escape.”

On September 28 Metropolitan Joseph was summoned to the OGPU agent Tuchkov in Moscow and was offered three places of exile (Archangelsk and two other places) for three years. Soon it was rumoured in Petrograd that this was all the work of the liberal clergy, who were trying to replace Metropolitan Joseph with Bishop Alexis. Indeed, Metropolitan Joseph’s vicar, Bishop Gabriel, petitioned to be replaced by Bishop Alexis or Bishop Nicholas because of the liberal clergy’s disenchantment with him. However, Metropolitan Sergius did not agree to this because Tuchkov was still conducting negotiations with Metropolitan Joseph, whose popularity was increasing all the more as a result of all that had happened.

On December 8 (or November 25), following the arrest of Metropolitan Sergius, Metropolitan Joseph became temporary leader of the Russian Church as deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Peter. The same day he appointed his own deputies as deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens.

On December 16 Metropolitan Joseph was summoned to the Lubyanka, and on December 28 he was arrested and told to live, without right of departure, in the former Modensky Nikolayevsky monastery near his native Ustyuzhna in Novgorod (or Cherepovets) diocese. According to another source, he was arrested on December 9 and sent to the monastery on December 29.

In March, Metropolitan Sergius was released from prison and immediately began on his pro-Soviet course. On May 10 Bishop Alexis, who had been forbidden to serve in Petrograd by Metropolitan Joseph, appealed to Metropolitan Sergius to put his comrade, Bishop Nicholas of Peterhof, in charge of the diocese. Metropolitan Sergius replied that "it is first necessary to clarify the question of the position of Metropolitan Joseph – whether he will be given the opportunity to return to Leningrad or not..." In other words, Metropolitan Sergius already made no appointments without the approval of the authorities.

In July, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius issued his well-known declaration, which placed the Russian Church in submission to the Soviets, and in the middle of August Bishop Demetrius of Gdov, Protopriest Alexander Sovetov and other clergy of the Petrograd diocese sent a letter to Metropolitan Joseph expressing their disagreement with the church position of Metropolitan Sergius.

On September 17, 1927, Metropolitan Sergius, probably acting under pressure from the authorities, transferred Metropolitan Joseph from Petrograd to Odessa. This aroused the extreme dissatisfaction of the Petrograd flock, and in many churches it was openly said that "Metropolitan Joseph has been transferred wrongly in accordance with the report of Bishop Nicholas, who has evidently slandered him."

On September 28, Metropolitan Joseph wrote to Sergius that he refused to accept it, saying that he saw in it "an evil intrigue by a clique which did not want him to be in Leningrad". Then he wrote to Tuchkov asking that he be allowed to administer the Leningrad diocese. Finally he wrote to Sergius again rebuking him and his Synod for "a woefully servile obedience to a principle alien to the Church". He said that he regarded his transfer as "anti-canonical, ill-advised and pleasing to an evil intrigue in which I will have no part". He clearly saw in it the hand of the OGPU, to which Metropolitan Sergius was simply giving in.

Certainly, the fact that more than forty bishops were transferred by Sergius in this period was one of the main complaints of the confessing bishops against him, and seems hard to justify by any purely ecclesiastical considerations.

However, on October 25 Sergius' Synod confirmed the decision to transfer Metropolitan Joseph, and appointed Metropolitan Sergius himself to the see of Petrograd. In the same decision Bishops Demetrius and Seraphim were forbidden to leave the diocese "without the knowledge and blessing" of Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich). Metropolitan Joseph heard about all this through messengers.

On October 25, Bishop Nicholas (Yarushevich) proclaimed in the cathedral of the Resurrection of Christ in Petrograd the decision of the Provisional Synod to transfer Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) from Petrograd to Odessa (the secular authorities had already forbidden Metropolitan Joseph to return to the

city). This caused major disturbances in Petrograd. The discontent of the faithful was compounded by the fact that on October 21 Sergius had ordered that the civil authorities be prayed for during the Divine services, and prohibited prayer for the bishops in exile.

Metropolitan Joseph moved to Rostov (taking the place of an absent hierarch), and then, on October 30, he wrote to Sergius: "You made me metropolitan of Leningrad without the slightest striving for it on my part. It was not without disturbance and distress that I accepted this dangerous obedience, which others, perhaps wisely (otherwise it would have been criminal) decisively declined... Vladyko! Your firmness is yet able to correct everything and urgently put an end to every disturbance and indeterminateness. It is true, I am not free and cannot now serve my flock, but after all everybody understands this 'secret'... Now anyone who is to any degree firm and needed is unfree (and will hardly be free in the future)... You say: this is what the authorities want; they are giving back their freedom to exiled hierarchs on the condition that they change their former place of serving and residence. But what sense or benefit can we derive from the leap-frogging and shuffling of hierarchs that this has elicited, when according to the spirit of the Church canons they are in an indissoluble union with their flock as with a bride? Would it not be better to say: let it be, this false human mercy, which is simply a mockery of our human dignity, which strives for a cheap effect, a spectre of clemency. Let it be as it was before; it will be better like that. Somehow we'll get to the time when they finally understand that the eternal, universal Truth cannot be conquered by exiles and vain torments... One compromise might be permissible in the given case... Let them (the hierarchs) settle in other places as temporarily governing them, but let them unfailingly retain their former title... I cannot be reconciled in my conscience with any other scheme, I am absolutely unable to recognize as correct my disgustingly tsarist-rasputinite transfer to the Odessa diocese, which took place without any fault on my part or any agreement of mine, and even without my knowledge. And I demand that my case be immediately transferred from the competence of your Synod, in whose competence I am not the only one to doubt, for discussion by a larger Council of bishops, to which alone I consider myself bound to display my unquestioning obedience."

In November several parishes in Petrograd stopped commemorating Metropolitan Sergius. On November 24 an important meeting took place in the flat of Protopriest Theodore Andreyev, at which it was decided to write several letters to Sergius. A few days later one such letter, composed by Fr. Theodore and Bishop Mark (Novoselov), was read out in the flat of Bishop Demetrius. On December 12 a delegation headed by Bishop Demetrius went to Metropolitan Sergius in Moscow and handed him three letters, one of which was signed by six of the city's eight bishops. The petitions contained demands that Metropolitan Joseph be restored to the see of Petrograd and that the decree of October 21 be rescinded.

On December 23, in response to a report by his vicar-bishops, Metropolitan Joseph declared: "In order to condemn and render harmless the latest actions of Metropolitan Sergius, we have no other resort in the present circumstances than decisively to depart from him and ignore his directives."

On December 26, Bishops Demetrius, Sergius, Gregory, Gabriel and Stefan, together with the priests Veryuzhsky, Dobronravov, Rozhdestvensky, Nikitin, Andreyev, Venustov and thirty to forty others, signed an act breaking communion with Metropolitan Sergius, with the blessing of Metropolitan Joseph. Four days later some of these signatories were banned from serving by Metropolitan Sergius' synod.

On February 2, 1928, Archbishops Anatolius (Grisiuk) of Odessa, Silvester (Bratanovsky) of Vologda and Sebastian (Vesti) of Kostroma were sent by Metropolitan Sergius to Metropolitan Joseph in Rostov to ask him: a) whether it was with his knowledge and blessing that Bishop Demetrius of Gdov and Sergius of Narva were calling on people to break communion with Sergius, and b) whether he separated himself from those bishops. However, Metropolitan Joseph stood firm. He refused to re-enter communion with Sergius or submit to his Synod, and announced that he was taking upon himself the administration of the diocese.

Then, on February 6, 1928, he, together with the hierarchs of the Yaroslav diocese, signed a formal act of separation from Sergius. Two days later he announced to his Leningrad vicars, pastors and flock that he was taking upon himself the leadership of the Leningrad diocese. This persuaded the authorities to arrest him, on February 29, and send him again to the Nikolo-Modensky monastery. On March 11 Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod placed Metropolitan Joseph under ban.

As Metropolitan Joseph's supporters in Petrograd were continuing to grow, Metropolitan Sergius sent Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov) there on February 19. However, the new hierarch (who had laid down as a condition of his journey to Leningrad that Tuchkov "not admit Metropolitan Joseph there") was unsuccessful. And so, on March 27 (April 11) Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod retired Metropolitan Joseph and his fellow-bishops and banned them from serving. This was ignored by them.

On August 6, 1929 Metropolitan Sergius' synod declared: "The sacraments performed in separation from Church unity... by the followers of the former Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh) of Leningrad, the former Bishop Demetrius (Lyubimov) of Gdov, the former Bishop Alexis (Buj) of Urazov, as also of those who are under ban, are also invalid, and those who are converted from these schisms, if they have been baptized in schism, are to be received through Holy Chrismation." This decree was also ignored by the Josephites.

Metropolitan Joseph wrote to Bishop Demetrius "that we should each rule independently, directing our whole gaze and all our hopes to the only lawful

locum tenens, Metropolitan Peter, and to the future Local Council of all our Hierarchs, and not of a chance selection of them by individual people. It is only this lawful Council that all the rulers and Synods must aim for now.”

When Archimandrite Lev (Yegorov) accused him of being a schismatic, Metropolitan Joseph replied: “We can only marvel at the indifference and blindness of those others who still suppose that those who permit and carry out this iniquity are doing the work of God, ‘saving’ and ruling the Church, and not crudely offending and mocking it, inscribing themselves into the numbers of its enemies and removing themselves from it rather than cutting off who can no longer stand this bacchanalia, crude violence and iniquitously blasphemous politics.

“... We will not give the Church as a sacrifice and victim of the traitors and disgusting intriguers and agents of atheism and destruction. And by this protest we do not ourselves cut ourselves off from it, but cut them off from ourselves and boldly say: not only have we not left, are not leaving and never will leave the depths of the true Orthodox Church, but we consider its enemies, betrayers and murderers to be those who are not with us and not for us, but against us. It is not we who depart into schism by not submitting to Metropolitan Sergius, but you who obediently follow him into the abyss of the Church’s condemnation...

"1. I am not at all a schismatic, and I call not to a schism, but to the purification of the Church from those who sow real schism and provoke it.

"2. Indicating to another person his errors is not schism, but, to put it simply, putting an unbridled horse back into the shaft.

"3. Refusing to accept sound reproaches and exhortations is the real schism and a trampling on the truth.

"4. The participants in the construction of Church life are not only the people at the top, but the whole Church body, and the schismatic is he who takes to himself rights that exceed his prerogatives, and who dares to speak in the name of the Church that which his brothers do not share.

"5. Metropolitan Sergius has shown himself to be such a schismatic. He has far exceeded his prerogatives and rejected and despised the voice of many hierarchs who retained the pure truth among themselves.

"In passing you mention among the ways to the truth ‘Christ indicated to us yet one more, new path: that you love one another’, which way, it would seem, you consider that I have left out of sight in my actions. In reply I would remind you, Father, of the wonderful conclusion of Metropolitan Philaret in his sermon on love for one’s enemies: ‘Despise the enemies of God, strike the enemies of the fatherland, love your enemies’.

"The defenders of Sergius say that the canons allow one to separate oneself from a bishop only for heresy which has been condemned by a council. Against this one may reply that the deeds of Metropolitan Sergius may be sufficiently placed in this category as well, if one has in view such an open violation by him of the freedom and dignity of the Church, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.

"But beyond this, the canons themselves could not foresee many things, and can one dispute that it is even worse and more harmful than any heresy when one plunges a knife into the Church's very heart - Her freedom and dignity?.. 'Lest imperceptibly and little by little we lose the freedom which our Lord Jesus Christ, the Liberator of all men, has given us as a free gift by His own Blood' (8th Canon of the Third Ecumenical Council)..

"Perhaps I do not dispute that 'there are more of you presently than of us'. And let it be that 'the great mass is not for me', as you say. But I will never consider myself a schismatic, even if I were to remain absolutely alone, as one of the holy confessors once was. The matter is not at all one of quantity, do not forget that for a minute: 'The Son of God when He cometh shall He find faith on the earth?' (Luke 18.8). And perhaps the last 'rebels' against the betrayers of the Church and the accomplices of her ruin will be not only bishops and not archpriests, but the simplest mortals, just as at the Cross of Christ His last gasp of suffering was heard by a few simple souls who were close to Him."

Metropolitan Joseph continued this theme in a letter "to a soul languishing amidst the adversities and storms of the sea of the present world": "The word of the Lord did not lie when He promised that He would be with us to the end of the world and preserve His Church not overcome by the gates of hell, that is, on the edge of destruction. Yes, we are now on the edge of destruction, and many, perhaps, will perish; the Church of Christ will become smaller, perhaps reduced again to the twelve, as at the beginning of her foundation. After all, these words of the Lord also cannot fail to be fulfilled: 'The Son of God when He cometh shall He find faith on the earth?'

"Everything happens in accordance with the foreknowledge of the Lord. People cannot add or take away one iota from it. Those who do not wish to perish are more insured against destruction and one can say: hell will be only for those who themselves want it. May this truth remain first of all as a comfort and encouragement for those who are despondent from the events of this world. Being deprived of the churches of God and the former magnificent services with their abundance of worshippers and glittering hosts of clergy, the angelic chanting of the choirs, etc. - this is, of course, sad and regrettable. But we have not been deprived of the inner service of God in quietness and compunction and concentration of the spirit within itself. Just as the well-known explorers who, deprived of the ship on which they were travelling, nevertheless did not perish but were able to create a tolerable life for themselves even on chunks of deceptive ice until they were raised from the abyss that was threatening to engulf them on the wings of aeroplanes, so we, after the pitiful fall of our spiritual ships, must not give in to panic and lose our

self-control and hope of salvation, but must calmly begin our prayerful labour of serving the Lord and taking our delight in him 'in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs', as the Apostles and all the believers prayed at the beginning.

"Did our majestic churches, bell-towers and magnificent services exist then? And did the absence of all this hinder them from being inflamed with such a love for the Lord as no succeeding age has attained?..."

In fact, fifteen out of the eighty-five churches of Petrograd declared in favour of Metropolitan Joseph. Of these only four later changed and joined Metropolitan Sergius under threat of liquidation, while eleven were closed by the authorities. Metropolitan Joseph ruled his flock through his vicar-bishops Demetrius of Gdov and Sergius of Narva; and his supporters could visit him in the Nikolo-Modensky monastery.

During his interrogation, Metropolitan Joseph said: "The matter in connection with which I have been charged is based on the opinion of me as the leader of a particular tendency in our Church, which arose four years ago in connection with the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, who crudely violated, in the opinion of believers, the deepest foundations of the structure of Church life and administration,... and elicited, simultaneously and everywhere, independently of any personalities, a correspondingly strong reaction in Church circles without any participation or influence on my part..."

"This tendency has been quite unjustly named 'Josephism', an injustice which Metropolitan Sergius himself has pointed to in his correspondence. It could with much more justice be called 'antisergianism'. Moreover, I myself was drawn into this tendency significantly later; it did not follow after me, but rather I was drawn in its wake, and I did not agree with many of its deviations to the right and to the left. And even if I and my participation in this movement were completely eliminated, it would go on without stopping and without the least possibility of its being completely eradicated..."

"This movement could not be stopped even by the name and authority of our chief leader, Metropolitan Peter. Every attempt of this kind would be interpreted as a departure from sound reasoning, from the truth, and would unflinchingly end only in the falling away of the believing masses from Metropolitan Peter himself."

Concerning the role of his deputy, Bishop Demetrius, Metropolitan Joseph said: "At first Bishop Demetrius was my deputy only in the Leningrad diocese, but later, when the antisergianist movement had spread far beyond the bounds of the Leningrad diocese, I could not forbid him, and myself agreed with him, to counsel all those who came to him for direction. Bishop Demetrius himself kept me informed with regard to all questions; he asked for advice and directions from me, as his metropolitan."

On July 24 / August 6, 1928, Metropolitan Joseph wrote to Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov with regard to the "capitulation" of the Yaroslavl hierarchs to Metropolitan Sergius: "There were also those who fell away from the Lord, going away from Him and leaving Him in the amazing minority of twelve. Then these twelve (however, even in this small number there later turned out to be a 'devil' (John 6.66-71)) then grew into what we now so carefully wish to preserve and protect from new traitors and destroyers, which these destroyers have again managed to reduce to an 'insignificant minority'. But let that not disturb us! Let us firmly remember that the Truth Himself was crucified by a majority (an overwhelming majority) of votes, and let those who now refer in their own justification to the majority rather read in this a terrible reproach and rebuke for themselves, that in their 'majority' Christ the Truth is again crucified!"

On September 12 (9), 1930 Vladyka Joseph was arrested in the Modensky monastery as part of "The Case of the All-Union Centre of True Orthodoxy, 1931" and cast into the Domzak in Petrograd. In December he was transferred to the inner prison of the OGPU in Moscow. On September 3, 1931 he was convicted of being "the leader of the church-administrative centre of the All-Union counter-revolutionary monarchist organization, 'The True Orthodox Church'". The indictment declared that "the leadership of the anti-Soviet activity was carried out on the orders of the participant in the church-political centre, M.A. Novoselov. The anti-Soviet activity was directed by his deputy in leading the organization, Bishop Demetrius (Lyubimov). He received and instructed the leaders of the branches and cells of the organization that came to him, giving them instructions on the direction and methods of counter-revolutionary activity and recommending them to prepare to support intervention". In accordance with article 58-11 Metropolitan Joseph was sentenced to five years in the camps commuted to exile to the desert of Kazakhstan for five years. He lived first in Dzhambul (now Aulie-Ata), and then, from 1935, in the Mirzoyan area near Chimkent in Southern Kazakhstan.

Condemned at about this time with Metropolitan Joseph in the group case, "The Case of Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh), Leningrad, 1931", were:-

Hieromonk Habbakuk, in the world Nicholas Petrovich Sutiev (Sutiev). He was born in October, 1897 in St. Petersburg in the family of a bureaucrat. In 1914 he became a student, and in 1915 joined the tsarist army. In 1918 he joined the Red Army. From August, 1919 to January, 1923 he was a member of the communist party, but was excluded from the party because of his religious convictions. He became a monk in 1923 and was ordained to the priesthood. According to one source, he was a renovationist priest from 1923 to 1925, but in 1925 was received into the Orthodox Church by repentance and was sent to serve in the St. Michael cathedral in Oranienbaum. In 1928 he joined the Josephites. On September 26, 1930 he was arrested in connection with the Petrograd branch of the True Orthodox Church, and on April 12, 1930 was convicted by the OGPU of "participation in a counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization". In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11

he was sentenced to ten years in the camps. He was sent to Solovki. Nothing more is known about him.

Together with Metropolitan Joseph from about 1935 was **Archimandrite Arsenius** (Kordi). Protopresbyter Michael Polsky quotes an eyewitness account of Metropolitan Joseph's life in exile:- "In August, 1936, there lived in Alma-Ata a comparatively young archimandrite, Arsenius. From him I first heard that there existed a secret, underground Church led by Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd and organized by him with the blessing of Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa with whom he, living in exile in Chimkent, about 100 versts from Alma-Ata, had secret communications all the time. Arsenius was ordained by the metropolitan and had the happiness of supporting him materially, earning his living by the sale of models of various figurines and knick-knack for museums. He had a church deep under the earth and Metropolitan Joseph served in it. The metropolitan also consecrated it secretly on one of his occasional visit from Alma-Ata. Father Archimandrite dug out this church with great and lengthy labour.

"We greatly respected Archimandrite Arsenius, the more so that he was loved by Metropolitan Joseph and through him we could have a link with him. At that time the metropolitan lived in Chimkent. Before then, from the very beginning of his exile, he lived in the small town of Auliet, where he was not allowed to live in a room, but they put him up in a shed with cattle, partitioning off a hammock with poles.

"The church dug in the earth was in the room of Archimandrite Arsenius. In the ante-room there was a hatch covered with a carpet. The cover was taken away and underneath a stairway led to the church. In the cellar in a corner there was an opening in the earth filled with stones. When the stones were taken away one had to crawl, bent down, for three paces and there was the entrance to the temple. There were many icons, and oil-lamps burned. Metropolitan Joseph was very tall, and when I was there he went there twice altogether and entered the church. A special atmosphere was created, but I shall not conceal the fact that fear manifested itself during the time of the Divine service, especially at night - it was difficult to overcome this feeling. When a big watchdog began to bark, albeit at a distance, outside, everything was audible under the earth, and everyone expected the shouting and stamping of the GPU. Throughout 1936 and until September, 1937, everything worked out well. My son chanted there with a nun. On August 26 Metropolitan Joseph arrived and granted us a visit on the day of my angel. What a wonderful, humble, unshakeable man of prayer! This was expressed in his appearance and in his eyes as in a mirror. He was very tall, with a great white beard and an unusually fine face. One could not help being attracted to him, and would wish never to be parted from him. His monastic clothing was covered, as was his hair, otherwise they would have arrested him while he was still in the street; for they shadowed him and he did not have the right to leave... He said privately that Patriarch Tikhon had proposed, shortly after his election, to appoint him as his

first deputy. For some reason this fact is nowhere mentioned in the history of the locum tenancy in the Church...

"He recognized Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa as the lawful head of the Church, and right until his last arrest in September, 1937, he had secret relations with him at a time when rumours were spreading everywhere that Metropolitan Peter was dead. Concerning his 10-year exile, he said that up to that time it had been exceptionally hard. He lived on bread with pigs in a wattled shed, and slept on boards, separated from the pigs by a few poles. He bore cold and heat, every kind of bad weather and the oppressive atmosphere in these conditions. Once a snake, clinging onto a pole from the ceiling, fell on his head. These conditions were evidently the reason for his illness. At times he suffered very much from an ulcer in the bowels, or he had some kind of interior tumour, perhaps cancerous, and he was on a diet which Archimandrite Arsenius helped him to carry out. He bore everything as a righteous man and if he spoke about his difficult persecutions, it was only because we were all recalling the cruelties of the GPU.

"Father Archimandrite told us about one form of torment and humiliation. 'When they took us through Siberia, the frost was cruel. In the train there was a bath-compartment. They drove us completely naked through the compartments to the bath. Joyfully we poured the hot water over ourselves and warmed ourselves a little, since the compartments were almost unheated. Then they drove us back, not giving us anything to dry ourselves with, our heads wet. They deliberately kept us on the iron platform, and our wet feet, momentarily froze to the iron. At the command: "Forward!" we tore our frozen, bloody feet away'...

"The next day, having spent the night at the archimandrite's, the metropolitan departed to his own place. Now he lived in different conditions. After many years we had been allowed to find him a flat in Chimkent. Archimandrite Arsenius built him a room where he could live undisturbed and took care about his food, making sure not only that he got enough but also that he kept to the diet. First he got him a zither, then a harmonium, with which the metropolitan, a great musician, was very pleased. He set psalms to music and chanted.

"On September 23, 1937, in the neighbourhood of Alma-Ata and in Kazakhstan, all the clergy of the secret 'Josephite' churches were arrested. They left for voluntary exile for refusing to recognise the 'Soviet church'. All were sentenced to ten years without right of appeal, and, as I learned later, the metropolitan was also among them. He was arrested with Archimandrite Arsenius. After the arrest of my son, I ran distractedly to his house and, as I came up, saw a car and the GPU going in. Happily, they did not notice me. The catacomb church of Fr. Arsenius was opened. Once he had carelessly revealed its secret to what seemed to be an honourable elderly man, but who turned out to be a chekist.

"Returning to Moscow after my three-year voluntary exile with my son, I soon found about the existence of secret 'Josephite' churches here - that is, not churches, but services in hidden rooms where sometimes 20-25 people gathered. The service went on in a whisper, with strict control of the worshippers, because of the possibility of betrayal. They usually came to the meeting according to an agreed sign, knocking carefully at a water-pipe by the window, where someone was standing listening.

"One old priest monk, **Fr. Alexander Gumanovsky**, selflessly travelled everywhere that he was called, and the Lord even managed that he should give communion to the sick in hospitals. Sitting by them like a visitor, he confessed them and then, as if giving them some medicine or food, gave them Holy Communion."

According to **Nina Alexeyevna Kitayeva**, Metropolitan Joseph lived on the outskirts of Chimkent, in Poltoratskaya street, near an irrigation canal beyond which stretched the untilled steppe. He had a room in a small Kazakh house with a light in the ceiling, a chair, a trestle bed on which he slept and a pair of chairs. He got up at six o'clock, served at his anamoly behind which he placed a carved folding icon, went to the market to buy some things, had breakfast, rested a little and then sat down to read. The local exiles sent him books. Parcels and money came to him from Russia on occasion. Sometimes exiles would visit him, and he went out into the steppe to talk with them.

He was served by **Nun Maria** (Ivanovna Koronatova). She was born in 1877 in St. Petersburg province and had known Vladyka since childhood. She worked as a teacher in Ustyuzhna. In September, 1929 she accompanied Vladyka into exile. On January 7, 1931 she was arrested in Ustyuzhna and sent to prison. Three months later she was given "voluntary exile" to Western Siberia, first to Novosibirsk, and then to the transit camp in Tomsk. In 1933, probably through the intercession of E.P. Peshkova of the Political Red Cross, she was living in Kazakhstan, and was able to look after Vladyka. On November 20, 1937 she was arrested and on December 10 was sentenced to ten years in the camps. She served her term at colony no. 9, Chamolgan station, on the Turkestan-Siberian railway. She fell ill and died in 1942.

On April 9, 1935 Metropolitan Joseph was released from exile, but had to remain in Kazakhstan without the right to leave. From there, in January, 1937, he wrote to Metropolitan Cyril through Archimandrite Arsenius expressing his "deepest respect" and that he bowed "before his courageous stand in his struggle for the interests of the Church". Archimandrite Arsenius brought back Metropolitan Cyril's reply, which, in the words of Metropolitan Joseph, "completely satisfied me".

On June 24 (or September 23), 1937 Metropolitan Joseph was arrested on a charge of "counter-revolutionary activity". Metropolitan Cyril was arrested on the same day and on the same charge. The previous day the NKVD Administration for the Chimkent procurator had announced: "In South

Kazakhstan province there exists a counter-revolutionary organization among the churchmen whose centre is in Chimkent. The task of the counter-revolutionary organization is to prepare counter-revolutionary cadres for the overthrow of Soviet power. Among the active members of the organization we find the names of Metropolitan Joseph, Metropolitan Cyril and Bishop Eugene (Kobranov)."

"During the search and arrest," writes A.V. Zhuravsky, "Metropolitans Cyril and Joseph behaved calmly and with dignity. Metropolitan Joseph even wrote in his own hand on the order presented to him: 'I have read the order and am perplexed why there are no sanctions from the procurator. I.S. Petrovykh.' The correspondence removed (121 pages from Metropolitan Joseph) was attached to the investigatory case initiated by the authorities."

On July 7 the three bishops were formally accused. Metropolitan Joseph refused to sign the accusation presented to him. Instead of his signature, the investigator wrote: "counter-revolutionary".

"The conditions of the prisoners' detention in Chimkent prison were unendurable. The prison guards, carrying out the commands of the investigators, did not allow the prisoners to sleep, trying to bring the arrestees to extreme exhaustion. The food was intolerable, the water smelt of clay. It was through these conditions that the prisoners were prepared for interrogation. It is known that some of them gave in at this stage and signed any 'confessions', just so as to be condemned as quickly as possible and thereby avoid the terrible conditions in the prison."

The first to be summoned for interrogation was Bishop Eugene. The next was Metropolitan Joseph. "The interrogation, which took place on July 14, brought the investigation only one result - Vladyka Joseph admitted his guilt in the leadership of 'an illegal religious organization'. He did not admit the political accusations (anti-Soviet or counter-revolutionary activity). To the question in what did his leadership of the illegal organization consist, Metropolitan Joseph replied: 'in leading the local religious organizations and in helping them; in relations with the leaders of these local organizations; in an underground form of carrying out religious rites'. Nine days later (on July 23) there appears in the investigatory case a document with the title 'Testimony of the accused Joseph Petrovykh', where there are neither questions nor replies. The document is presented as, supposedly, 'the heartfelt confession' by Metropolitan Joseph 'of counter-revolutionary activity' and his leadership 'of a counter-revolutionary organization'.

"From the bureaucratic style of the letter and its form, which was standard for such 'confessions', this testimony must without doubt be assigned to the creativity of the investigators themselves. The document contains not one new witness by comparison with Metropolitan Joseph's previous testimonies, and, consequently, anybody could have composed such a paper. The servile self-slander makes it in general impossible to recognize in it Metropolitan Joseph's

authorship. In other words, we boldly assign the given document to the compartment 'spuria' (fabricated). The only question is: whose signature is under this falsified document? Was it that of Metropolitan Joseph, forced out of him (by various methods of 'investigatory inquiry')? Or is this signature just as fabricated as the authorship of 'the accused's testimony'? A final resolution of this problem will require, of course, a corresponding expertise, but even without expertise the signature below this 'testimony' elicits doubts with regards to its belonging to Metropolitan Joseph. The doubts intensify if one were to remember that Metropolitan Joseph refused to put his signature under the accusation presented to him when he was brought in the capacity of accused."

For, as M.S. Sakharov and L.E. Sikorskaya comment: "We shall never know the whole truth about the last days in the lives of many new martyrs from the documents of the punitive organs. For, by contrast with the documents of the persecutions of the first ages of Christianity (Roman judicial acts became the basis for the composition of the martyrologies of the Church), the documents of the persecutions of the last times were founded on lies from the beginning, as was the whole system of power that engendered them, and were thoroughly soaked in falsehood."

There is some evidence that in his last years Metropolitan Peter had appointed Metropolitan Joseph as "Extraordinary Locum Tenens", in accordance with a little-known decision of the Council of 1918 and with the approval and support of Metropolitan Cyril. If so, then Metropolitan Joseph became leader of the Russian Church for 42 days after the death of Metropolitan Peter and until his own death. For, as KGB archives confirm, Metropolitan Joseph was first sentenced on November 19, and then was shot at midnight on November 20-21, together with **Metropolitan Cyril, Bishop Eugene (Kobranov) of Rostov** and about **150 other Christians**.

As Fr. Epiphanius Chernov writes: "In Chimkent, Metropolitan Joseph met Metropolitan Cyril, lived together with him under arrest and received with him a martyric death... This fact was known in the Catacomb Church in Moscow. This detail was told to the author of these lines in prison by a Moscow priest. Every day, when they let Metropolitan Cyril and Joseph out for a walk, they walked side by side, pressed against each other. Now Metropolitan Joseph was tall, and by comparison with him the stocky Metropolitan Cyril was short. As they walked in a circle, they were always engaged in concentrated conversation. Evidently there, in the open air, no one could overhear them. And these two figures, as if fitting into each other, gave a touching demonstration of the 'two-in-one' nature of these hierarchs. And this walk of the metropolitans was watched by some catacomb nuns from a hill. This was not without danger. It was necessary to disguise it, so that the authorities should not notice this secret signalling. And it came to the point where the metropolitans gave them their blessing at the beginning and at the end of their walk. I heard this detail from inhabitants of Chimkent both in captivity and in freedom. So there can be no doubt about this sojourn of Metropolitan Cyril with Metropolitan Joseph in

the autumn of 1937. Both 'Moscow' and 'Chimkent' witness to it. Now there are no traces left of the little house in which the hierarch-confessors were kept. They demolished it when they noticed that the place enjoyed special veneration from the believers..."

Among those shot with Metropolitan Joseph was **Hieromonk Gabriel**, in the world Gregory Petrovich Vladimirov. He was born in January, 1873 in the village of Kotlyarovka, OPOCHKINSKY UYEZD, Pskov province into a peasant family. He joined the monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mount Athos, where he was tonsured into the mantia with the name Gabriel and then ordained to the priesthood (according to one source, in the Mikhailovsky Skovorodsky monastery near Novgorod in 1917). From 1914 to 1918 he was serving at the front as a military priest of the Taman regiment. From 1918 he was working as an agitator of the department of popular education in Novgorod province. In 1923 he joined the Mikhailovsky Skovorodsky monastery near Novgorod. In 1927 (or 1928) he became a convinced Josephite, and often served molebens in cemeteries and secret services in the homes of believers in Petrograd and Novgorod provinces. Then he began to do the same in the Pskov district. He also collected signatures for the building of a prayer house. On December 8, 1929 he was arrested in Novgorod in connection with the Petrograd branch of the True Orthodox Church, and on August 3, 1930 was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 11 to ten years in the camps. In September he was sent to Solovki. Later he was sent to Kazakhstan. In 1937 he settled in Chimkent, and on September 9, 1937 he was arrested for being "a participant in the counter-revolutionary organization organized by its leader, Joseph Petrovykh". On November 19 (or 18) he was sentenced to death, and was shot on the same day.

58. HOLY HIEROMARTYR CYRIL, METROPOLITAN OF
KAZAN (+1937)
and those with him

Metropolitan Cyril, in the world Constantine Ilarionovich Smirnov, was born in the city of Kronstadt, St. Petersburg province, on April 26, 1863 (according to another source, 1862), in the family of a Church reader. After graduating from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy in 1887 with the degree of candidate of theology, he married; and on November 21, 1887 he was ordained to the priesthood and was appointed to serve in the St. Petersburg Resurrection church of the temperance society (by the Warsaw station). He was also a teacher of the Law of God in the Elizabeth gymnasium. In 1894 he became rector of the Kronstadt Holy Trinity cemetery church, and a teacher of the Law of God in secondary school number 2 of Saint Petersburg. On October 1, 1900 he became superior of the Holy Trinity church.

In 1902 Fr. Constantine's daughter Olga died tragically after swallowing a needle, and then his wife, also called Olga, died from grief. On May 10 Fr. Constantine received the monastic tonsure with the name Cyril in honour of the enlightener of the Slavs. Then he was appointed head of the Orthodox Mission in Urmia (Persia) and was raised to the rank of archimandrite. On August 6, 1904 he was consecrated Bishop of Gdov, a vicariate of the Petersburg diocese. On October 31, 1905 he became the second vicar of the Petersburg diocese, and on February 15, 1908 – the first vicar. (According to another source, he was consecrated Bishop of Narva in 1907.)

Bishop Cyril introduced chanting by the whole congregation in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra. Being a monarchist, he did not approve of the revolutionary spirit which burst out during the abortive 1905 revolution. He was a member of the Pre-Conciliar Council.

Bishop Cyril was a close friend of the great luminary of the Orthodox Church, St. John of Kronstadt. In his will St. John asked that he be buried by Bishop Cyril, and Cyril fulfilled this request. In 1908, he was the chief celebrant in the funeral services and placed the body in the coffin.

During Theophany, 1909, it was decreed that because of an outbreak of cholera all water which was blessed for the feast in Petersburg should be boiled beforehand, and that the blessing of the waters should be performed over steaming pots. A church newspaper wrote: "More faith was shown in the firewood necessary to boil the water and kill the germs than in God. Fortunately, however, not everyone stepped away from the anchor of our salvation, and in the same Petersburg the Lord preserved for His chosen ones a single bishop who did not agree to yield his faith for the sake of peace with the enemies of Christ's Church. If these notes ever see the light of print, let them preserve the name of this loyal servant of God and archpastor, for the strengthening of faith and piety in my overburdened brethren. The name of

this bishop is Cyril of Gdov. May his name be blessed from generation to generation." Defying the warnings of the police, and in the presence of the Royal Family, Bishop Cyril had blessed the water of the Neva at the St. Alexander Nevsky Lavra through a hole in the ice. The local police, however, took measures to ensure that no one was allowed to take water from the "Jordan".

Perhaps as a result of this incident, Bishop Cyril was transferred to the diocese of Tambov and Shatsk on December 31, 1909. On May 6, 1913 he was made an archbishop. It was on the initiative of Archbishop Cyril that the glorification of St. Pitirim of Tambov took place in the cathedral in Tambov in July, 1914.

Archbishop Cyril spent a large part of his time going round his large diocese. He always appeared suddenly, when he was not expected. In his sermons he showed a good knowledge of the life of the people: common themes of his were their drunkenness, foul language and prejudice against literacy and schooling. The fundamental aim of his life was the enlightenment of the people in the spirit of the Orthodox Church.

He was very exacting towards the clergy. It was enough for him to notice two deacons talking during a service for their names to appear in the local diocesan newspaper. But at the same time he was very merciful to the poor.

He was an energetic, practical person. Once he heard that several severely ill parishioners could not visit the cathedral. So he had telephones installed in their flats and in the cathedral so that they could hear the service in bed.

Archbishop Cyril took a leading part in the Local Church Council of 1917-18, being president of the section on the teaching of the Law of God. In this capacity he made a report which unmasked the antichristian plans of the Provisional Government for the education of children. He was the leader of the Council delegation which went to Kerensky with the demand for the re-establishment of the patriarchate, was elected to the Sacred Synod and was one of the 25 candidates for the patriarchate.

On March 19 / April 1, 1918, he was appointed Metropolitan of Tiflis and Baku and exarch of the Caucasus. However, he did not succeed in reaching his see.

In November, 1919 he was arrested in Moscow on a charge of "counter-revolutionary agitation by means of the distribution of appeals and relations with Kolchak and Denikin". He was imprisoned in the Cheka prison in Moscow, but was released after two months.

Characteristic of him was his attitude towards the Soviet "authorities", whom he openly refused to recognize.

In April, 1920 he was appointed Metropolitan of Kazan, and in May he became a member of Patriarch Tikhon's Synod. He arrived in Kazan on July 9, but was arrested again on August 19 because he "left Moscow for the city of Kazan without the permission of the Cheka". On August 27 he was sentenced for "counter-revolutionary activity" to imprisonment in a camp until the end of the Civil War, but this was changed to a five-year sentence. From October 5, 1920 he was in the Taganka prison in Moscow in one cell with Bishops Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) and Gurias (Stepanov).

On November 7, while in prison, Metropolitan Cyril was elected an honorary member of the Kazan Theological Academy.

Abbess Juliana, whose particular duty was to supply food and help to imprisoned bishops, wrote: "In about 1919 Bishop Gurias was arrested; he was protector [of the Academy] in Kazan when Metropolitan Cyril was rector. Therefore the Metropolitan [who was in Moscow] called me in connection with sending some things to Vladyka Gurias. As it turned out, he had agreed with him beforehand as to how the Holy Gifts were to be sent to him in prison. For this he gave me a little box with what seemed to be small white pieces of bread, and he said that these should be registered among the other supplies which were to be given. I was upset at taking the Holy Gifts with me, and in general at the idea of carrying them at all, and I told this to Vladyka. To this he answered me:

"What business is that of yours; I am sending you.'

"But having thought a little, he offered that I take the Holy Gifts from him early in the morning on the same day when I would be going with the packages for Vladyka Gury in the Butyrki prison. This was done. Soon I was going with packages for Vladyka Cyril himself, but not for long. In 1920 Metropolitan Cyril was in the Taganka prison; in the same prison at that time, perhaps even in the same cell, were Vladykas Theodore [Pozdeyevsky] and Gurias. In the Taganka prison the old rules were still in effect: for good behaviour prisoners were called or went over to the category of the 'reformed', and they enjoyed certain privileges. In the Taganka prison there were five prisoners in this category: Metropolitan Cyril, Archbishop Theodore, Bishop Gurias, Alexander Dmitrovich Samarin and Vladimir Fyodorovich Dyunkovsky. Besides the usual general visits, they were allowed once a week on a certain day to have visitors with the grating lifted. Usually, at the general visits, when many people were speaking with the prisoners through a double grating, it was almost impossible to converse because of the noise and shouting. Besides that, these meetings lasted only five minutes. On the other hand, visits to the 'reformed' lasted for fifteen minutes, and one could even give things right into the hands of the prisoners. Under these circumstances I had to speak with and give things to Metropolitan Cyril many times. When the Metropolitan was in exile we were able to help him not only with parcels but also by furnishing church service books."

On December 24, 1921 Metropolitan Cyril was released, and on January 18, 1922 he arrived in Kazan. He was met at the station by Bishops Joasaph and Athanasius and a crowd of joyful Christians. In April the Bolsheviks carried out their requisitioning of the valuables of the Kazan churches supposedly "for the benefit of the starving". However, on August 15 (or 1 or 21) Vladyka Cyril was arrested (he had already been arrested in April) for his involvement with the American Relief Organization which supplied food to the starving. After a spell in prison in Moscow, in January, 1923 he was exiled first to the province of Krasnoyarsk in Siberia, then to Ust-Sysolsk (Syktyvkar), then to Ust-Kul (Komi SSR) and finally to Kotelnich (Vyatka province).

During this period Patriarch Tikhon, too, was imprisoned, which gave the renovationist heretics the opportunity to seize control of the central administration of the Church. Even after the Patriarch was released from prison in 1923, the GPU tried to persuade the Patriarch to enter into negotiations with the renovationists, promising that if he did many hierarchs languishing in prison and exile would be freed. So in May, 1924, the renovationist leader Krasnitsky was admitted briefly into the Patriarch's Higher Ecclesiastical Council.

In the same month, however, Metropolitan Cyril was summoned to Moscow for negotiations with the GPU agent Tuchkov. Since he refused to recognize the renovationists, Tuchkov threatened to let him rot in prison. But Vladyka Cyril did not give in.

Vladyka then went to the Patriarch, who asked him his opinion about admitting Krasnitsky into the Council. He replied:

"Your Holiness, don't think about us hierarchs. There's no need to take pity on them, they are strengthening the Church. But you must not compromise with Krasnitsky."

Strengthened by Metropolitan Cyril, the Patriarch struck Krasnitsky's name off the list of the Council members. As a result of this, in July Metropolitan Cyril was again exiled, first to Yelsk and then to Perevolok. On January 7, 1925, Patriarch Tikhon appointed Metropolitan Cyril first locum tenens of the patriarchal throne although he was still in exile.

In the spring of 1925 he was in exile in Zyryansk region. As Protopresbyter Michael Polsky writes, he came "to some dense forest at which he arrived only after two weeks of travelling in a boat on a river. He was not given anything to eat, he was left to sleep in the cold outside the forest cabins in which the agents themselves lodged, he was dragged by the beard and mocked in such a way that he began to ask for death for himself. He spent a year under the rule of a communist in a forest where there were only two hunting cabins."

During this period, Vladyka governed his diocese through his vicars, Bishops Joasaph, Athanasius and Andronicus.

On March 25 / April 7, 1925, Patriarch Tikhon died. In his will, which was read out in the presence of 60 hierarchs in the Donskoy monastery, it was revealed that he had appointed Metropolitan Cyril as the first of three hierarchs who were empowered to become locum tenens of the patriarchal throne and take over the leadership of the Russian Church until a new patriarch could be elected. Since Metropolitan Cyril was not allowed to return to Moscow take up the locum tenancy, and since the second candidate, Metropolitan Agathangel of Yaroslavl, was also in exile, the post fell to the third candidate, Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa.

In December, 1925, Metropolitan Peter was imprisoned for rejecting the GPU's terms for legalization of the Church. In the event of his death he appointed Metropolitan Cyril as the first candidate to the locum tenancy. And so the GPU agent Tuchkov went to Metropolitan Cyril and put the same terms for the legalization of the Church to him.

When Metropolitan Cyril refused to accept the locum tenancy on the GPU's terms, he was sent back to Turukhansk. However, Tuchkov did not leave him alone. According to Matushka Seraphima Bulgakova, a former cell-attendant of Metropolitan Cyril, "at the beginning of his locum tenancy Metropolitan Sergius had been firm and uncompromising. At that point Tuchkov went to Metropolitan Cyril, who was in exile at that time, in the hope that the latter, tormented by prisons and exiles, would make a compromise. He even succeeded in persuading the metropolitan to take up his post of locum tenens (he was the first candidate according to Patriarch Tikhon's will). Metropolitan Cyril left his place of exile, but, on arriving in Rybinsk, he stopped and sent his cell-attendant to an ascetic nun [Blessed Xenia] living in Rybinsk, and asked her what he should do. She replied that if he went to Moscow and accepted Tuchkov's offer, he would lose everything (spiritual) that he had gathered throughout his life. And the metropolitan went back into exile."

While he was there, in November, 1926, a secret ballot of 72 bishops elected him as the best candidate for the patriarchate (Metropolitan Sergius received not more than one vote). "And so," writes a sergianist source, "Metropolitan Cyril was elected Patriarch. But his enthronement did not take place." For almost immediately, on December 21, 1926, he was arrested in Kotelnich and cast into the special isolator in Vyatka.

In February, 1927 Tuchkov arrived in Vyatka and met Metropolitan Cyril. He offered him freedom and the possibility of heading the Church administration, but with the following condition:

"If we have to remove some hierarch," asked Tuchkov, "will you help us in this?"

"Yes, if the hierarch appears to be guilty of some ecclesiastical transgression... In the contrary case, I shall tell him directly, 'The authorities are demanding this of us, but I have nothing against you'."

"No!" replied Tuchkov. "You must try to find an appropriate reason and remove him as if on your own initiative."

To this the hierarch replied: "Eugene Nikolayevich, you are not the cannon, and I am not the bomb, with which you want to blow up our Church from within!"

On March 23, 1927, in accordance with article 58-6, he was sentenced to three years in exile in Siberia in "The Case of Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov) and Protopriest Alexander Agafonnikov, Vyatka province, 1927". The OGPU found that "Citizen Smirnov, while in Komi province in 1926 and later in Vyatka province, had relations with church activists with the purpose of consultation on church matters and exerting influence on them, while most recently he contacted a group of blackhundredist bishops whose aim was to give the Church the character of an anti-Soviet organization. Citizen Smirnov was planning to head this latter group, summoning it to church activity and bringing its anti-Soviet programme into life." "The group of blackhundredist churchmen, who are being investigated in case N 39960, headed by Metropolitan Sergius Stragorodsky, the patriarchal locum tenens, decided finally to give the Church the character of a definitely anti-Soviet organization, and with this aim give it a patriarch as its head. They carried out elections for him [the patriarch] and indicated as a candidate the person who was the most anti-Soviet. The group set about the election in a very conspiratorial way. Moreover, the voting by sealed ballots was carried out only among the episcopate. A special 'Address of the Orthodox Church to the Soviet Government' was worked out, which had a directly counter-revolutionary and threatening character. This declaration was to be given out in the name of the new Patriarch and under his signature. The group indicated as their most desired candidate Constantine Ilarionovich Smirnov (Metropolitan Cyril), and contacted him for this reason although he, from 1919 until the present time, with a few breaks when he was subject to repressions because of his anti-Soviet activity, has been the most blackhundredist and counter-revolutionary churchman. At this time Smirnov, for the ending of his administrative exile, had been transferred to Kotelnich, where he came into close contact with the local priest Agafonnikov... Cyril and Agafonnikov, the first personally and the second in writing, received news from the already mentioned grouping concerning Cyril's appointment as patriarch... But he received for Cyril the indication that 'the bishops who are exiled and have suffered for the faith are against any degree of legalization,' that is, in other words, they decided to continue conducting church politics in an anti-Soviet spirit. This was as it were a precondition for Cyril's signing of the above-mentioned anti-Soviet declaration. Cyril immediately began having receptions as if he were the patriarch. Moreover, they were staged in an extremely conspiratorial way, with the doors locked and conversations conducted in a whisper. The visits by

churchmen acquired a mass character: up to five people came to him at once. On the basis of the above Smirnov and Agafonnikov were arrested together with the blackhundredist grouping of churchmen. Since the investigation in the present case is finished, I suggest it should not be joined to case N 36960, whose investigation is still continuing. I suggest that the guilt of Smirnov and Agafonnikov be considered proven.”

Metropolitan Cyril was sent to Khantaika, Turukhansk region, in north-western Siberia. Ten days after his condemnation, Metropolitan Sergius, the deputy of the Patriarchal Locum Tenens, was released from prison. Very probably the GPU’s conditions which Metropolitan Cyril had rejected were accepted by Metropolitan Sergius...

It was while Metropolitan Cyril was in exile that he heard of Metropolitan Sergius’ infamous declaration of July 16/29, 1927, which placed the Church in the same position of servitude that Metropolitan Cyril had rejected. Cyril rejected the declaration and broke communion with Sergius.

From May to December, 1929, Metropolitan Cyril was in exile in Yeniseisk. From there he immediately wrote a letter to Sergius, denouncing him as a usurper who had overstepped the bounds of his authority by instituting a new church policy not approved by Metropolitan Peter. Although they exchanged several letters, Metropolitan Cyril did not succeed in persuading Sergius to change his course. On January 2, 1930 Metropolitan Sergius subjected Metropolitan Cyril to the judgement of a Council of bishops and removed him from his see, but with the right to serve if the local diocesan bishops allowed it. This decree was to come into force on February 15 unless Metropolitan Cyril indicated before that date that he had broken communion with the Catacomb bishops. However, Metropolitan Cyril maintained his position, and in January was taken from Yeniseisk to exile in Turukhansk region. On April 23, 1930, in “The Case of Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov) and Protopriest Alexander Agafonnikov, Vyatka province, 1930”, he was sentenced in accordance with article 58-10 to deprivation of the right to live in Moscow and Petrograd provinces, and in Kharkov, Odessa, Dagestan and Tataria for three years. He was again sent into exile in the Turukhansk region for three years.

Several points were made by Metropolitan Cyril in his correspondence with Metropolitan Sergius which are of vital importance in evaluating the significance of the various schisms that have taken place in the Orthodox Church in this century. The first is the priority of “the conciliar hierarchical conscience of the Church”. As he wrote in 1929: “Church discipline is able to retain its validity only as long as it is a true reflection of the hierarchical conscience of the Conciliar [Sobornoj] Church; discipline can never take the place of this conscience”. Sergius violated the hierarchical, conciliar conscience of the Church by his disregard of the views of bishops equal to him in rank.

The second is that a hierarch is justified in breaking communion with a fellow hierarch, not only for heresy, but also in order not to partake in his

brother's sin. Thus while Metropolitan Cyril did not consider Sergius to have sinned in matters of faith, he was forced to bread communion with him because "I have no other means of rebuking my sinning brother". If clergy have mutually opposing opinions within the Church, then their concelebration is for both "to judgement and condemnation".

Thus in November, 1929, Metropolitan Cyril refused to condemn Metropolitan Joseph and his supporters, who had broken communion with Sergius; and he did not agree with the bishops in exile in Tashkent - Arsenius (Stadnitsky), Nicodemus (Krotkov), Nicander (Fenomenov) and others - who condemned Joseph, considering their hopes of convening a canonical Council to be "naivety or cunning".

A third point made by Metropolitan Cyril was that even when such a break in communion occurs between two parties, both sides remain in the Church so long as dogmatic unanimity is preserved. But this immediately raised the question: had Sergius only sinned "administratively", by transgressing against the canons, as Metropolitan Cyril claimed (until 1934, at any rate), or had he sinned also "dogmatically", by transgressing against the dogma of the One Church, as Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov, among others, claimed?

On August 19, 1933 Metropolitan Cyril was released and went to live in the town of Gzhatsk, from where he continued secretly to lead the opposition to Metropolitan Sergius. During this period, while refraining from saying that the sacraments of the sergianists were graceless, Metropolitan Cyril nevertheless considered that those who partook of them knowing the unrighteousness of Sergius' position partook of them to their condemnation. Thus he wrote to an unknown hierarch: "It seems to me that both you yourself and your correspondent do not distinguish those actions of Metropolitan Sergius and his partisans, which are performed by them in proper order by the power of those grace-given rights received through the mystery of the priesthood, from those other activities which are performed with an exceeding of their sacramental rights and according to human cunning, as a means of protecting and supporting their self-invented rights in the Church. Such are the actions of Bishop Zacharius and Priest Patapov of which you speak. These are sacramental acts only in form, while in essence they are a usurpation of sacramental activity, and therefore are blasphemous, without grace, non-ecclesiastical. But the Mysteries performed by Sergianists who are correctly ordained and not prohibited to serve as priests, are undoubtedly saving Mysteries for those who receive them with faith, in simplicity, without deliberations and doubts concerning their efficacy, and who do not even suspect anything incorrect in the Sergianist order of the Church. But at the same time, they serve for judgement and condemnation for the very performers of them and for those who approach them well understanding the untruth that exists in Sergianism, and by their lack of opposition to it reveal a criminal indifference towards the mocking of the Church. This is why it is essential for an Orthodox Bishop or priest to refrain from communion with Sergianists in

prayer. The same thing is essential for laymen who have a conscious attitude to all the details of church life."

These letters make clear that while Metropolitan Cyril was quite prepared to say of certain hierarchs (the renovationists, Bishop Zacharius) that they were deprived of the grace of sacraments, he was not prepared to say this – yet – of Metropolitan Sergius, "until a lawful Council by its sentence shall utter the judgement of the Holy Spirit concerning him". He gave as one reason for his hesitation – or "excessive caution", as his correspondent put it – "an incomplete clarification of the conditions which surround me and all of us". Another reason was his ignorance of the position of Metropolitan Peter – an ignorance engineered, of course, by the Bolsheviki. Thus "for me personally," he wrote, "it is impossible at the present time to step forth, since I am entirely unsure of the character of the attitudes of Metropolitan Peter, in order to be convinced of his actual views and to decide how to act..."

In about the middle of the 1930s Metropolitan Cyril issued an epistle in which he called on the Catacomb hierarchs to confirm his candidacy as lawful patriarchal locum tenens in the case of the death of Metropolitan Peter. We know the reaction of one hierarch, Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, to this epistle. He was not enthusiastic, because he considered that in times of persecution a centralized administration was not obligatory for the Church. According to another account, however, a "little Council" of hierarchs meeting in Arkhangelsk at the end of 1933 or 1934, and including Archbishop Theodore, offered the locum tenancy to Metropolitan Cyril, but he refused.

According to the witness of his spiritual daughter, he once went to meet Metropolitan Sergius in Moscow. A guard stopped him from entering the building, but Metropolitan Cyril pushed past him and went into Metropolitan Sergius' study. A few seconds later, he came out again. "Evidently," writes a sergianist source, "everything had now become clear to him."

On July 14, 1934 he was arrested on a charge of "counter-revolutionary activity" and was transferred to the inner isolator in the Butyrki prison in Moscow, where, on December 2, he was convicted of "counter-revolutionary activity" and sentenced to three years' exile in Yany-Kurgan in Southern Kazakhstan. All attempts to find out where he was from the woman who had served him in her house proved fruitless, and ended with the disappearance of this woman, too.

In August, 1936 the Bolsheviki spread the false information that Metropolitan Peter had died. Immediately Metropolitan Sergius quite illegally assumed to himself Peter's title of Metropolitan of Krutitsa. From this time, a distinct hardening in Metropolitan Cyril's position is noticeable.

Thus in March, 1937 he wrote: "With regard to your perplexities concerning Sergianism, I can say that the very same questions in almost the same form

were addressed to me from Kazan ten years ago, and then I replied affirmatively to them, because I considered everything that Metropolitan Sergius had done as a mistake which he himself was conscious of and wished to correct. Moreover, among our ordinary flock there were many people who had not investigated what had happened, and it was impossible to demand from them a decisive and active condemnation of the events. Since then much water has flowed under the bridge. The expectations that Metropolitan Sergius would correct himself have not been justified, but there has been enough time for the formerly ignorant members of the Church, enough incitement and enough opportunity to investigate what has happened; and very many have both investigated and understood that Metropolitan Sergius is departing from that Orthodox Church which the Holy Patriarch Tikhon entrusted to us to guard, and consequently there can be no part or lot with him for the Orthodox. The recent events have finally made clear the renovationist nature of Sergianism. We cannot know whether those believers who remain in Sergianism will be saved, because the work of eternal Salvation is a work of the mercy and grace of God. But for those who see and feel the unrighteousness of Sergianism (those are your questions) it would be unforgivable craftiness to close one's eyes to this unrighteousness and seek there for the satisfaction of one's spiritual needs when one's conscience doubts in the possibility of receiving such satisfaction. Everything which is not of faith is sin.... I am in fraternal communion with Metropolitan Joseph, and I gratefully esteem the fact that it was precisely with his blessing that there was expressed the first protest against Metropolitan Sergius' undertaking from the Petrograd diocese..."

On July 7, 1937, Metropolitan Cyril was arrested in Yany-Kurgan and imprisoned in Chimkent on a charge of "participating in a counter-revolutionary underground organization of churchmen" together with Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd.

According to Schema-Monk Epiphanius Chernov, Metropolitan Cyril met Metropolitan Joseph in Chimkent, "lived together with him under arrest and received with him a martyric death. In any case, this fact was known in the Catacomb Church in Moscow. This detail was told to the author of these lines in prison by a Moscow priest. Every day, when they let Metropolitan Cyril and Joseph out for a walk, they walked side by side, pressed against each other. Now Metropolitan Joseph was tall, and by comparison with him the stocky Metropolitan Cyril was short. As they walked in a circle, they were always engaged in concentrated conversation. Evidently there, in the open air, no one could overhear them. And these two figures, as if fitting into each other, gave a touching demonstration of the 'two-in-one' nature of these hierarchs. And this walk of the metropolitans was watched by some catacomb nuns from a hill. This was not without danger. It was necessary to disguise it, so that the authorities should not notice this secret signalling. And it came to the point where the metropolitans gave them their blessing at the beginning and at the end of their walk. I heard this detail from inhabitants of Chimkent both in captivity and in freedom. So there can be no doubt about this sojourn of Metropolitan Cyril with Metropolitan Joseph in the autumn of 1937. Both

'Moscow' and 'Chimkent' witness to it. Now there are no traces left of the little house in which the hierarch-confessors were kept. They demolished it when they noticed that the place enjoyed special veneration from the believers..."

When the KGB archives were opened in January, 1992, it was discovered that after his arrest Metropolitan Cyril had been accused of leading "all the counter-revolutionary clergy", but that he had conducted himself with great courage and had taken all the responsibility upon himself. On September 23 he was joined in prison by Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd. The two outstanding hierarchs were condemned by a troika of the South Kazakhstan region on November 6/19, and were shot together on November 7/20, 1937 in Lisiy ovrag, near Chimkent. They were buried in Lisiy ovrag.

59. HOLY HIEROMARTYR EUGENE, BISHOP OF ROSTOV
(+1937)

and those with him

Bishop Eugene, in the world Eugene Yakovlevich Kobranov, was born on January 21, 1892 in the village of Blagoveshchenye, Dorogobuzhsky uyezd, Smolensk province, in the family of a village teacher. His brother was a priest. In 1906 he finished his studies at the Smolensk theological school, and in 1912 - at Smolensk theological seminary. In 1916 he graduated from the Moscow Theological Academy. In 1917 he defended his master's dissertation and was awarded the degree of master of theology. In 1917-18 he held a professor's scholarship from the Moscow Academy and at the same time attended lectures at the Eastern Languages faculty of Moscow Imperial University. At the end of 1917 (1918) he was ordained to the priesthood as a celibate by Patriarch Tikhon, and served in the church of the Nine Martyrs of Cyzicus in Moscow. From 1919 to 1921 he was assistant director of the Museum of the Classical East in Moscow. On March 10, 1921 he was arrested for "anti-Soviet agitation by means of sermons and discussions". The affair arose as a result of an anonymous letter to Lenin which said that "Pope Eugene" was preaching sermons that were "not in your or the Republic's interest". He was released on March 18. In the same year he was tonsured as a monk in the Novospassky monastery in Moscow by Bishop Palladius (Dobronravov) and appointed prior of the monastery with the rank of archimandrite. On June 22, 1931 he was arrested, but released after a week. On June 30 (or in September) he was arrested for "creating an anti-Soviet organization", and on July 19 was exiled to Archangelsk for two years. He was released early from exile in 1922 (1923), and began serving as superior of the Novospassky monastery, but in the spring of that year he was again arrested in Moscow. After three-and-a-half months a Moscow court found him innocent and he was released. He was again arrested on December 18, 1923 and on March 28, 1924 was sentenced to two years exile in Khiva in Central Asia. On January 23, 1926 (or in 1925) he was released and returned to Moscow.

On March 14, 1926 he was consecrated bishop of Murom, a vicariate of Vladimir diocese, by Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and other bishops in Nizhni-Novgorod. In the spring of 1927 he was exiled to Moscow in connection with the affair of Metropolitan Sergius. On September 15, 1927 he was appointed bishop of Balashov, a vicariate of the Saratov diocese, but was transferred to Rostov, a vicariate of the Rostov diocese, on December 14 of the same year.

On February 6, 1928, Bishop Eugene was one of the bishops of the Yaroslavl diocese who signed a declaration separating themselves from Metropolitan Sergius, and was banned by him on April 11. On May 10 he signed a second declaration with Metropolitan Agathangelus and other Yaroslavl bishops in which the hierarchs asserted that they had not broken communion with Sergius but that they would not carry out any of his orders which they considered to

be anti-canonical. As a result of this, Bishop Eugene was released from his ban on May 30.

However, in the summer of 1928 he was again arrested in Rostov, and on October 28 was exiled for three years to Kzyl-Orda in Kazakhstan. He returned from exile in September, 1929, but in October, 1929 he was arrested and cast into Yaroslavl prison for "participation in the Yaroslavl branch of the 'True Orthodox Church'". He was sentenced to three years' exile in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 and sent to Vologda.

In 1931 he was released from exile in Alma-Ata, but he was not allowed to live in twelve cities. He was for a time in Petrograd, then on May 5, 1933 moved to Velikij Ustyug, and from there to Vologda, where on December 7, 1935 (or in 1934) he was arrested again. On September 3, 1936 he was sentenced to five (two) years' exile in Chimkent.

On June 23, 1937 Bishop Eugene was arrested in Chimkent, at almost the same time as Metropolitans Cyril of Kazan and Joseph of Petrograd. The NKVD Administration for the Chimkent procurator announced: "In South Kazakhstan province there exists a counter-revolutionary organization among the churchmen whose centre is in Chimkent. The task of the counter-revolutionary organization is to prepare counter-revolutionary cadres for the overthrow of Soviet power. Among the active members of the organization we find the names of Metropolitan Joseph, Metropolitan Cyril and Bishop Eugene."

On July 7 the three bishops were formally accused. "The conditions of the prisoners' detention in Chimkent prison," writes A.V. Zhuravsky, "were unendurable. The prison guards, carrying out the commands of the investigators, did not allow the prisoners to sleep, trying to bring the arrestees to extreme exhaustion. The food was intolerable, the water smelt of clay. It was through these conditions that the prisoners were prepared for interrogation. It is known that some of them gave in at this stage and signed any 'confessions', just so as to be condemned as quickly as possible and thereby avoid the terrible conditions in the prison.

"The first to be summoned for interrogation was Bishop Eugene. On June 25 the investigator demanded of Vladyka Eugene: 'Give testimony on your counter-revolutionary activity.' But the reply followed: 'I have not indulged in counter-revolutionary activity and can say nothing on this question.' At this the first interrogation came to an end."

On November 19, the three bishops were condemned to be shot for "counter-revolutionary activity and struggle against Soviet power".

Bishop Eugene was shot at 24.00 on November 20 at Lysij ovrag near Chimkent.

*

Among Vladyka Eugene's disciples who suffered for the faith were:

Schema-Archimandrite Eleutherius (Ignatyevich Pechennikov). He was born in 1870 in the village of Perepechnoye, Cherikovsky uyezd, Mogilev province into a peasant family. From 1892 he served in the army as a private. Later he became a regimental priest. In 1896 he was tonsured. In 1922 he was serving as deputy and hieromonk in the Trinity monastery in Smolensk. He was arrested twice during the requisitioning of church valuables and for selling them at the bazaar. On December 5, 1922 he was cast into the GPU's Gubotdel in Smolensk. "Citizen Pechennikov is well-known for his attacks on the renovationist tendency, and, as a convinced supporter of [Patriarch] Tikhon, can do a lot of harm at the [renovationist] hierarchical congress appointed for December 6, 1922." "Isolation, albeit only during the congress, will undoubtedly have a moral effect - a positive one on the 'livingchurchmen', and a negative one on all the supporters of Tikhon." On December 10 he was released after promising not to leave his constant domicile. In the same month he was appointed igumen of the Trinity monastery. On March 20, 1924 he was arrested again, and during his interrogation on March 24 said: "Since the day of the release of Patriarch Tikhon from under guard, I have every time publicly pronounced his name during commemoration... [His] appeal issued in 1918, with its cursing of the Bolsheviks, I have read, but I have not distributed..." He was sentenced in accordance with article 10-70, but was released on March 31, 1924 in "The Case of Igumen Eleutherius (Pechennikov) and Priest I.N. Zverev, Smolensk, 1924". He became one of the main leaders of the Conciliar Brotherhood together with Igumen Barlaam (Vladykin), and on February 26, 1930 he was arrested again and cast into Smolensk isolator for "participation in a counter-revolutionary organization". On May 28 he was convicted of being "the leader of a church counter-revolutionary community", and in accordance with articles 58-10 parts 1 and 2 and 58-11 was sentenced to ten years in the camps in "The Case of the Conciliar Brotherhood, Smolensk, 1930". He was sent to Solovki, but in 1932 was sent on to Chimkent. On June 23, 1937 he was arrested at Mankent station, Sairamsky region, South Kazakhstan province, and on August 26 was convicted of "counter-revolutionary activity" and of being "the leader of a secret monastery". In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 he was sentenced to death in "The Case of Archbishop Alexis (Orlov) and others, Chimkent, 1937". During his interrogation Fr. Eleutherius said that he had not conducted any counter-revolutionary work and refused to give any further testimony. Besides the standard accusations he was accused of being "the leader of a secret monastery in Mankent", of "carrying out tonsures into secret monasticism", of "maintaining links with the counter-revolutionary element in Mogilev" and of "being under the leadership of [Bishop Eugene] Kobranov". On August 27, 1937 he was shot at Lisya balka, Chimkent.

Hieromonk Gabriel, in the world Gregory Petrovich Vladimirov. He was born on January 14, 1873 in the village of Kotlyarevka, Opochinsky uyezd, Pskov province into a peasant family. He went to the monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mount Athos, but from 1914 to 1916 was priest of the Taman

regiment. From 1918 to 1923 he was an agitator in the department of Popular Education in Novgorod province. In 1924 he was arrested in Pskov province for illegally entering a border zone, and was sent to live in Novgorod. In the same year (or in 1923) he entered the Skorodinsky Mikhailovsky monastery in Novgorod province. In 1927 he joined the Josephites and began to serve secretly in houses in the Pskov border zone. He collected signatures for the construction of a prayer house. On December 8, 1929 he was arrested in Novgorod in connection with the case of Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov), and on August 3, 1930 was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 to ten years in the camps. This sentence was later reduced to four years because of his invalid status. On September 24, 1930 he arrived in Solovki. In 1931 he was exiled to Kazakhstan. His term of exile there was meant to end in 1935. On September 9, 1937 he was arrested in Chimkent and cast into prison there. He was accused of "being a member of a counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen, an active leader of counter-revolutionary cells. The leader of the organization was [Metropolitan] Joseph Petrovykh and was under the direction of [Bishop Eugene] Kobranov, with whom Vladimirov was linked in everyday counter-revolutionary activity. He was a participant in a counter-revolutionary meeting conducted by Petrovykh and Kobranov to work out methods of developing counter-revolutionary activity among the dark masses of the population with the aim of preparing them for going against Soviet power at the moment that Fascist states attacked the Soviet Union." On November 19, 1937, at 24.00, he was shot with Metropolitans Cyril and Joseph and Bishop Eugene in Lisya balka near Chimkent, and buried there.

Priest Basil Vasilyevich Klimov. He was born on March 10, 1869 in Barnaul, Tomsk province into the family of a teacher. He went to a theological seminary and a higher pedagogical academy. In 1902 he was ordained to the priesthood, and served for eleven years in Biisk before being transferred to the village of Kashinskoye, Tomsk province. From 1907 to 1912 he was a deputy from Tomsk province to the Third State Duma. After the revolution he served in Omsk diocese. In 1930 he was arrested in the city of Uzen for "anti-Soviet agitation". He was imprisoned in Omsk, but was soon released. On June 23, 1937 he was arrested in Chimkent in Kazakhstan and accused of "counter-revolutionary activity" and being "the organizer of illegal church communities in Chimkent. He had negotiations with the renovationist pope Nikolayev on the liquidation of the schism, and on the instructions of [Bishop Eugene] Kobranov grouped the counter-revolutionary element, conducting counter-revolutionary agitation among believers against the enterprises of Soviet power, inciting the latter to resistance, giving instructions, especially to the women, about the education of children in a counter-revolutionary spirit, so that the youths should not enter the Komsomol. With counter-revolutionary aims he discredited Soviet medicine, provoking the believers (by miraculous healings)." In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 he was sentenced to death. On August 27 he was shot in Lisya balka, near Chimkent.

60. HOLY HIEROMARTYR JOASAPH, BISHOP OF CHISTOPOL
(+1937)

and those with him

Bishop Joasaph, in the world John Ioannovich (Ivan Ivanovich) Udalov, was born on April 5, 1886, in the pious family of a watchmaker in the city of Ufa. He finished his studies at the Ufa theological school (1900) and the Ufa theological seminary (1906). Wishing to become a priest, John Ioannovich entered the Kazan Theological Academy in August, 1906, and graduated with the degree of candidate of theology in 1910. On August 2, 1910, he was tonsured into the brotherhood of the monastery of the Theophany in Zhitomir by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia and Zhitomir, and on the next day was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Gabriel of Ostrog, the vicar-bishop of the diocese. On August 14, by a decree of the Holy Synod, he was appointed a teacher in the Zhitomir pastoral school in the name of John of Kronstadt. In the same year of 1910 Fr. Joasaph was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Anthony, whose influence helped his rapid rise up the ecclesiastical hierarchy. However, he was helped even more by his righteous life and firm confession of the Orthodox Faith.

On October 3 (or September 24 or in November), 1911 Fr. Joasaph was appointed assistant inspector of the Kazan Theological Academy at the request of the rector of the Academy, Bishop Alexis (Dorodnitsyn). He was appointed president of the Council of missionary courses. He then worked in the Tatar mission and with the yedinovertsy. On July 11, 1912, by another decree of the Holy Synod, he was appointed acting superior of the Kazan Spaso-Preobrazhensky monastery with promotion to the rank of igumen. With his fine mind and administrative flair and ability to get on with all kinds of people, the young igumen soon brought the community to a flourishing state. Here he began building a chapel in the Old Russian style over the relics of St. Ephraim, metropolitan of Kazan. (The chapel was destroyed to make way for a garage in 1972.)

In 1915 he was raised to the rank of archimandrite and appointed president of the Pedagogical Council and the Economic committee of the Kazan missionary courses.

In September, 1918 the Bolsheviki conquered Kazan. At that moment there were no bishops in the city: Metropolitan James (Pyatnitsky) of Kazan and Bishop Boris (Shipulin) had left with the Whites, while Bishop Anatolius of Chistopol, the rector of the Academy, was in Moscow at the All-Russian Church Council. It was at this critical moment that Archimandrite Joasaph took upon himself the burden of leading the church administration in the city. Arrests and shooting were taking place everywhere, and the majority of the churches were closed because of the departure of a significant proportion of the parish clergy - they were all terrified by the bestialities perpetrated by the Bolsheviki. Besides, almost all the members of the diocesan council were out

of the city at that moment. So Archimandrite Joasaph was forced to take on the administration of the Kazan diocese alone.

On September 20, while he was celebrating the Liturgy in the Spassky monastery, a red commander burst into the altar and declared that the Kremlin was to be closed to the public and declared a military citadel. The Kremlin churches were closed on September 22, and Archimandrite Joasaph decided to remove the most venerated holy objects. The authorities allowed this on condition that a list of those taking part in the removal should be submitted to them, and that no chanting take place during the transfer.

Finally, with the help of the nuns of the Monastery of the Mother of God, the relics of Saints Gurias and Barsanuphius, the icon of St. Barbara with part of her relics, the icons of the All-Merciful Saviour and other holy objects were transferred in a silent procession to the Kazan monastery.

The Bolsheviks then began looting the churches in the Kremlin and shooting several priests in the Kazan region. News of these shootings reached the diocesan council headed by Archimandrite Joasaph, and he inscribed the martyrs' names into the martyrologies and diptychs. These acts were confirmed by Bishop Anatolius, who returned to Kazan on September 26 and took over the leadership of the diocese.

With the approach of Kolchak's armies, the Kremlin was again opened to the public. Archimandrite Joasaph took a leading part in the restoration work which then began. And it was he who served the first service in the cathedral church on March 25, 1920 (old style).

In April, 1920, Patriarch Tikhon learned that Metropolitan James was not intending to return to Kazan, so he appointed Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov) to take his place. Metropolitan Cyril was met with great joy by the citizens of the city.

On July 12, Archimandrite Joasaph was consecrated bishop of Mamadysh, a vicariate of the Kazan diocese, by Metropolitan Cyril and Bishop Peter (Zverev) of Balakhinsk. He was appointed to live in the Kizichesky monastery and remained superior of the Spaso-Preobrazhensky monastery. In the same month he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison in Moscow, but was released on August 23 after promising not to leave the city.

On August 6 Metropolitan Cyril was arrested in his chambers and taken to Moscow. This greatly sorrowed the citizens of Kazan, but they were able to form links with Moscow and supply the metropolitan with all that he needed. The Orthodox in the region were now led by Bishops Anatolius and Joasaph, and on November 8 they consecrated Archimandrite Athanasius (Malinin), a lecturer in the Kazan Theological Academy, as Bishop of Cheboksary.

In the spring of 1921 the Cheka learned that the Theological Academy was still in existence under the guise of theological courses. So they arrested Bishop Anatolius, the rector of the Academy, and all the professors on the charge of organizing an unlawful academic organization. The professors were soon freed, but Bishop Anatolius was detained in prison in Moscow.

This left Bishop Joasaph once again in charge of the Kazan diocese. With the agreement of Metropolitan Cyril, with whom he maintained contact in the Taganka prison, he and Bishop Athanasius proceeded to consecrate Archimandrite Andronicus of the Seven Lakes Hermitage to the episcopate, transferring him to the monastery of St. John the Forerunner in Kazan. Moreover, in November he obtained the authorities' permission in effect to reopen the Kazan Theological Academy under the rectorship of Professor Protopriest Nicholas Petrov, the superior of the church of St. Barbara. The institute continued in existence for another two years until Bishop Joasaph's exile from Kazan in 1924.

Early in 1922 Metropolitan Cyril was released from prison and was met in Kazan by Bishops Joasaph and Athanasius and a large crowd of Orthodox, for whom Metropolitan Cyril already had the aura of a confessor of the faith.

In April, 1922 the Bolsheviks carried out a requisitioning of the valuables in the Kazan churches. Bishop Joasaph was able to save many valuable and ancient holy things from the Spassky monastery, but not the beautiful royal doors made of silver. In 1922, in connection with the confiscation of church valuables, **24 clergy of all ranks** were killed by the Bolsheviks in Kazan province.

On July 12, 1922 Bishop Joasaph was appointed Bishop of Chistopol, a vicariate of the Kazan diocese.

On August 21 Metropolitan Cyril was exiled to Ust-Sysolsk, after which a representative of the renovationist schism appeared in Kazan. Hoping to overcome their "differences" with the renovationists, Metropolitan Cyril and Bishop Joasaph did not stop the renovationists E. Sosuntsov and S. Spirin from joining the diocesan council on October 1. However, their attitude changed when they sent their "Archbishop" Alexis (Bazhenov) to Kazan to take the place of the exiled Metropolitan Cyril.

"Archbishop" Alexis arrived in Kazan on Great Thursday, April 5, 1923. First he occupied the metropolitan's residence, then he set off for the winter church of the monastery of the Mother of God and stood in the altar to the left of the royal doors. Vladyka Joasaph, who was celebrating the Liturgy and the washing of feet on that day, entered the church at "Glory...", vested and went into the altar during the little entrance. Here for the first time he saw Archbishop Alexis. He continued to serve the Liturgy, censuring Alexis at the appropriate times as a hierarch. During the singing of the communion verse, Alexis went up to Bishop Joasaph, called himself Archbishop of Kazan and

Svyazhsk and asked whether he would serve with him. Vladyka categorically refused, justly pointing out that such an appointment of a new hierarch in the place of the still-living Metropolitan Cyril contradicted the church canons. That was why he, as an Orthodox bishop and vicar of the Kazan diocese, being in obedience to Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Cyril, considered such a decision of the renovationist authorities to be uncanonical. The firmness of Vladyka Joasaph made a strong impression on Alexis, who had expected nothing of the sort.

Meanwhile, Protopriest N.M. Vinogradov and other priests of the Kazan monastery went up to seek the blessing of "Archbishop" Alexis. At the end of the Liturgy Vladyka Joasaph carried out the rite of the washing of feet. That was a truly tragic moment, when the priests sang the verses about the traitor Judas and themselves prepared to betray their hierarch. For when Bishop Joasaph, in imitation of Christ Who washed the feet of His disciples at the Mystical Supper, washed the feet of these pastors, they had already agreed to submit to the false hierarch Alexis. In the evening the renovationist archbishop was already reading the twelve Gospels in the monastery, while Vladyka was serving the all-night vigil in the Vladimir cathedral, where Fr. Peter Grachev had immediately invited him. Most of the parish priests recognized Alexis, and after Pascha the Orthodox Bishops Joasaph and Athanasius were already serving in secret, commemorating the most holy Patriarch and Metropolitan Cyril. After Bishop Joasaph left the diocesan council, it became completely renovationist, and immediately reports were sent to the GPU denouncing him as an "old churchman, counter-revolutionary and ardent Tikhonite", who was not only anti-renovationist but also anti-Soviet.

Only two churches remained faithful to Orthodoxy in Kazan - the Pokrov church, where Fr. Alexander Gavrilov served, and the Peter and Paul cathedral, where Fr. Alexander's father-in-law, Protopriest Andrew Bogolyubov, served. Also faithful to Orthodoxy at this time were Hieromonk Theophanes (Yelansky) of the Saviour cathedral in the Kremlin, several academically trained disciples of Metropolitan Cyril from the monastery of St. John the Forerunner: Igumen Pitirim (Krylov), Hieromonks John (Shirokov) and Paul, and Hierodeacon Seraphim (Shamshev), the nuns of the Raithu and Seven Lakes Hermitages and the St. Theodore convent, and some of the nuns of the Sviyazhsk monastery. By contrast with the parish clergy, the laity of Kazan refused to recognize Alexis. They appealed to him, as to a senior hierarch and a professor of the Academy, to return to the True Church, but all in vain. He began to serve in the parish churches.

On the night of May 25 to 26, on the eve of Alexis' first visit to the church of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the whole city was filled with notices stuck to houses and telegraph posts declaring that Alexis was a wolf in sheep's clothing and appealing to the citizens of Kazan not to accept him. Alexis then wrote to the renovationist "Metropolitan" Eudocimus: "I am personally beginning to regret that I came to Kazan. Since the council negative reactions to me, as to the usurper of Cyril's see, have increased... As long as Bishops Joasaph and

Athanasius live here, I supposed that we shall not be able to create a single vicariate..."

Alexis also complained that the Soviet authorities were not helping him enough against his opponents. However, when, on May 24, the renovationist diocesan council petitioned the authorities for the removal of Igumen Pitirim, Hieromonk John, Hierodeacon Seraphim and Hieromonk Theophanes, the authorities responded by arresting them on June 14 for writing and spreading anti-renovationist proclamations and for maintaining links with Metropolitan Cyril in Ust-Sysolsk. A report to the GPU put the real reasons for the arrests as follows: "The whole of this Black Hundreds company headed by Archbishop Joasaph is the headquarters of every possible kind of counter-revolutionary intrigues. After them trudge all of the reactionary clergy and the believing masses, which is to the highest degree dangerous from a political point of view." It is interesting that Bishop Joasaph is named "archbishop" in this document; this showed how great was his authority among the believers.

Bishop Joasaph was for a long time Metropolitan Cyril's deputy in the Kazan region, and in the opinion of the Kazan renovationists he was "the undeclared administrator of the whole of the Kazan, Mari and Chuvash regions". The victory of the Orthodox over the renovationists in the Kazan region was in large part owing to him. Thus it was through Vladyka Joasaph's exhortations and his own sermons that Protopriest Theophanes converted almost the whole of the city of Yelabuga (his native town, where his father was protopriest in the Pokrov church) from renovationism to Orthodoxy. Again, when Bishop Andronicus was summoned to the renovationist diocesan council to explain his refusal to accept them, he said: "I don't want to separate from Bishop Joasaph." From 1923, according to one source, Bishop Joasaph was a member of the strictly anti-renovationist (and later, anti-sergianist) "Danilovtsy" and "Andrewite" groups, led by Archbishops Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) and Andrew (Ukhtomsky) respectively.

On June 30, the arrested monks were released; all of them had conducted themselves bravely under interrogation, and none of them said a word against Bishop Joasaph. The position of the renovationists was further weakened when Patriarch Tikhon was released from prison and issued his anathema against them in July. On July 17 an assembly of all the believers of the parish churches of Kazan was held in the main cathedral. It was organized by the circle of the zealots of Orthodoxy, led by the Academy Professor Plato Ivanovich Ivanov and the 28-year-old lawyer Alexander Sergeyeovich Kozhevnikov, who were trusted followers of Bishop Joasaph. At the meeting it was resolved: "The community considers that the only lawful, canonical authority in the Kazan diocese is the deputy of Metropolitan Cyril, Bishop Joasaph of Chistopol..."

On July 19 about twenty of Bishop Joasaph's closest friends among the clergy and laity met in his flat. From 7 to 11 o'clock the new situation of the Church was discussed, and a rite of repentance was worked out for those returning from the renovationist heresy to Orthodoxy. Then, the next day, which was the

eve of the feast of the Kazan icon, Bishop Joasaph served the first open service in the Spaso-Preobrazhensky monastery together with the clergy who had been faithful to Orthodoxy during the persecution. Many people attended the triumphant service, during which flowers were strewn under the feet of the confessing clergy. Similarly triumphant services were served by Bishop Athanasius in the Theophany church and Bishop Andronicus in the monastery of St. John the Forerunner.

During the next two or three days almost all the renovationist clergy offered repentance for their sin and were received back into the Church by Bishop Joasaph. At the insistence of the laity, Bishop Joasaph served a lesser blessing of the waters in those churches which had been defiled by the services of "Archbishop" Alexis. When the main cathedral was blessed, the people rejoiced and wept. Alexis immediately ran to complain to the GPU. The last of all to repent were the priests of the monastery of the Mother of God, who were particularly compromised before the citizens of Kazan. The four of them came to Vladyka and were accepted benevolently, with the promise not to humiliate them in front of the diocese; and on July 21 Vladyka was already serving in their monastery.

The local GPU, annoyed at the defeat of the renovationists but not having clear instructions about what to do from the Moscow authorities, arrested Plato Ivanov and Alexander Kozhevnikov on the basis of denunciations by secret GPU agents who had been present at the parochial assembly.

After Patriarch Tikhon had repented of his previous anti-Soviet activities, Bishop Joasaph was in the difficult position of having to explain his own position to the GPU. (After all, it was said, if the Patriarch had repented, then his followers should also repent). He also wanted to help bring about the release of Ivanov and Kozhevnikov. So he composed an "address to the clergy and laity of the Kazan diocese", in which he said: "Insofar as I, as a religious follower of Patriarch Tikhon, in the conditions of life in our diocese in recent times have, by force of circumstances, been linked to the concept of 'Tikhonism', I shall with all the strength of my moral authority stand on guard for the practical realization of the [apolitical] direction of church activity that I have mentioned above".

This was considered enough by the GPU, and within a month Ivanov and Kovezhnikov were released.

On September 15 (NS) the authorities obtained Bishop Joasaph's signature to a statement that he would not leave the bounds of Kazan. But this did not prevent him blessing monks and nuns from the Kazan monasteries (who numbered more than 150 people) to go to the villages with sermons against the renovationist heresy. And he sent to the Patriarch a list of clergy and monastics petitioning that they be awarded for "firmly witnessing their devotion to the Orthodox Church", including: Protopriest Andrew Bogolyubov of the Peter and Paul cathedral; Protopriest Paul Mansurovsky from the village of

Nikolsky, the only person to come out openly against the renovationists in the Arsky canton; the priest Fr. Anatolius Romanovsky of the Annunciation church in Svyazhsk, who already in 1922 had been summoned to the authorities with Archimandrite Ephraim for teaching children the Law of God; and monks from the St. John, Raithu and Seven Lakes monasteries.

At the end of November Archimandrite Pitirim, Hieromonks John and Theophanes and Hierodeacon Seraphim were again arrested and sent to Solovki for three years. In January, 1924 Plato Ivanov and Protopriest Alexander Gavrilov of the Georgian church were exiled to Tashkent. And in March Alexander Kozhevnikov was sent to Moscow and imprisoned in the Taganka prison.

In December, 1923, the GPU intercepted some correspondence from Patriarch Tikhon to Bishop Joasaph about the awards he had asked for and other administrative matters and banned him from serving on the basis of the fact that "although he does not have permission from the civil authorities to organize a diocesan administration, he in fact rules the diocese". The nominal administration of the diocese now passed to Bishop Athanasius, although Bishop Joasaph did not cease to serve in secret and in fact remained at the helm of the diocese. But the GPU forbade Bishop Athanasius to perform any ordinations.

At the end of February, 1924, "Archbishop" Alexis consecrated some married priests as "Bishops" of Chistopol and Cheboksary - the sees occupied by Bishops Joasaph and Athanasius. So, on March 16 (OS), the Sunday of Orthodoxy, Bishops Joasaph and Athanasius, accompanied by a multitude of priests, deacons and laity, delivered these new false bishops to anathema in the monastery of St. John the Forerunner. By March 23, Tuchkov himself had been informed of the news, and on April 20, 1924 Bishop Joasaph was summoned to the GPU.

On being asked why a bishop should work in the diocesan council and then leave it, Vladyka replied: "My agreement to work in the diocesan administration as a ruling bishop was dictated by my succession from Metropolitan Cyril and the promise of the diocesan administration not to introduce any church reforms before the Council and not to infringe my hierarchical rights in matters of church ritual... My departure from the diocesan administration took place not for political reasons, but because a new hierarch was appointed in Kazan and in connection with this I was retired. At the given time in political and ecclesiastical matters I share Tikhon's point of view as expressed in his appeals published up to this time..."

With regard to his services, Vladyka said: "I started to serve after the release of Patriarch Tikhon, since in this release I saw Moscow's permission for the existence of the Orthodox, but not of the renovationist hierarchy..." Vladyka denied that his struggle against renovationism in Kazan was political, for "every interference of the Church in the civil political struggle is undoubtedly

incompatible with the mission of the Church. In this struggle she will be turned into an ordinary institution and will cease to be the highest impartial criterion of the life of man..." Confirming his conviction that the only canonical head of the Russian Orthodox Church was Patriarch Tikhon, Vladyka remarked: "I would like now, as in the past, to see in the person of my Patriarch an exclusively spiritual leader, directing the believers in their spiritual life..." As a man, Vladyka Joasaph could not agree with certain of the decisions of the Patriarch, but as an Orthodox hierarch and a monk he always recognized his Holiness' rights and followed the decrees of his ecclesiastical authority, which remained for him incontestable.

On April 30 (OS), the authorities summoned Vladyka from Kazan to Moscow. On the day of his departure Vladyka served the Liturgy in the church of St. Nicholas the Warrior. The deacon, Fr. Maximus Mikhailov, could not pronounce the exclamations from emotion, and the service was several times interrupted because of the general weeping. Patriarch Tikhon was commemorated, although by this time his commemoration was again forbidden. At midnight Vladyka Joasaph left Kazan station accompanied by a multitude of believers.

On arriving in Moscow, Bishop Joasaph went straight to the Patriarch, whom he had never met, in the Donskoy monastery. On May 16, 1924 he presented himself to the GPU, and on the next day was cast into Butyrki prison on the basis of article 73. However, not finding anything to accuse him of, they released him on August 24 after securing his signature to a document declaring that he would not leave the city. He went to live in the Danilov monastery.

On April 12, 1925 Bishop Joasaph signed the act which transferred the leadership of the Church to Metropolitan Peter.

In Moscow, Vladyka Joasaph became the trusted representative of Metropolitan Peter and locum tenens of the patriarchal throne while living in the Danilov monastery. He took part in Metropolitan Peter's negotiations with the authorities concerning the organization of a Holy Synod, and warned the metropolitan in good time about the so-called Gregorian bishops. In the autumn of 1925 he composed a project declaration concerning the relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet State.

However, on November 18, 1925 he was arrested in the Danilov monastery in connection with the affair of Metropolitan Peter and was interned in the inner prison of the OGPU. On May 21, 1926, the OGPU exiled him to Turukhansk for three years on the basis of article 68 (69). On June 17, 1926 he was sent to Turukhansk region, arriving there in August.

When Metropolitan Sergius published his notorious declaration in July, 1927, Bishop Joasaph entered into opposition to him, and was retired by him. In August, 1927 Vladyka Joasaph renewed his correspondence with

Metropolitan Cyril, who was living in the same region. According to one source, in 1928 Vladyka Joasaph became bishop of Birsk.

On the way back from his three-year exile, in the summer of 1929, he stopped for two months in Yeniseisk. There he was ordered to live in one fixed domicile. He chose the town of Kozmodemyansk in the Mari republic, where he settled towards the end of 1929.

Once Bishop Barsanuphius of Spassky, who recognized Metropolitan Sergius, invited Vladyka Joasaph to pray with him, to which Vladyka replied:

"No, you pray without me for Soviet power."

Bishop Barsanuphius said:

"But it's not I, it's the deacon who prays for it..."

While living in Kozmodemyansk, Bishop Joasaph did not break his ties with Kazan, and especially with the nuns there: Vitalia, Kaleria, Agrippina, Veronica (Busygina) and others went at various times to Metropolitan Cyril with assignments from him. They all brought food, letters and other things to Metropolitan Cyril, Archimandrite Alexander (the last superior of the Seven-Lakes desert) and many other exiled pastors and archpastors. And they organized meals for the arrested clergy languishing in the prisons of Kazan. Most of these nuns perished towards the end of the 1930s.

In August, 1930, there began the first arrests of people for belonging to the True Orthodox Church. These included the following teachers at the Kazan Theological Academy: Protopriest Nicholas V. Petrov, V.I. Nesmelov, M.N. Vasilevsky, E.Y. Polyansky, I.M. Pokrovsky; Bishop Nectarius (Trezvinsky), the priests Fathers Nicholas Troitsky, James Galakhov, Andrew Bogolyubov, Nicholas Dyagilev, Sergius Vorontsov and Eulampius Edemsky-Sovyezemtsev; the nuns of the closed Kazan monasteries, and laymen - 33 people in all.

On December 1, 1930 Bishop Joasaph was arrested in a group case of churchmen and cast into the OGPU isolator in Kazan for further interrogation. He behaved with great courage during his interrogations and betrayed nobody even by a single word. With regard to his adherence to Metropolitan Cyril and separation from Metropolitan Sergius he said: "My attitude to the differences between Metropolitan Cyril and Metropolitan Sergius on the question by the latter of a Synod around himself is as follows. Metropolitan Cyril, as one of the most senior hierarchs, who was appointed by Patriarch Tikhon as his first deputy after his death, has the right to demand that Metropolitan Sergius give him documentary proof of his authority to convene such a Synod, and in the absence of such proof to place the competency of this Synod in question. He has the right to demand that this quarrel be referred to Metropolitan Peter, who is still alive and retains the privileges of the locum tenancy. This right of appeal

to the head of the Church is guaranteed by many church canons. Therefore the attempt by Metropolitan Sergius to resolve the conflict that has risen between them on his own, his refusal to refer the quarrel to Metropolitan Peter and his imposition upon Metropolitan Cyril of repressive measures in the form of sending him into retirement, is in my opinion uncanonical and should be annulled... Metropolitan Sergius' usurpation of rights that do not belong to him, or which are, in any case, dubious until their authoritative clarification, the fact that he had no difficulty in imposing repressive measures upon Metropolitan Cyril and others (I stress that in his reply Metropolitan Cyril sharply and decisively rejects the idea that his disagreements are politically motivated and gives reasons for keeping to a strictly ecclesiastical evaluation of this quarrel), his accusing all the clergy who are serving terms of punishment, including, that is, myself, of political crimes - all this has forced me until the end of my term of exile (November, 1931) to distance myself from Metropolitan Sergius without separating from him. If I were to receive freedom of movement, then by means of an exchange of thoughts with Metropolitan Sergius it is possible that I would change my present point of view on much that I have said just now. With regard to the 'Interview' Metropolitan Sergius has given in the newspapers, my position is this: while welcoming his desire by all available means to avert the new human war that is being prepared and dispel many of the incorrect opinions that have been formed about our life, I was sorry that Metropolitan Sergius did not find the proper tone for his interview and did not avoid or foresee objections." "In my personal relations with Soviet power, I do not recall any particular manifestations of hostility towards myself. During my most difficult trials in exile, when I had to go hungry, freeze and wander around as a sick man with a weak heart in the filth in prisons, there were, of course, minutes when I felt bitter in the consciousness of my innocence. But this was not my main feeling."

On January 5, 1932, Vladyka Joasaph was convicted of "heading and being in de facto control of the Kazan church-monarchist organization, remaining an active worker in it after its transformation into a branch of the All-Union centre of the counter-revolutionary monarchist organization, the True Orthodox Church". In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, he was sentenced to three years in the camps. He was sent to the Osinnikov section of Sibltag, the mines of Aralichev near Kemerovo (Kuznetsk basin), where he was tortured, several times shorn and had to drag wheelbarrows full of coal for several years.

In May, 1933 Bishop Joasaph was arrested for being "a participant in the church-monarchist counter-revolutionary group, the True Orthodox Church". On January 28, 1934, two years were added to Bishop Joasaph's sentence in accordance with article 58-11 of the criminal code for supposedly participating in a "church-monarchical group" in the camp, recruiting new members, spreading "provocative rumours about the position of the Church in the USSR" and conducting work among the prisoners "to disrupt the camp and blow up the camp's work". He was transferred to a punishment isolator.

In 1936 (1935) Vladyka Joasaph was released and returned from the camps to Kazan. He lived in the outskirts of the city with his sick mother, and served fourteen people, including one protopriest and three nuns, in the cemetery church dedicated to SS. Theodore and his sons David and Constantine. His sufferings in the prisons and camps had not broken his faith. He had not renounced Christ or separated from Metropolitan Cyril, with whom, according to one report, he had been for a time in the same prison or camp.

In the city, two diocesan councils, one renovationist and the other sergianist, were in control of the churches. Vladyka continued not to recognize the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and remained a bishop in retirement. He served only rarely in the church of the Yaroslavl wonderworkers in Arsky cemetery, and then only pannikhidas. Those close to him consisted mainly of clergy who were exiled or in sympathy with him. Also, the peasants of the Tatar and Chuvash republics, and the Mari region, came to the confessor bishop for advice and archpastoral instruction. However, the majority of the parish clergy were afraid to visit him, and if they visited him, it was in secret.

In April, 1936, when they began to destroy the ancient memorials and crosses, Vladyka angrily noted: "The people that does not care for its antiquities is good for nothing." And, after a short silence, he added: "However, Joseph Vissarionovich [Stalin] has nothing more to destroy, so the cemetery is his last support."

Once, when asked what he thought of Soviet power, he said: "One has to have been in the concentration camps to judge about Soviet power..."

Vladyka had very little to live on. But his spiritual children, monks and nuns from the destroyed monasteries of the region, continued to give him and his mother food and clothing, as they had helped his mother during his period in the camps. Vladyka kept very few of these gifts for himself, sending a significant part through trusted people to Metropolitan Cyril (from whom a letter to Vladyka dated September, 1936 has been preserved), to the exiled clergy and to the priests who were languishing in Kazan prison. Moreover, he often gave refuge in his house at 31 Tikhomirova street, flat 2, to people who were persecuted for their confession of the Orthodox Faith.

In August, 1937, an agent of the NKVD reported that Bishop Joasaph was persuading people not to go to Metropolitan Sergius' churches, and was serving pannikhidas in the cemetery church of SS. Theodore, Constantine and David. On November 30 (29) he was arrested at the bedside of his dying mother for "organizing a counter-revolutionary church underground". Together with Protopriest Nicholas Troitsky, Nuns Eudocia (Dvinskikh) and Stepanida (Makarova) of the destroyed monastery of the Mother of God and several people among those closest to him, he was thrown into the inner prison of the NKVD in Kazan.

The NKVD accused Vladyka, on the basis of confessions extorted from tortured prisoners, of organizing a counter-revolutionary underground organization, of slandering the Church in the USSR and Stalin himself, and of sympathies with Fascism and the enemies of the people Trotsky, Tukhachevsky, etc. Vladyka courageously rejected all the charges against him. On November 29, a troika condemned Vladyka Joasaph and Fr. Nicholas to execution by shooting, and the nuns Eudocia and Stepanida to ten years' hard labour. At 20.35 on December 2, 1937, the feast of St. Joasaph, the prince of India, Bishop Joasaph was shot in the Kazan inner prison.

61. HIEROMARTYR ALEXIS, BISHOP OF VORONEZH (+1937)

Bishop Alexis, in the world Alexander (in his autobiography – Semyon Vasilyevich Buy, was born in the village of Ksyenyevka (or Nikolayevsky), Novo-Kuskovskaya *volost*, Tobolsk (or Tomsk) province, in 1892 into a peasant family that had emigrated to Siberia from Vitebsk province even before the time of Stolypin. In his words, “I finished the parish and theological school in Tomsk, and, having no means to continue my education, I entered a church-parish school attached to the Krasnoyarsk Znamensky men’s monastery, where I became chief clerk”. While in the monastery, Alexander Vasilyevich studied by correspondence at the theological seminary in Krasnoyarsk, and in 1915 passed his examinations in the fourth class. However, he could not continue his studies because of a lack of money. At the beginning of September, 1915 he became cell-attendant in the Hierarchical House in Tomsk and with the blessing of Archbishop Anatolius (Kamensky) was accepted at the local seminary and was able to finish the classes and receive an intermediate-level theological education. On September 29, 1915 he was tonsured into monasticism in the Hierarchical House with the name Alexis. On October 11, 1915 he was ordained to the diaconate, and was placed in charge of the chancellery of the Archbishop of Tomsk and Irkutsk. On April 4, 1917 he was ordained to the priesthood, and continued to work in the chancellery. He remained with the bishop until 1918, when he was appointed as teacher of Holy Scripture in the missionary-catechetical school in Biisk, Tomsk province. For a whole year he also served as inspector of the school. In the winter (or autumn) of 1919 he returned to Tomsk and became the private secretary of Archbishop Anatolius, and stayed with him until the middle of 1920, after which he moved to Irkutsk, entered the Prince Vladimir men’s monastery. On June 27, 1922 he was appointed superior of the community. However, the Bolsheviks soon closed the monastery and in the autumn of 1922 he was arrested for “counter-revolutionary activity”. After three months he was released and was summoned to Moscow.

Fr. Alexis was tall and thin, an inspired preacher, a great faster and a true monk. He celebrated the Divine services with great concentration.

On April 21, 1923 Fr. Alexis was received into the Samara diocese, which for several months had been deprived of its ruling archpastor, Archbishop Anatolius (Grisiuk), who was in prison. He was appointed superior of the Alexander Nevsky monastery near Bugulma, where the famous icon “It is meet” was venerated (according to one source, he was appointed superior on June 27, 1922). He was raised to the rank of archimandrite, and Vladyka Anatolius wanted to make him his vicar in Bugulma. According to one source, he was consecrated Bishop of Bugulma on December 19, 1923.

However, according to other sources, On December 19 / January 1, 1923/24, Fr. Alexis was consecrated bishop of Veliga, a vicariate of the Polotsk diocese in Ufa by Bishop John (Poyarkov) of Davlekanovsky, Mark (Bogoliubov) of

Sterlitamak and Benjamin (Frolov) of Baikin in Ufa. The ordination was later recognized by Patriarch Tikhon. Very soon after his consecration he went to Moscow, and on March 13 (or July 19) he was appointed Bishop of Petropavlovsk, a vicariate of the Omsk diocese. After several months he was transferred to the see of Semipalatinsk, a vicariate of the same diocese. On April 12, 1925 he was in Moscow, and signed the act transferring higher ecclesiastical power to Metropolitan Peter. Later in 1925, according to one source, he was appointed bishop of Akmolinsk and then bishop of Vitebsk. In October, 1925 he was appointed bishop of Semipalatinsk, temporarily administering the Yekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk) diocese, but did not arrive at his see. In the same month, however, according to another source, he was appointed Bishop of Veliga and temporary administrator of the Vitebsk diocese.

In February, 1926 he was appointed bishop of Ostrog, a vicariate of the Voronezh diocese. That spring he was arrested, sent to Moscow and cast into Butyrki prison. After six months he was released. Later in 1926, he became bishop of Kozlov (Michurinsk) and the superior of a monastery in the town. There are some indications that in 1926-27 he became bishop, first of Shatsk, a vicariate of the Tambov diocese, and then, from December, 1926, of Urazovsk, a vicariate of the Voronezh diocese. According to another source, however, he returned to the diocese of Kozlov.

According to some sources, Bishop Alexis was appointed a candidate for temporarily fulfilling the duties of deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens by Archbishop Seraphim (Samoilovich).

According to Bishop Alexis himself, however, on February 16/29 (or March 1), 1927, with the blessing of Archbishop Seraphim, deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens, he became temporary administrator of the Church of Voronezh while remaining at the same time bishop of the Kozlov district. This happened after Archbishop Peter (Zverev) of Voronezh was arrested and imprisoned by the Bolsheviki in November, 1926, which encouraged the renovationists in the city, led by "Metropolitan" Cornelius (Popov) and "Bishop" Zacharius (Popov) of Ostrog, to rear their heads again. Soon Bishop Alexis found himself the target of a campaign by the OGPU, who undoubtedly planted stooges in his entourage. In the autumn he moved to Voronezh, and in December was appointed Bishop of Urazovsk – but did not accept the appointment.

On January 9, 1928 Bishop Alexis joined the True Orthodox Church under Metropolitan Joseph, and on January 22 he wrote an epistle to the clergy and laity of the Voronezh diocese concerning his separation from Metropolitan Sergius, in which he said: "By his actions contrary to the spirit of Orthodoxy, Metropolitan Sergius has torn himself away from unity with the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and lost the right to lead the Russian Church... Being zealous for the glory of God and wishing to put a bound to further encroachments by Metropolitan Sergius on the integrity and inviolability of the Holy Canons and the decrees of Church order and to preserve without stain canonical communion with our lawful Head, the Patriarchal Locum Tenens his

Eminence Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa I elect his Eminence Joseph (Petrovykh) as my highest spiritual leader... His Eminence Metropolitan Joseph and those hierarchs who are of like mind with him have condemned the actions of Sergius and deprived him of communion with themselves."

The epistle was signed by ten representatives of the Voronezh clergy, including Archpriests John Andreyevsky, Nicholas Piskanovsky, Peter Novosiltsev, Elijah Pirozhenko, Paul Smirnsky, Sergius Gortinsky, Alexander Philippenko, John Stelbin-Kamensky and V.P. Chilikin. It was then taken by Bishop Alexis' cell-attendant, the priest Stepan Stepanov, to Metropolitan Joseph, and received his approval.

Five days later, on January 27, and again on April 11, Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod placed Bishop Alexis under ban "for schismatic activity". He rejected these bans. Then the sergianist bishop of Voronezh, Vladimir (Bogucharsky), announced the "fall" of Bishop Alexis. In April, Metropolitan Sergius entrusted the Voronezh diocese to Archbishop Macarius (Zvezdov) of Smolensk. However, the majority of the Voronezh flock, led by the above-named priests, refused to follow the sergianists.

The main centre of the activity of the True Orthodox Christians was the men's Alexeyev Akatov monastery in Voronezh together with the women's Pokrov Devichi monastery, and, in the first half of 1928, the Voznesenskaya and Pyatnitskaya (Nativity of the Mother of God) churches. In all, about 80 parishes separated from Metropolitan Sergius in the Voronezh diocese, mainly in the Ostrog, Usmansky and Borisoglebsk districts.

In the spring and summer of 1928 the movement of the True Orthodox Christians spread to other eparchies in the Central Black Earth region. On March 17, there arrived in Voronezh an emissary of the clergy of the town of Yelets, the priest Fr. Sergius Butuzov. He met Bishop Alexis and copied his Josephite appeals and epistles. On returning to Yelets, he placed his parish of the St. Vladimir church under the omophorion of Bishop Alexis. When the second priest left the church, Bishop Alexis sent Igumen Pitirim (Shumskikh) to support Fr. Sergius. He helped organize a monastic community attached to the St. Vladimir church; this was later transferred to the Yelets Znamensky monastery, which had left Metropolitan Sergius.

Another "Buyevtsy" stronghold was the Zadonsk district, where the leading figure was Archimandrite Nicander (Sturov). In September, 1928, Bishop Alexis himself went to Zadonsk and succeeded in consolidating the True Church there. In the Kozlov (Michurinsk) district, where Bishop Alexis had previously served, the St. Nicetas church in the town of Kozlov joined the True Orthodox Church, as did the church in the village of Izberdey. In Tambov, the cemetery church of Saints Peter and Paul joined the True Orthodox Church. In the spring and summer of 1928, a significant proportion of the parishes of the Staro-Oskolsky district, led by the dean, Archpriest Athanasius Shigalev, joined Bishop Alexis, as did the churches in the villages of Dronovo and

Terebrino in the Belgorod district, and others in the Kursk district. In all, the "Buyevtsy" branch of the True Orthodox Church encompassed about 40 districts of the Central Black Earth region.

On March 18, 1928, Bishop Alexis was visited by **Bishop Barlaam** (Lazarenko) of Maikop in the North Caucasus, who was living illegally in the mountains while leading the anti-sergianist Christians of the Maikop, Black Sea and Armavir districts. On his way to Voronezh, Bishop Barlaam had united a whole series of parishes in the Poltava, Kharkov and South Kursk provinces, and in particular a group in the Sumy district led by **Priest Basil Podgorny**. Since Bishop Barlaam was not able to lead these parishes himself, he handed them over to the spiritual direction of Bishop Alexis. Moreover, after getting to know Bishop Alexis, he decided to put himself, as well, under his spiritual direction. In this way a large swathe of parishes in the South of Russia came under the omophorion of Bishop Alexis.

In May, 1928, there was a meeting in the flat of Protopriest Theodore Andreyev in Petrograd attended by Bishop Demetrius of Gdov, Bishop Alexis, the Muscovite Protopriest Nicholas Dulov and Professor Michael Novoselov. "The most important result of the conference," writes M.V. Shkarovsky, "was the distribution of spheres of influence. Vladyka Demetrius entrusted Bishop Alexis with administering the whole of the south of Russia and the Ukraine, including the parishes he himself had looked after earlier. His motive for this was their distance from Petrograd. The bishop of Kozlov [Alexis] completely recognized the leadership of Bishop Demetrius and resolved all thorny questions with him."

The news of this event, in the summer of 1928, led to a mass movement of sergianist parishes in the Ukraine and the South of Russia to Bishop Alexis: in the town of Yelizavettgrad (Zinovievsk), Kupyansky district, the town of Yeisk, various districts of the Kuban, etc. Bishop Alexis himself moved to Yelets in Orel province, from where he administered his parishes in the Ukraine and the South of Russia, carrying out the duties of Exarch of the Ukraine.

The rapid growth of the True Orthodox Church greatly worried the authorities. So, at the beginning of May, 1928, the OGPU forbade Bishop Alexis from living in Voronezh, and on May 20, immediately after his trip to Petrograd, he moved to Yelets, into the flat of Fr. Sergius Butuzov.

Fr. Sergius Butuzov witnessed during his interrogation in 1930: "After Bishop Alexis moved to Yelets, there was a wave of people uniting with him. My flat became a kind of wanderers' hostel, since every day two or three priests spent the night there. Most of these people came from Sumsk district, and Bishop Alexis ordained some tens of priests for that district."

Bishop Alexis sent Fr. Sergius to the Voznesensky church in Voronezh, but he was not accepted there because the church had already been occupied by the sergianists. So on January 2, 1929, Fr. Sergius became the superior of the

church in the village of Nizhny Iskorets, Liskinsky region. On July 21, 1929, Fr. Sergius Butuzov was arrested in Yeltz and was exiled on September 12, although he had been released from prison only one-and-a-half weeks earlier.

Bishop Alexis appointed as his representative in Voronezh the eparchial dean, Archpriest Alexander Palitsyn, and as his assistant - **Fr. John Steblin-Kamensky**. At the end of 1928 Fr. Alexander died, and Bishop Alexis appointed Fr. John as eparchial dean in his place.

In the course of 1928 many leaders of the True Orthodox Church were arrested and exiled from the region - Fr. Nicholas Piskanovsky, Fr. Peter Novoseltsev, Fr. Elijah Pirozhenko, Fr. Chikilin, and, at the beginning of 1929, Fr. John Andreyevsky. When Bishop Alexis heard of Fr. John's arrest, he came the same day to the church where the priest had been serving and comforted his grieving flock. After returning from exile in Central Asia, Fr. John went underground and, as we shall see, continued the traditions of the True Orthodox Church for several more years.

The "Buyevtsy" had close and constant relations with the Josephites in Moscow and Petrograd. This was achieved mainly through Protopriest Nicholas Dulov and Fr. Stephen Stepanov. The latter met Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov) several times in September, 1928, and went with him to Taitsy, near Petrograd, where a secret store of Josephite literature was held. This literature spread to the Central Black Earth region, where it was gratefully received and multiplied by the peasants. Particular success was enjoyed by the brochure "What an Orthodox Christian must know".

In the spring of 1929 fresh repressive measures were undertaken by the authorities, some of them in connection with the just beginning collectivization campaign. On the night from March 6 to 7, 1929, Bishop Alexis was arrested in Yelets for being "the organizer of the counter-revolutionary monarchist organizations of the 'Buyevtsy'". During the search he was described as behaving "boldly and provocatively". He was sent to Moscow in a special convoy and was cast into Butyrki prison. On May 17 he was sentenced to three years in the camps in accordance with article 58-10 of the criminal code, and was sent to Solovki, arriving there on June 9. There he took part in catacomb services. He never returned to his flock.

After the arrest of Bishop Alexis, Metropolitan Sergius appointed Archbishop Zacharius (Lobov) as head of the Voronezh diocese. However, the clergy did not accept him, but rather considered him as no better than a renovationist, and a secret college of priests loyal to Bishop Alexis was formed to administer the diocese. This college consisted of Archpriest John Steblin-Kamensky (the president), the priests Sergius Gortinsky, Eugene Marchevsky and John Zhidyayev, and Archimandrite Ignatius (Biryukov), the diocese's spiritual father and the de facto leader of the diocese's monastics. On May 2, the authorities closed the church of the Pokrov Devichi monastery - Abbess Dorogavtseva died at the same time. Many thousands of people attended her

funeral on May 4, when Fr. John gave a flaming speech in which he said that the abbess had been a victim of the contemporary persecution against the Church. Fr. John had been under constant observation since March, and on May 19 he was arrested and sent for three years to Solovki. This was a heavy blow, but the activities of the "Buyevtsy" did not come to an end. The leadership of the secret college was assumed by Fr. Sergius Gortinsky, and the superior of the church of the Alexeyev monastery, Fr. Theodore Yakovlev, was enrolled as a member. Relations were established with Bishop Alexis, who was at that time in the camps.

The Josephite college had a wide range of preacher-messengers in the diocese. The most important of them were Archimandrite Tikhon (Krechkov), Igumen Joseph (Yatsk), Hieromonk Melchisedek (Khukhryansky) and the laymen Polyakov, Kartsev and Karelsky.

The activities of the "Buyevtsy" were hindered by the lack of a bishop. In the beginning, after the arrest of Bishop Alexis, they were led between March and May, 1929 by Bishop Maximus (Zhizhilenko), who sent an epistle about this to Voronezh. In the "Buyevtsy" churches they began to commemorate Bishop Alexis in the ordinary services, and Archbishop Demetrius and Bishop Maximus - in the litany of fervent supplication.

However, on May 24 Bishop Maximus was also arrested. After this differences of opinion appeared among the Voronezh clergy. In July, most of the diocese began to be served by Bishop Joasaph (Popov) of Bakhmut and Donetsk, who lived in the town of Novomoskovsk. The diocesan spiritual father, **Archimandrite Ignatius (Biryukov)** "with the brotherhood" applied to come under his omophorion. But the leader of the Zadonsk district, **Archimandrite Nicander (Sturov)** made a corresponding application to Archbishop Demetrius and received his written agreement to administer the district. When Archimandrite Nicander went to Petrograd, Archbishop Demetrius offered that he accept consecration to the episcopate, but Fr. Nicander refused on grounds of illness. Archbishop Demetrius served the Zadonsk district until his own arrest in November, 1929. In July, **Igumen Pitirim (Shumskikh)** and **Hierodeacon Melchisedek** (Khukhryansky) came to him from Voronezh for ordination, but they were refused because of doubts concerning certain facts in their personal biographies. Then they went to Bishop Joasaph and were raised by him to the ranks of archimandrite and hieromonk, respectively.

Since Novomoskovsk was significantly nearer than Petrograd, the majority of the Voronezh clergy were forced willy-nilly to be served by Bishop Joasaph, even sometimes against their will. Thus Fr. Theodore Yakovlev spoke in favour of joining Archbishop Demetrius and corresponded with him, but in August he nevertheless agreed with the circular of Bishop Joasaph declaring that the affairs of the diocese would now be administered by himself and Fr. Sergius Gortinsky. Bishop Joasaph was considered the ruling bishop of Voronezh and de facto served the majority of the "Buyevtsy" until the massive arrests at the

beginning of 1930. Thus on March 5 the dean of Bobrovsky, Archpriest Alexander Archangelsky, sent him a letter asking him to appoint priests in six village churches of the district. On March 7, 1930, Bishop Joasaph wrote an epistle to the clergy and laity of the city of Tambov and sent it with a priest whom he had ordained, Fr. George Nikitin.

At first the activity of the little-known Bishop Joasaph aroused suspicions and fears in the Josephite leadership. According to one source, Archbishop Demetrius even considered the possibility of banning the Voronezh clergy who recognized him. However, this conflict was defused. From the camps Bishop Alexis transferred the administration of the diocese to Bishop Joasaph, which act was sanctioned by Archbishop Demetrius. But according to the witness of Fr. Sergius Butuzov, many Voronezh clergy still went to Archbishop Demetrius, who was "well known throughout Russia for his steadfastness in Orthodoxy".

Fr. Sergius himself received a proposal from Archbishop Demetrius that he accept a place under his leadership and on November 6, 1929 moved to Petrograd. Archbishop Demetrius wanted to send Fr. Sergius to Vyatka or Serpukhov, but the parishioners of the Moiseyevsky church at Porokhov succeeded in keeping him for their church. There he was arrested on March 19, 1930, in connection with the "Buyevtsy" affair.

The clouds gathered over the Voronezh Josephites throughout 1929. In the summer Fr. Sergius Gortinsky was arrested and accused of taking over the rights of the administration of the diocese, but there was not enough evidence and he was freed. Another member of the Josephite "college", Fr. John Zhidyaev, was arrested in August, was freed for a time, and then arrested again in December and sentenced to two years in prison on the trumped-up charge of 'stealing church property'.

The OGPU's main excuse for attacking the Buyevtsy was the unrest that took place in the countryside with the beginning of collectivization in 1929-30. This unrest was supposedly organized by an ecclesiastical-monarchist organization in the south of Russia lead by Bishop Alexis and coordinated in the Alexeyev monastery by periodical meetings of the Buyevtsy leadership. During one of these, in December, 1929, Fr. Theodore Yakovlev is reported to have said: "The clergy and believers are now suffering great violence at the hands of Soviet power. The churches are being closed, the priests are being arrested, and the peasants are being forcibly driven into the collective farms." Archimandrite Tikhon said that collectivization was a way of removing the peasants from their churches, which were then closed. (This is what in fact happened.) Igumen Joseph (Yatsk) is reported to have said: "Now the times of the Antichrist have arrived, so everything that Soviet power tried to impose upon the peasantry: collective farms, cooperatives, etc., should be rejected."

At the beginning of 1930 the Voronezh peasantry rebelled against forcible collectivization in several places. Thus in Ostrog district alone between January

4 and February 5 there were demonstrations in twenty villages: Nizhny Ikorets, Peskovatka, Kopanishche, Podserednoye, Platava, Kazatskoye, Uryv, Dyevitsa, Godlayevka, Troitskoye, Drakonovo, Mashkino, Badyeyevo, Selyavnoye and others. At the same time there were demonstrations in the neighbouring areas of Usmansky district, from where they moved to the Kozlov, Yelets, Belgorod and other districts, encompassing more than forty districts in all. The OGPU considered that these demonstrations took place under the influence of the "Buyevtsy".

On January 21-22, in Nizhny Ikorets, some hundreds of peasants, mainly women, destroyed the village soviet, tore down the red flag, tore up the portraits of the "leaders" and walked down the streets with a black flag, shouting: "Down with the collective farms! Down with the antichrist communists!" An active participant in this event was **Nun Macrina** (Maslovskaya), who said at her interrogation: "I preached Christ everywhere... [I urged] the citizens to struggle with the apostates from God, who are emissaries of the Antichrist, and [I urged] the peasants not to go into the collective farms because by going into the collectives they were giving their souls to the Antichrist, who would appear soon... In the village of Nizhny-Ikorets the believers do not go and will not go into the collective farm... In 1929 I went round many places and everywhere I preached against the communists..."

In February-March, 1930, the OGPU investigated 492 people in connection with these disturbances. The anti-Soviet organization called "The Flock" which they uncovered was supposedly made up of 22 leaders and 470 followers, including 4 officers, 8 noblemen, 33 traders, 8 policemen, 13 members of the "Union of the Russian people", 81 priests, 75 monastics, 210 kulaks, 24 middle peasants, and 2 beggars. 134 people were arrested, of whom some were freed, some had their cases referred to higher authorities and some died during the investigation (the violent methods used to extort confessions during the 1930s are well-known). One of the accused, **M.A. Vladytska**, was found in possession of photographs of Archbishop Peter (Zverev) and Bishop Alexis together with some notes about their fates. This was considered evidence of guilt.

On February 1 (or 20), 1930, Bishop Alexis was arrested in Solovki for spreading the "Epistle to the whole Church" of Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich, and together with Protopriests John Steblin-Kamensky and Nicholas Dulov was taken by convoy to Voronezh. From March 5 they were in the local prison. Bishop Alexis was interrogated by A.V. Kazansky several times, but without result. In his last protocol Bishop Alexis wrote in his own hand: "I do not plead guilty to anything."

Many of Bishop Alexis' followers were being arrested and condemned in the first "Buyevtsy" trial and shot in Voronezh at this time, and on July 28 he himself was sentenced to death. However, it was decided not to carry out the sentence against Bishop Alexis. Instead, he and Archpriest Nicholas Dulov, who had been broken by interrogators, were brought to trial in Moscow in

connection with the case of the All-Union Centre "True Orthodoxy" and in September, 1930 were cast into Butyrki prison. On September 3, 1931 Bishop Alexis was convicted of being "the leader of a regional branch of the All-Union counter-revolutionary organization, 'The True Orthodox Church' in the Central Black Earth province". He was also accused of "undermining the collectivization of village agriculture", of "having links with one of the leaders of the Centre, Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov), and other members of the Centre", and of "linking his counter-revolutionary activity with the leaders of other branches of the organization". In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 he was sentenced to death. However, this sentence was commuted to ten years in the Svir camps, where he arrived on October 3, 1931, being under constant surveillance.

Meanwhile, in June, 1931, the authorities had closed the Alexeyev Akatov monastery in Voronezh. Of the monks who still remained, some were arrested and others were dispersed. It seemed that this was the end of the "Buyevtsy". But after hiding for a time in the underground, the Voronezh Josephites again set to work in January, 1932. The initiators of the reestablishment of the "Buyevtsy" centre in Voronezh were **Hieromonk Bassian** (Dmitrievich Molodtskoy), from the former Alexeyev monastery, and **Nun Anatolia** (Sushkova), who had been arrested in 1929 and after serving her sentence in the Svirsk camp had returned to Voronezh in 1932. They chose the parish in the village of Uglyanets as the centre of their activity because it was situated in a remote wooded area but was at the same time not far from Voronezh.

Between April and August, they managed to establish links with Bishop Alexis in the Svir camp, where he was reported to enjoy the honour and respect of the prisoners, and especially the clergy. In April, 1932, Hieromonk Seraphim (Protopopov) went to him. In August of the same year, Hieromonk Bassian himself together with Hieromonk Seraphim went to meet him in the camp. During this meeting Bishop Alexis appointed the priest Basil Kravtsov, the superior of the Uglyanets church, as dean of the Voronezh diocese and indicated that they should continue to commemorate his name during the Divine services.

Hieromonk Bassian witnessed: "His Grace Vladyka Alexis blessed us for further difficult exploits in the defence and strengthening of True Orthodoxy, saying that we should continue our work and draw more people to our side, explaining and convincing them that Soviet power... does works that are pleasing only to the Antichrist and is hostile to the true Christian, and that the true Christian must not be troubled by Soviet power, but - the main thing - should not join the collective farms."

The reconstituted "Buyevtsy" diocesan centre quickly united 27 groups - in Voronezh, Kozlov and 25 villages, in the majority of which churches that had separated from Metropolitan Sergius could still function legally. Unfortunately, Fr. Basil Kravtsov was recruited by the OGPU and from March, 1932, operating with the codename "Martov", began to incriminate True

Orthodox Christians. By the autumn 64 new "Buyevtsy" had been arrested and condemned by a troika of the OGPU. On October 4, 74 more people were arrested. On October 5, 1932 twenty-five Josephite nuns arrived in Uglyanets from Kiev. However, massive arrests began there within a few weeks. These arrests continued until January 4, 1933.

On November 1, 1932 Bishop Alexis was arrested in Svirlag and sent to Solovki. Then, on December 19 (21), he was taken under guard to Voronezh to take part in the second "Buyevtsy" trial. In this trial 202 people were investigated. Besides Bishop Alexis, 13 priests, 44 monks and nuns, 4 "wandering churchmen", 2 former policemen, 8 kulaks and merchants, one handicraftsman and one civil servant were eventually brought to trial.

Bishop Alexis' first interrogation took place in the local prison on December 21. In his cell he was surrounded by stooges and informers who reported his every word. On December 25, according to OGPU records, Bishop Alexis repented of his opposition to Soviet power and counter-revolutionary activity. On December 27, however, according to the informer "Martov" (Fr. Basil Kravtsov) he said that this repentance had been a lie, a manoeuvre by which he hoped to shorten his own and the others' investigations. And on December 28 he declared to Fr. Kravtsov: "They want to use me to liquidate... the True Orthodox movement. I will never do this, even if they threaten me with death. I am ready to die for the Holy Church with a clean conscience." Three months later the investigation of Bishop Alexis came to an end.

The other defendants conducted themselves with great steadfastness. Thus Nun Anatolia (Sushkova) declared at her interrogation on November 3: "In accordance with my political world-view, I am hostile to the existing regime in Russia for the following reasons: Soviet power is an atheist power which wages war on religion and closes churches, repressing the clergy and thereby persecuting the faith. But we Buyevtsy are conducting an irreconcilable struggle with Soviet power and its enterprises, creating the most fitting cadres of True Orthodox Christians, who can be strong fighters for the Christian faith in Russia."

Again, the priest A. Sviridov, the "leader of the Podgorny branch", declared that the actions of the authorities in relation to the Church and in the creation of collective farms was unjust: "The clergy is being persecuted. In order to close the Church down, all of the clergy without exception are being accused of conducting propaganda and imprisoned. Atheism is being imposed. The churches of the peasants are being desecrated, ignorance is being inculcated... In spite of the wishes of the majority of the peasants, collective farms are being created which only harm the peasants, for they are not ready for them. Without taking into account the capacities of the peasants, they are imposing intolerable taxes on them, condemning them to certain death."

On March 12, 1933 Bishop Alexis was sent to the Butyrki prison in Moscow, and on April 2 his case was shelved. On April 12 he was sent to Solovki to serve the remainder of his sentence. He worked in the wood-polishing factory.

Archpriest Sergius Shukin recalls an encounter he had with him in the summer of 1936: "We were sent by convoy to the Ukhto-Pechersk concentration camp (in the far north). The transfer took almost a whole month, since every two or three days we had a stop at the following points: Kharkov, Orel, Syzran, Vyatka and Kotlas. In Kotlas the railroad ended and we were conducted further on barges along the Northern Dvina and Vychehda to the harbour of Ust-Vym. From there we were taken on camp trucks to the various camp points.

"At first on this convoy there were no clergymen: it was a mixture of political and criminal exiles. But at each stop our convoy changed - some left, others were added. And at Syzran we were joined by Archbishop Alexis, formerly of Voronezh and Kozlov. He was an old bishop, about 65 years old, tall and of a large build, with an unhealthy colour in his face. But the most extraordinary thing was that Vladyka was carrying with him two large and heavy suitcases. The other people in the convoy had only a single bundle with dry bread and clothes, so as not to attract the attention of the criminals. But the important thing was each carried his bundle himself and put it under his head at night.

"It was quite natural that the appearance of Vladyka with two suitcases became of immediate interest to the criminals in our cell. My companions and I made the acquaintance of the Archbishop and advised him to be careful, especially at night, when the criminals went hunting for other people's things. But Vladyka did not feel well and, shrugging his shoulders, replied: 'What can I do? Let them take them... All the same I will sleep at night.' Then we decided that we would take turns at night and watch over Vladyka's suitcases... The criminals were very dissatisfied with this turn of events and in the morning did not conceal their anger, but God preserved us from trouble...

"The same evening we were brought to the station for the further journey. Such transfers the NKVD always arranges at night, so as not to attract the attention of the local inhabitants. My companions carried Vladyka's suitcases and we were loaded into one of the compartments of a 'Stolypin' wagon....

"Under the Tsarist government people in such convoys received hot food twice a day, but under the Soviets they were given only a 'dry ration': 400 grams of black bread, 20 grams of sugar, and a piece of herring. Water was given only twice a day, morning and evening. Therefore, receiving in the morning a cup of water and after this some salted fish, those in the convoy were tormented with thirst the whole day.

"The whole way Vladyka lay and dozed. He spoke little and rarely; it was evident that he felt ill, and he ate nothing. Of course, both the wagon and the surroundings acted on him in an oppressive manner. The next day, when we arrived at the station of Kotlas, we were separated from Vladyka. Although he

was heading for the same Ukhte-Pechersk camp, he was put in a different transfer barracks and we didn't see him again.

"Judging by the physical condition of Vladyka Alexis, the camp regimen was beyond his strength. He could not work, and therefore he could expect the worst rations: 300 grams of bread and once a day a watery soup. Even if people could have sent him food parcels, it wouldn't have been right away, until he could let them know his address. There was no thought given to the diet of prisoners, either; the food was the most crude and monotonous. One has to suppose that Vladyka could not survive long in such conditions. Such was the camp system of the NKVD in order to deliver them from those incapable of work..."

On October 9, 1937 Bishop Alexis was condemned by a troika of the UNKVD for the Petrograd district, and sentenced to be shot. The sentence was carried out, according to one source, on November 3, 1937, after torture, and according to another on December 8 in Sandormokh, Medvezhegorsk region.

*

According to the very approximate estimates of the OGPU, in 1929 there numbered about 700 active members of the True Orthodox Church, while in 1930-31 up to one thousand were "discovered", and in 1932 - another 27 groups comprising 202 people. In 1929 the organs of the OGPU arrested at least 33 clergy. Among the 567 people investigated by the OGPU in 1930-32, 97 were priests, 120 were monastics and one was a bishop - Bishop Alexis.

On July 28, 1930 the OGPU pronounced its verdict against 38 supposed leaders of the organization in "The Case of Bishop Alexis (Buy), Voronezh, 1930". 12 people were condemned to be shot in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, 14 - to ten years in the camps, 10 - to five years, one was exiled for five years to Solovki and one was given a three-year suspended sentence in the camps. They included:

Protopriest John Georgievich Steblin-Kamensky. He was born on October 26, 1887 in St. Petersburg. His father, George Georgievich, was the director of the chancellery of the Naval Ministry, and in the last years before the revolution - a senator and privy councillor. He was also president of the Russian Society of Maritime Law. John's grandfather, George Pavlovich (+1882), was during the last years of his life the governor of Vilnius in the rank of privy councillor. At that time he acquired the estate of Biutsishki in Vilnius uyezd, where John spent his childhood. Here in the estate his mother, Olga Alexandrovna, was buried. She was the daughter of Rear-Admiral Alexander Pavlovich Zhandr, and she died on August 17, 1902. Fr. John received his first education at home. Olga Alexandrovna exerted a huge influence on him and his two sisters, Olga and Elizabeth - they died in the city of Kashin, Tver province. From his childhood the boy felt the warmth of her maternal love and the power of her blessing. But she died early, when John was only fourteen. Looking at his

mother on the day of her death, he felt both sharp pain at her loss and that the rest of his life without his mother would witness to the movement in his soul that she developed. It seemed to him then that every bad act of his from now on would be a defilement of her radiant memory and a violation of his obligations in relation to her. After the death of his mother John finished four years at the gymnasium, and, in accordance with family tradition, chose to serve in the fleet. He entered the Naval cadet corps, finishing in 1908 with the title of guards marine. Then he was appointed to the cruiser "Knight", and from 1908 to 1909 was in foreign waters. In 1909 (or 1912) he was promoted to the rank of midshipman, transferred to the First Baltic Fleet and served on a minesweeper. From 1909 to 1910 John Georgievich was a company commander on the cruiser "Admiral Makarov". In 1911 he was awarded with a silver medal by the Italians for helping sufferers during the 1908 earthquake in Sicily and Calabria. In June 1917 he was retired from the fleet for reasons of health. In the summer of 1918 he worked on a scientific expedition studying the sandbanks of the Neva. In 1919 he was mobilized and until 1921 served as assistant director of the lighthouses of the Baltic fleet and at the same time carried out the duties of a reader in the Holy Trinity church in Petrograd. During this period he firmly decided to become a clergyman and give himself wholly to the service of God. The grace-filled support he felt when he made this decision led him clearly to understand that the Lord was calling him and would not abandon him in his earthly trials. Having decided to become a priest and entrusted himself completely to the will of God, he went to the grave of his mother in the estate that had belonged to them near Vilnius. Falling down to the earth, he felt peace and calm descend into his soul, and a warmth as if his mother were blessing him again. On returning to Petrograd in 1920, John Georgievich was ordained to the diaconate. In 1921 Fr. John was arrested by the Cheka for the first time, but soon released. In the summer of 1923 he was ordained to the priesthood for the church of the Holy Trinity on Stremyannaya street. There he gave all his time and energy to his flock. Soon Patriarch Tikhon appointed him rector of this church and raised him to the rank of protopriest. It was the time of the renovationist schism, and persecutions began against the Tikhonite Church. The life of the parishes was activated, and brotherhoods were organized. Under the leadership of Fr. John the believers began to gather not only in the church, but also in flats, where akathists were read, and the priest explained one or two chapters from the Holy Scriptures. The OGPU began to interfere more and more into Church life. About forty clergy and laity were arrested in Petrograd. On February 2, 1924 Fr. John was arrested in connection with the case of the Orthodox Brotherhoods. He was accused of uniting Orthodox around him. During interrogation Fr. John said that he served molebens in the flats of some of his parishioners, after which they drank tea and discussed religious matters. That was enough for the authorities. On September 26, 1924 he was sentenced to three years on Solovki. In all thirty-five clergy and laity were sentenced to the camps. On Solovki Fr. John worked as an accountant, and always walked in priestly clothing and went to church services as long as this was allowed. He wrote letters to his father, sisters and spiritual children. Many of these letters have survived to this day. Towards the end of his term it became increasingly obvious that the authorities were not

going to allow Fr. John to live in Petrograd, and his spiritual children had to reconcile themselves to a prolongation of his absence. And so it turned out: on October 1, 1927 he was released and sent for three years' administrative exile to Voronezh. Arriving in November, he was given the place of a priest in the Alexeyev church of the former Pokrov Devichi monastery, and after some time was appointed its rector and one of the deans of the Voronezh diocese. He served in the church until its closure on May 2, 1929. Thanks to his efforts and active support, the Voronezh parishioners gathered together frequently and sent food to Archbishop Peter (Zverev) of Voronezh and other prisoners on Solovki. Fr. John rejected the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and remained to the end of his life faithful to the "Tikhonite", True Orthodox Church. He was in communion with Metropolitan Joseph, Archbishop Peter and Bishop Alexis (Buy). In 1928 persecutions against the Church increased, and everywhere the authorities organized meetings of workers demanding the closure of churches. 275 flats were built on the territory of the Devichi monastery, and unbelieving people were accommodated in them. Thus in addition to the nuns who remained in their cells there lived 872 people. On September 2, 1928 a meeting of the inhabitants of the workers' village in which the monastery was situated took place. 217 people were present, and 100 people were invited from outside, so unsure were the authorities that they could obtain the closure of the church. One of the speakers immediately pointed out that the followers of Archbishop Peter (Zverev) were increasing their activity. ... 'Zverevschina' has again raised its head, its nest has not been completely destroyed, it is necessary to destroy it through the GPU." Others supported the speaker. "In the 31st cell there lives Pope John, a follower of Zverev. I live in cell number 89 and I see how the wives of the counter-revolutionaries Nechayev and Pushkin (the former founder of the Ternovaya church) visit him. The nuns teach the children of workers to go to the priest for a blessing. It is already clear to all that the music of the church bells is the music of counter-revolution. As long as this counter-revolutionary nest exists here, the workers' village will not exist. The nuns are hindering the cultural development of the growing generation and are winning the sympathy of the inhabitants not only within the walls of the monastery, but far beyond its walls." On September 8, 1928 an article appeared in the Voronezh newspaper, "Commune", calling for the monastery to be turned into workers' flats, and the church - into a club. It called for a "decisive battle" with the counter-revolutionary statements of the nuns and their leader, Fr. John. After the arrest of Bishop Alexis and the death of Protopriest Alexander Palitsyn at the end of 1928, Vladyka Alexis appointed Fr. John as diocesan dean, and in March, 1929 he was the de facto leader of the Voronezh diocese. Articles appeared in the atheist press demanding his arrest. On March 4 the assistant head of the police Podkopayev sent a "top secret" message to the OGPU saying that Fr. John was conducting agitation against Soviet power. At five o'clock on May 1, 1929, when the atheists came to break the cross on the dome of the church, the abbess of the Devichi monastery died. This coincidence amazed many in the city. Later the authorities accused Fr. John of affirming that her death was the result of persecutions against the Church. The burial of the abbess took place on May 4, and after the burial Fr. John blessed everyone and advised the remaining nuns and parishioners of the monastery to hold out

together. On May 6 (19) Fr. John was arrested, and on May 21 he was interrogated. On July 4 Agent Victorov composed an indictment, in which we read: "Having received the leadership of the nuns of the former Devichi monastery, [Fr. John] Kamensky, so as to become a specially venerated 'pastor', obtained for himself a portrait of the 'eldress' Theoctista Mikhailovna, who is well-known among the hysterical element, and began to occupy himself in exorcizing the demon-possessed, and other similar machinations. Thanks to the rumour spread by the nuns that Kamensky was 'holy', he began to acquire great authority among the hysterical element and in general among antisovietically inclined believers. Kamensky began to be visited not only by believers from Voronezh, but many peasants also came to him from the villages of the Central Black Earth region, asking him to heal them of headaches, etc. Kamensky gave advice to everyone who came to him, and particularly how to behave in the present conditions of life and what attitude to take towards Soviet power. Sometime Kamensky personally, but usually through the nuns who were close to him, spread various provocative rumours undermining Soviet power and insinuating anti-Soviet idea, mainly among the inhabitants of the Workers' Village (the former Devichi monastery). When Metropolitan Sergius published his declaration of loyalty to Soviet power, Kamensky and other exiled priests of the city of Voronezh broke with Sergius and began to recognize the leadership of Metropolitan Joseph of Leningrad. They began to spread rumours about Metropolitan Sergius that he had given in to Soviet power, had become a heretic, red, etc. After the arrest of Bishop Alexis Kamensky became the diocesan dean, and for that reason the whole leadership of the 'Josephites' in the Central Black Earth region passed into his hands. Since he is an extreme rightist element among the churchmen, Kamensky personally and through the nuns conducts an active struggle against the churchmen who are in one way or another loyal to Soviet power. Through the nuns Kamensky spreads rumours that Soviet power is going to perish soon, that other states will come and conquer all those loyal to Soviet power. On February 16, 1929 Kamensky personally in a sermon in church said with regard to the proposed introduction of bread ration books: 'Citizens, there are no reserves of bread, a famine is threatening, whoever can let him store up food, all these are harbingers of coming battles.' As a result, the nuns and women of the workers' village began to store up food, queues were formed, and a panic that there really would be a famine, etc., and one of the workers, giving in to this influence, was storing up flour at 2 roubles 80 a pound. The death of the former abbess, coinciding with the moment of the closure of the church of the former Devichi monastery and the removal of the cross was used by Kamensky to stir up religious fanaticism and incitement of believers against Soviet power. Kamensky said that the abbess was a victim of the contemporary persecution against religion, and he (Kamensky) was a defender of the faith against the dark forces of hell (Soviet power). At the burial of the abbess, Kamensky, remaining in the cemetery to bless the believers, said: 'Look, we are again together, again one flock, soon better times will come and we shall again triumph.' In the circle of those close to him Kamensky usually turned the conversations from religious topics to political ones. So, for example: in February of this year, while a guest in the house of citizen Eusebius Fomich Kalinina, while discussing the contemporary

construction of Soviet power, adduced an example from the Bible: 'Madmen, you will build, but I will destroy'. When a former teacher (her name has not been established) complained to Kamensky that they were forcing her to teach children unbelief in God, she was advised to drop her job and not bring up children in unbelief. One can deduce how authoritative Kamensky was among the believers from notes taken from him during a search in his house: 'Greatly respected batyushka, I turn to you again with the request that you pray for Alexander, he was at his place and was working, but they fired him and he began to drink... Your prayer will reach God, and I believe that he will again go there and stop drinking vodka.'... In the notes that believers give to Kamensky in church they write: 'for the health of so-and-so who has gone astray' ('gone astray' means 'unbelieving'), supposing that Kamensky will be able to turn the unbeliever to God, and make him a believer again. Everywhere the nuns spread the idea that Kamensky is a martyr, a sufferer from Soviet power, the persecutor of Christians. Often Kamensky himself has said: 'Well, what if I go into exile, I can unite believers around me everywhere, they will always feed me, so all their (the authorities') efforts to do something to me are in vain.'" Fr. John denied the charges against him and said: "I do not sympathize with actions directed against religion. I think that the teaching of children in schools in an anti-religious direction, etc., is incorrect. I have no doubt that faith in the crucified Christ is invincible, and that the apparent triumph of materialism is a temporary phenomenon. The photograph found during the search of my flat of the old woman known in Voronezh as the wanderer Theoctista Mikhailovna came into my possession by chance from a woman that is known to me only by name (Catherine). I received many notes asking for my prayers. Among the notes there are some that ask for prayers for prisoners and those who have gone astray. By 'gone astray' I understood fall away from the faith or nominal believers who are living in an unlawful manner. During the whole of my service in the former Devichi monastery, unflinchingly on every feastday and every Sunday, and sometimes also on weekdays, I gave a short instruction of a purely spiritual character without in any way touching on the civil authorities or on the necessity of storing up this or that kind of food. In particular, I gave such an instruction on February 16. After the death of the abbess I neither personally nor through anyone else spread rumours through the city. I am still less guilty of having ever calling myself or incited others to call me a true pastor in the exceptional sense of being called to save believers from the dark forces of the hell of Bolshevism, but I do not deny that I consider myself to be one of the faithful pastors of the Church of Christ, who are obliged by word and life and spirit and faith and purity to be a model for believers and to guard them from the darkness of unbelief. And I confess that, according to my faith, not only materialism, but also the very 'gates of hell' will not prevail over the Church of Christ. I left the grave of the abbess before its closure, but it is true that I blessed those who came to me. Moreover I comforted them as far as I was able, but I did not say: 'Don't grieve, we'll get what is best for us'... To those who came to me and asked about entering a cooperative, collective farms, communes, etc., about taking part in the new structure of agriculture, I always replied in this spirit: that if in this, as far as I know, no renunciation from the faith is required, then it goes without saying that there can be no sin in such a

participation..." From prison Fr. John secretly sent a letter to his flock which said: "If during my service in Voronezh and stay amongst you, you, who have been entrusted to me by the Lord, have not felt that your faithfulness to Him is dearer to me than my own life, then, alas, neither this letter nor any other will reveal this to you. But if I truly love you with the love of Christ, and if I partly take comfort in our sorrow, since it witnesses also to your love for me..., I now want for the last time with tears in my eyes to ask you... If you do not depart from the Cross, then we shall be close to each other during our separation, however long it may last..." On August 16 he was sentenced to three years in the camps, and was again sent to Solovki. This time, however, his stay on Solovki was short. On April 23 (February 12 or February 20), 1930 an order came to Solovki for his arrest and his despatch to the Voronezh OGPU together with Fr. Nicholas Dulov. On May 5 (or March 5) Fr. John was imprisoned in Voronezh. Case P-24705, "The Church-Monarchist Organization, 'The Buyevtsy' (TOC) in the Central Black Earth region (February to July, 1930) was brought by the OGPU for the Central Black Earth region, and consisted of seven volumes. Between February and March 492 people were arrested, and 134 people were indicted. The accused were held in Voronezh prison. The first interrogation took place on May 15. Priest Nicholas Dulov had been broken by cruel tortures, and agreed to testify against the accused. The investigator therefore had to prove nothing more than his close acquaintance with Fr. John, who said: "During my time in freedom in Voronezh, Priest Dulov came twice to Voronezh, the first time at the feast of the Trinity (at the beginning of June), 1928, and the second time in November in the same year. We saw each other twice in the church. The first time he served in the cathedral with the clergy of the former Devichi monastery, while the second time he was only present at the service. After the first service I invited him to have lunch with me. No conferences of priests with the participation of Dulov were arranged. Dulov did not bring me any brochures; I don't know the brochure, "What the Orthodox Christian Must Know". In general, I was interested only in the opinions of authoritative hierarchs, and not in anonymous brochures." On May 20 Fr. John was accused of "spreading church-monarchist leaflets and brochures and spreading various kinds of provocative anti-Soviet rumours, and of conducting agitation against all the actions of Soviet power in the sphere of collectivization, the industrialization of the USSR, his ultimate aim being to prepare the believing masses to speak out against Soviet power, overthrow it and restore the monarchy. As a result there were massive outbursts of the population against Soviet power and its actions in many regions of the Central Black Earth region." Later during the case Fr. John was called one of the initiators of the anti-sergianist movement of the True Orthodox Christians in Voronezh, which at that time formulated public opinion in the city. In the protocol of the interrogation of Fr. Sergius Butuzov it was said: "... They created that firm mood of the masses which drew in its wake the whole of the Voronezh clergy." According to the case records, in order to achieve the practical leadership of the "Buyevite" movement of the True Orthodox Christians in Voronezh, there was created instead of the legal deanery council a secret college for administering the Voronezh diocesan centre of the TOC composed of five people. Its president was Protopriest John Steblin-Kamensky,

and its members: the priests Fr. Sergius Gortinsky, Fr. Eugene Marchevsky, Fr. John Zhityaev and Archimandrite Ignatius (Biriukov) – the diocesan spiritual father, who headed the Josephite monastics of the TOC in the Central Black Earth region. The college had a wide net of propagandist-messengers in the diocese. The most important of them were Archimandrite Tikhon (Krechkov), Igumen Joannichius (Yatsuk), Hieromonk Melchisedek (Khukhryansky), and the laymen Polyakov, Kartsev and Karelsky.... After the arrest of Fr. John the secret college was led by Fr. Sergius Gortinsky, and the rector of the church of the Alexeyev monastery, Fr. Theodore Yakovlev, was made a member in the capacity of secretary. The college maintained links with Bishop Alexis in camp. One of the main points of the indictment was the immediate participation of “Buyevite” clergy in massive uprisings of the peasants. The Alexeyev monastery was accused of playing the leading role. In 1929 and at the beginning of 1930 there were supposedly meetings of the “Buyevite” leadership there in order to coordinate their work among the peasantry. On getting to know the indictment, Fr. John demanded that he be given the opportunity to reply to the accusations. Two days later the investigator gave him that opportunity. He wrote: “I categorically refuse to accept that I am guilty of the accusation I am charged with. I have not belonged to a monarchist church organization... Peasants, members of communities and clergy came to me on various church business. I never had any political or organizational discussions with anybody...” The investigation came to an end of July 14, 1930. On July 23 the result was sent to the OGPU college. On July 28 the college reviewed the case and sentenced eleven men to death in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11: **Protopriest John Steblin-Kamensky, Archimandrite Tikhon (Krechkov), Protopriest Alexander (Arkhangelsky), Priest Sergius Gortinsky, Priest Theodore Yakovlev, Priest George Nikitin, Hieromonks George (Pozharov) and Cosmas (Vyaznikov) and the laymen M.P. Tymchishin, Euthymius Grebenshikov and Peter Vyaznikov.**

Archimandrite Tikhon, in the world Timothy Ulyanovich Krechkov. He was born in 1862 in the village of Plotava, Repyevsky uyezd, Voronezh province into a peasant family. He entered the Alexeyevo-Akatov monastery as a novice, was tonsured there and ordained to the priesthood. He became the treasurer of the monastery, and showed great zeal in the beautifying of the churches. In 1924 he was raised to the rank of igumen and superior of the monastery. In 1927 he was raised to the rank of archimandrite. He joined the True Orthodox Church and was arrested on January 30, 1930 in connection with the Voronezh branch of the Church and cast into prison in Voronezh. On July 28 he was convicted by the OGPU and sentenced to death in accordance with article 58-10. He pleaded not guilty. On August 2, 1930 he was shot.

Protopriest Alexander Nikolayevich Archangelsky. He was born on February 1, 1874 (or 1873) in the village of Soshki, Lipetsk uyezd, Tambov province (or Voronezh province) in the family of a church reader. He was the rector of the Dormition church in Buturlinovka sloboda, near Voronezh, and dean of the Buturlinovka uyezd. From 1923 he was persecuted by the

authorities for his faith and service in church. In February, 1930 he was arrested for being “an active participant in the Voronezh branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and imprisoned in Voronezh. On July 28 he was sentenced to death, and on August 2 he was shot.

Priest Sergius Dmitrievich Gortinsky. He was born on March 10, 1889 in the village of Kazinka (Kazinskoye), Moscow region, Stavropol district (or in 1897 in Ryazan) into the family of a priest, and studied in a six-year school in Alexandrov, Yerevan province. In 1916 he was ordained to the diaconate and served in the village of Bogoyavlenskoye, Masalsky uyezd, Kaluga province. In 1917 he was transferred to the village of Malkovo. In 1920 he was ordained to the priesthood, and went to serve in the village of Budenovka, Kolotonsky district, Chernigov province, and then in the village of Tylka. In 1925 he was serving in his native village, where, on November 28, 1926, he was arrested and cast into prison in Stavropol. He was accused of commemorating Tsar Nicholas II and his family in services, and of speaking against civil marriage and driving uncrowned people out of the church. On January 5, 1927 he was arrested convicted in accordance with article 10-70 part 1, but was released with three years' deprivation of the right to live in six cities and Stavropol region, with confinement to one place of residence. He decided to live in Voronezh. In 1928 he began serving in the Alexeyevsky Akatov monastery in Voronezh. On April 8, 1930 he was arrested for being “an active participant in the Voronezh branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and imprisoned in Voronezh. He suffered greatly in prison because of his bronchial tuberculosis. On July 28 he was sentenced to death, and on August 2 he was shot.

Priest Theodore Mikhailovich Yakovlev. He was born in 1897 in a peasant family from St. Petersburg (or province). He finished seven classes in the Voronezh real school and then graduated from the physico-mathematical faculty of a university before undertaking successful scientific work. After the revolution he was mobilized into the Red Army, then served in the police in a provincial provisions committee. But, having been brought up in Orthodox piety, he was not able to stand aside when the Church was mocked, and in 1918 was ordained to the priesthood. He was appointed to the Vladimir church and the Alexeyev-Akatov monastery in Voronezh. After the arrest of Bishop Alexis, Fr. Theodore became "secretary" of the organizational centre. He was arrested on June 8, 1930 for being “an active participant in the Voronezh branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and imprisoned in Voronezh. On July 28 he was sentenced to death, and on August 2 he was shot.

Hieromonk George (Dmitrievich Pozharov). He was born in 1886 in the village of Malaya Privalovka, Usmansky uyezd, Voronezh province. He served in Usman uyezd from 1927, then in Tver province, and then, in the same year, moved to Voronezh to join the Josephites. On April 8 (or February 12), 1930 he was arrested for being “an active participant in the Voronezh branch of the

counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and imprisoned in Voronezh. On July 28 he was sentenced to death, and on August 2 he was shot.

Hieromonk Cosmas (Trofimovich Vyaznikov). He was born in 1872 (or 1876) in the village of Staro-Nikolskoye, Usman uyezd, Voronezh province, and served in the Alexeyevsky monastery and in the village of Semidesyatnoye, Gremyachesky region. He was arrested on April 8, 1930 together with the brothers of the Alexeyevsky monastery in connection with the Voronezh branch of the True Orthodox Church. On July 28 he was sentenced to death, and on August 2 he was shot.

Priest George Nikitich Nikitin. He was born in 1870, and received an elementary education. He belonged to a religio-moral society in Yekaterinoslav province. After 1918 he was arrested several times, and went underground. In the summer of 1930 he was secretly ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Alexis and sent to serve in a church in Yekaterinoslav province. In 1930 he was arrested for being “an active participant in the Voronezh branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”. On July 28 he was sentenced to death, and on August 2 he was shot.

Mark Petrovich Tymchishin. He was born in 1882, a peasant from Kamenets-Podolsk province. He served under General A.G. Shkuro in the White army. He led a counter-revolutionary demonstration in Platava. He was shot on August 2, 1930.

Euthymius Nikiforovich Grebenshchikov. He was born in 1904 in the village of Platava, Repyevsky region, Ostrog district, where he served until his death. In March, 1930 he was cast into prison in Voronezh, and on July 28 he was sentenced to death. On August 2 he was shot.

Peter Mikhailovich Vyaznikov. He was born in 1876 (or 1872) in the village of Platava, Repyevsky region, Ostrog district, and was one of the leaders of the massive demonstration in the village. He joined the Josephites, and was arrested in January, 1930 in connection with the Voronezh branch of the True Orthodox Church and cast into prison in Voronezh. On July 28 he was sentenced to death in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11. The sentence was carried out on August 2, 1930.

**62. HOLY HIEROMARTYR NICHOLAS, ARCHBISHOP OF
VLADIMIR (+1937)**
and those with him

Archbishop Nicholas, in the world Constantine Pavlovich Dobronravov, was born on November 21, 1861 in the village of Ignatovka, Dmitrov uyezd, Moscow province, in the family of a priest. In 1881 he finished his studies at the Moscow theological seminary, and in 1885 graduated from the Moscow Theological Academy. From 1885 he became a teacher at the Bethany theological seminary. In 1886 he received the degree of master of theology for his thesis, "The Book of the Prophet Joel". In 1889 he became a priest of the cathedral church of Perm and a member of the Perm spiritual consistory, and in 1890 - teacher of the Law of God in the Alexandrovsky military school in Moscow and rector of the church attached to the school. In 1891 he was raised to the rank of protopriest and on February 8 was appointed rector of the Perm theological seminary. In 1892 he became a teacher of the Law of God at the 7th Moscow secondary school. Later he was transferred to the church of the Martyr Nicetas in Moscow, staying there until 1917. He was the author of many works on theology and church matters. In 1917 he was a member of the Preconciliar Council, and from 1917-18 - a member of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church. At the Council he spoke ardently against the restoration of the patriarchate. However, after the election and enthronement of Patriarch Tikhon he became a sincere and fervent supporter of the patriarchy, and was exceptionally devoted to the patriarch himself.

After the death of his wife he was tonsured into monasticism and was raised to the rank of archimandrite, becoming superior of the church of All Saints on Kulishki in Moscow on January 25, 1918. From June 12 he was also a teacher at the Orthodox People's Academy. On August 19, 1918 he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison. On December 3 he was sentenced to the camps, but on April 16, 1919 was released because of lack of evidence.

On August 13, 1921, he was consecrated Bishop of Zvenigorod, a vicariate of the Moscow diocese. In 1922 he was sentenced to one year's exile for refusing to accept the renovationists. He was exiled to Ust-Sysolsk in Vologda province (Syktyvkar in Komi ASSR).

From 1923 he was archbishop of Vladimir and Suzdal. He led a strictly ascetic life, praying for whole nights. In relation to people he was exceptionally simple, attentive and full of love. He firmly stood at the helm of the Church, struggling against the renovationists and introducing important ecclesiastical reforms. In particular, according to his project for the parish, it was necessary to introduce alms-giving and payment for needs by the parish as a whole. On his insistence the new style, which had been accepted by the patriarch, was revoked.

On April 16, 1924 he was arrested in Moscow for "beating up a member of

the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate". He was cast into Butyrki prison, but was released on June 14 for lack of evidence of a crime.

After the death of Patriarch Tikhon in April, 1925, he became a close associate of the patriarchal *locum tenens*, Metropolitan Peter. On November 30, 1925 he was arrested together with Metropolitan Peter and a group of hierarchs living in Moscow and cast into Butyrki prison. There the elderly bishop was mocked, thrown into damp dungeons and constantly interrogated at night. But thanks to his strength of spirit Vladyka was able to strengthen many people, including **Fr. Sergius Sidorov**, and also preserve many secrets of the Church.

On February 1, 1926, he was nominated by Metropolitan Peter to the Temporary Church Council proposed by Archbishop Gregory of Yekaterinburg in place of three bishops whom Peter did not trust. On May 21, 1926 he was convicted by the OGPU of "active participation in the monarchist organization of churchmen and laity 'The Danilovite Synod' in Moscow, which set as its aim the concentration of the believing masses around the Church". This was part of the group case, "The Case of Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky) and others, Moscow, 1926". He was sentenced in accordance with articles 62 and 68 to three years' exile in Siberia. He arrived in the Turukhansk region in June, 1926.

Archbishop Nicholas adopted a very strong position in relation to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius in 1927. On April 7/20, 1929 he wrote: "He [Metropolitan Sergius] has sinned against the apostolicity of the Church by introducing earthly, worldly principles into the Church, against her holiness - by blaspheming against the exploit of confession, against her catholicity - by his single administration of the Church."

From April, 1929, Vladyka Nicholas was transferred to Vologda province - he was not allowed to live in six major cities of the country. However, he later lived in retirement in Moscow. On October 27, 1937 he was arrested and accused of "counter-revolutionary agitation and participation in the illegal counter-revolutionary church-monarchist organization, the True Orthodox Church". He rejected the charges. On December 7 he was sentenced to be shot, and on December 10 the sentence was carried out in Butovo, Moscow district.

Together with Archbishop Nicholas there suffered **Bishop Arsenius (Zhadanovsky)**, the iconographer **V.A. Komarovsky** and the student of ancient Russian art **Yu. A. Olfusyev**.

63. HOLY HIEROMARTYR ANDREW, ARCHBISHOP OF UFA

(+1937)

and those with him

The Pastor of Souls

Archbishop Andrew, in the world Prince Alexander Alexeyevich Ukhtomsky, was born on December 26 (according to another source, December 28), 1872, in the village (or estate) of Vosloma, Arefinskaya (or Arefeskaya) volost, Rybinsk uyezd, Yaroslavl province. His parents were called Alexis and Antonina. The Ukhtomsky Byelozersk princes were a very ancient family which traced its origins to the holy Great-Prince Vladimir himself. The young Alexander was brought up in childhood by his nanny, Manefa Fyodorovna, a former serf of the Ukhtomskys. She imbued him with a love for the Church and the feeling of sincere prayer.

In 1887, on completing the fifth class of high school, Alexander at the insistence of his parents entered the Nizhni Novgorod military school in the name of Count Arakcheyev.

Once, when Alexander's mother was bringing him and his younger brother home for the holidays, they met St. John of Kronstadt on a Volga steamer. The conversation with St. John made such an impression on the brothers that they both decided, in spite of the attempts of their mother to dissuade them, to enter the Moscow Theological Academy. In later life, Alexander often met St. John, corresponded with him, and often mentioned him in his sermons and articles.

In 1891, after graduating from the Nizhni-Novgorod military school, Alexander entered the Moscow Theological Academy. His teachers there included E. Golubinsky, N. Subbotin, V. Klyuchevsky and N. Kapterev. The inspector of the academy at that time was Archimandrite Sergius (Stragorodsky), while the rector was Archimandrite Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who became his spiritual father and with whom he maintained contact for many years. When he was archbishop he remembered Vladyka Anthony with gratitude, saying that "he always firmly instilled in us the attitude that the Church must be free, that she must be ruled by Councils, and that without Councils there can be no Church life." In 1895, Alexander Ukhtomsky wrote his course dissertation on the theme: "The Wrath of God", for which he later received the degree of candidate of theology.

On graduating from the academy, on November 9, 1895, he was appointed teacher of Russian language in the Kazan theological school. On December 2, 1895, he was tonsured into the mantia by Archimandrite Anthony (Khrapovitsky) with the name Andrew. On December 6, 1895, he was ordained to the priesthood.

Subsequently, in his sermon before his consecration to the episcopate, Vladyka Andrew recalled with what fear he, a young hieromonk, had taken upon himself this responsibility: "I have suffered awesome torments ever since I first heard these words found in the rite for the consecration of a bishop: 'Take this Covenant (the Body of Christ) and keep it whole and untainted until your last breath - to Whom you must give an account at the great and terrible Second Coming of our Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.' I thought, 'How can I preserve this great Covenant, which was entrusted to me, the Body of Christ, if I cannot even preserve myself?' I felt then that the Holy Mysteries of the Eucharist were, indeed, a fire burning the unworthy.

"For two whole years I found no peace, performing the Holy Mysteries in fear and trembling on account of my unworthiness, ready to forsake that terrible and awesome calling. But a meeting with the great Father John of Kronstadt saved my soul from further bitterness, torment and the prolongation of the almost sickening duel in my soul. When I asked him for counsel on this matter, Father John said, 'Yes, we are all guilty before the Holy Mysteries, but we must be true to our priestly calling, for we are in obedience to the Holy Church. Weeping over our own sins, we must, however, do the will of Christ's Church and follow the instructions of the Church which are made known to us through our Archpastors.'

"These words of Father John were, in truth, a soothing balm for my wounded and sinful soul which had been torn by various doubts; they made my outlook on life whole and indicated my path in life; I began to understand it only as the most precise fulfilment of obedience to the Church, as the most perfect way of serving the Holy Church, the nation and people of God who have been redeemed by the Precious Blood of Christ."

In 1897 he was appointed inspector of the Alexandrovsky missionary seminary in the city of Ardon, Ossetia. In 1899 he was promoted to the rank of archimandrite and appointed overseer of the Kazan missionary courses. He soon became a popular figure for his deeds of mercy to the poor and needy and for his asceticism. It was known that he spent his nights in prayer, using a hard bed with no blanket or pillow for his brief rest. In the midst of his social activity he always fasted, never eating even fish. When his wealthy admirers presented him with crates of fresh fruit he immediately gave it away to seminarians and children. People were astonished to see him eat only two or three prosphoras and a few glasses of tea a day, never complaining of frailty or loss of energy, yet his activity was enormous. When raised to the rank of archimandrite he became abbot of the ancient Holy Transfiguration Monastery in Kazan, ably governing it, delivered flaming sermons, founded a convent for Tatar girls, was an excellent spiritual adviser, published a magazine and booklets, and organized missionary conferences.

Once in the revolutionary year of 1905 the workers of a gunpowder factory eight miles from Kazan rose up in revolt, as a result of communist propaganda, and killed one of the eight directors of the factory. A barrel of explosives was

blown up, breaking all the windows in the neighbouring houses. Archimandrite Andrew immediately mounted a horse and, fearlessly risking his life, galloped to the factory. There he mounted a high place and silently waited for the mob to quiet down. They laughed at him, cursed, threw handfuls of dirt and rotten apples; but he stood quietly, looking at the mob and praying silently. The mob, seeing him fearless and peaceful, gradually calmed down; and then Fr. Andrew began to talk. His talk was short, but so powerful that the whole mob came to repentance, realizing what a sin they had committed in killing an innocent man. They released the other directors and resumed work, after accompanying Fr. Andrew with great respect back to his monastery quarters. One who witnessed this was the future Hieromartyr Bishop Basil of Kargopol, a deacon at the time.

It was at about this time that Fr. Andrew had a deep premonition of the coming of new persecutions against the Orthodox. It became clear that the only way to preserve the faith and the Church in such conditions would be service in secret in the manner of the Catacomb Christians of Roman times. And so, when he was ruling the Sukhumi diocese in 1911-1912, Vladyka Andrew founded a number of secret sketes in the Caucasus mountains which later became strongholds of True Orthodoxy.

On October 4, 1907 Fr. Andrew was consecrated Bishop of Mamadysh, the third vicariate of the Kazan diocese in the Kazan cathedral of the Annunciation by Archbishop Demetrius of Kazan, Bishop Nazarius (Kirillov) of Nizhni-Novgorod and Bishop Metrophanes (Simashkevich) of Penza. This see was specially established for missionary work among the Tatar population.

Vladyka's spiritual daughter, Nun Tabitha, writes that when he left Kazan, "a crowd of thousands accompanied him. His carriage headed for the steamer quayside. The workers and soldiers unharnessed the horses from his carriage and transported him themselves. Everyone wept... Non-Russians wept like children as they accompanied their beloved 'batka', and they strewed their clothes in his path..."

On July 25, 1911 he became bishop of Sukhumi, in which see he founded a number of mountain monasteries and sketes and was an active missionary among the indigenous, non-Russian population.

On December 22, 1913 he became bishop of Ufa and Menzelinsk. He immediately started attracting more and more people of all ages to the cathedral. During the services he would be completely immersed in prayer, and was an example of a true pastor caring without ceasing for the salvation of souls. In 1915-16 he distributed pastoral epistles attacking the use of tobacco by priests of the Russian Church. He was outspoken in his opposition to the rich exploiters of the poor.

As a bishop, Vladyka continued his missionary activities among the Tatar Moslem population. Many remembered his speeches at missionary congresses

in Moscow, Kazan and Kiev, and his brilliant, unforgettable appeals to unite around the Church and the Tsar. Once he wrote:

"What can save us, preserve our Orthodox fatherland, and return to Holy Rus' her former glory?"

"I believe and am firmly convinced that, just as Holy Rus' grew around the Orthodox Church, so only her native Orthodoxy can regenerate her. That is why I await that great day in Rus' when a Council of the Russian Church will be convened in the presence of our most meek and Christian Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich... It is not a faithless gathering of self-appointed arrogant people, not crowds of people united by nothing and hating each other, that will point out for us new paths of public and state life, but a Council of Church hierarchs... who come together in complete concord and love and speak the truth to the most truth-loving of tsars with Christian firmness."

In 1916 Vladyka became president of the East Russian cultural-educational society, and founded a journal attached to the society called "Trans-Volga Chronicle". He spoke out in print against Rasputin, warning the Tsar. He welcomed the February revolution, seeing in it an opportunity to free the Church from State control.

The Revolution and Renovationism

On April 14/27, 1917, after the Provisional Government had dissolved the old Holy Synod, Archbishop Andrew became a member of the new Synod. However, he did not believe that the Provisional Government had changed the situation for the better. "The Provisional Government," he wrote, "appointed a revolutionary Over-Procurator, but the problem of having the Church ruled by a government official was not resolved." At the same time he did not believe in a complete separation of Church and State. Thus in August, 1917, he sent Kerensky a long letter, in which he declared that "the separation of the Church from the State is not frightening for the Church, but for the State its own separation from the Church is frightening."

Following his mentor, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Archbishop Andrew was a fervent supporter of the restoration of the patriarchate. He took a very active part in the elections for a patriarch in the Council of 1917-18, at which he was a delegate, and his admirers put his name forward as one of the candidates for the patriarchal throne.

Archbishop Andrew considered the February and October revolutions to be the natural result of, and just recompense for, the people's loss of faith, whose roots he saw in the process of the destruction of Christian consciousness in the Russian people that had taken place over the previous 200 years. And he refused to accept the superficial excuses given by many: "In defence of the Russian people, they try to say that the people have been confused by the Jews, or deceived by their own leaders... A bad excuse! It's a fine people and a fine

Christian religious disposition that can be confused by any rogue that comes along!..."

Already in the spring of 1917, clashes took place between Archbishop Andrew and the new socialist authorities. The newspaper of the Ufa social-democrats accused him of monarchist sympathies, pointing out that the bishop who had previously prayed fervently for the autocratic power did not want to do this for the new revolutionary government.

However, it is clear from the bishop's articles that when, during the first months of the revolution, the socialist movement was dominated by fairly moderate elements, he tried to establish contacts with the movement and even wrote about its positive sides:

"Is it possible for the parish councils to form a block with the social revolutionaries?... This party is the closest for me of all the parties. The Church-parish councils and the party of the social revolutionaries must form one whole..."

But as the violence of the socialists grew, the bishop sharply changed his attitude towards the movement. Thus in one of his sermons in the cathedral, he said: "The socialists have taken from our original Apostolic Church her holy teaching on the community, brotherhood and equality... and have departed from us with this teaching."

"The socialists," wrote the bishop, "do not have enough love, and so at the base of their theory and practice they have placed the idol of class struggle, which on Russian soil has given 'freedom to hooliganism'."

And again: "Our homeland and the whole of our Russian people is confused, and is now living the last weeks of its existence. One page of Russian history has come to an end, and another, terrible one is beginning..."

In his speech before the opening of the state conference of members of the Constitutional Assembly, which took place in Ufa in April, 1918, Archbishop Andrew gave a clear basis to his judgements on the events that were taking place. He referred to Biblical history, when the judges of Israel led the people along the path of spiritual regeneration and national renewal:

"And now," he said, "for the salvation of the fatherland we need one particular fine, patriotic name, and an inspired leader who is powerful in word and deed, and who could incarnate our unfortunate Homeland and incarnate it in himself."

Vladyka Andrew welcomed the Whites; he called the White Czech soldiers "the best representatives of the Slavic family", and hoped for a republic on the lines described in the Book of Judges.

On December 17, 1917, at a session of the administration of the Councils of the Churches of Ufa, he spoke in favour of the separation of the Church from the State. On January 20, 1918 he spoke out against the Bolshevik decree on the separation of the Church from the State and the school from the Church. In the autumn of 1918 he was elected Old Ritualist bishop for the yedinovertsy of the village of Satka, Ufa province.

In the autumn of 1918 Vladyka became a member of the Siberian Conciliar Conference, and the leader of the clergy in the third army of the White leader, Admiral Kolchak. In November, 1919 he was elected a member of the Higher Temporary Ecclesiastical Administration at the Siberian ecclesiastical congress in Tomsk. Later he left Kolchak's government.

The commander of one of Kolchak's armies, Lieutenant-General Sakharov, wrote of Vladyka's work during this period: "His idea was simple and great. His arguments were incontrovertible and taken from life itself. He said: '... we must organize the people... around the best people in each village and town, around the most honourable, moral and hardworking people. And we do not need to go far; there are many such Russians, they are everywhere, in every church parish - only give them the chance.'

"Archbishop Andrew often appealed to Admiral Kolchak himself with his plan for organizing parishes throughout Eastern Russia. But he was rejected, and sometimes even persecuted. And this in spite of the fact that the supreme ruler himself greatly respected him.

"And so this major Russian activist and patriot failed until almost the very end to find an application for his abilities."

Later, in 1933, Archbishop Andrew expressed his final opinion on socialism and the revolution in the final chapter of his book, The Story of my Old-Ritualism, in which he wrote: "I must finish - I have used all my material relating to the story of my old-Ritualism. Now I consider it my sacred duty to say firmly and openly: I am an irreconcilable enemy of caesaropapism, and of all violence... I am not a revolutionary, for in the revolution there is a large element of spite and vengefulness. But I well understand the revolution as a protest against injustice and violence... I am not even a Christian socialist, for in so-called Christian socialism there is something from the evil one in the form of useless human verbiage and contradictions. Christian socialism, like social democracy is the fruit of Roman Catholicism, just as Bolshevism is the fruit of Petersburg caesaropapism."

Although Vladyka had been on the side of the Whites, and although, in 1918, the Ufa newspaper Zavolzhskij Letopisets (N 1, p. 8) described Bolshevism as "an illness of the spirit, socialism of the belly, the service of Mammon", he renounced counter-revolution after the collapse of the White armies. Thus in August, 1920 he promised A.G. Goikhdart of the Siberian Revolutionary

Committee that he would not undertake any open or secret agitation against Soviet power, and that he would be completely loyal to it.

At the same time, he welcomed article 13 of the Soviet Constitution on the separation of church and state.

On February 28, 1920 Vladyka Andrew was arrested by the Cheka in Novonikolayevsk. On March 8 he was cast into prison in Omsk, but in November he was released on amnesty after promising loyalty to Soviet power. He returned to Ufa.

On February 28, 1921 Vladyka was arrested in Omsk and accused of "giving sermons in which he called on the peasants to organize themselves into peasant unions", of inciting class hatred and aiding the Whites, and of "participation in Kolchak's Temporary Ecclesiastical Administration". On November 1, 1921 he was sent under convoy to Moscow, and on November 5 was imprisoned first in the inner prison of the GPU and then in the Butyrki prison.

At the end of the year Patriarch Tikhon appointed him bishop of Tomsk.

From this time until his death, Vladyka was only rarely out of prison or exile. Nevertheless, the people did not forget him, and many managed to see him in prison or deliver food parcels to him; and every time he was released and returned to his flock, it would cause a whole 'event' among the people. The Secret Police sought to use his popularity as bait to fish out the more fervent church people, but Bishop Andrew was so cautious and prudent in his behaviour that these attempts always failed.

In 1922 he fell ill in prison with tuberculosis of the lungs, and on February 22 was treated in one of the private Moscow clinics before being returned to Butyrki. On August 8, 1922 he was acquitted by the Moscow revolutionary tribunal "because of insufficient evidence". In the same month, according to one source, Archbishop Andrew met Patriarch Tikhon and received from him the blessing to elect candidates for the episcopate and arrange their consecration in secret - if necessary, moreover, by one bishop only.

On November 14 he returned to Ufa. In the same month he, together with Bishop Nicholas (Ipatov), consecrated a group of bishops for the main regions of his diocese. These included Bishops Trophimus, Mark, Habbakuk and Benjamin. Other bishops consecrated with his active participation in this period included: Amphilochius (Skvortsov) and Benjamin (Frolov).

In May, 1922, Vladyka convened a diocesan congress, rejected renovationism and declared the Ufa diocese to be autonomous on the basis of the ukaz of the Patriarchal Locum Tenens, Metropolitan Agathangel, of May 18. The renovationists immediately labelled Archbishop Andrew and his group of bishops "the Andrewite schism". Thus in an article for Vlast' Truda a certain P. Pravdin rejected the "schismatic" bishops' right to rule their flock. And he

went on to say that Bishops Mark, Trophimus and Habbakuk "act under the banner of Patriarch Tikhon, which prompts Soviet power to think of arresting these bishops".

By this time there was only one Orthodox church in Ufa; all the rest were renovationist. So serious was the situation that Archbishop Andrew once said to the married priest Fr. Victor (Poyarkov): "You and matushka must accept monasticism so as to save the Church!" Fr. Victor and matushka obeyed the call, and on November 29 / December 12, 1922 Fr. John (as he was now called in monasticism) was consecrated Bishop of Davlekanovsk, a little town near Ufa.

In February, 1923, Vladyka Andrew was again arrested, and on February 23 was sentenced to three years' exile in Central Asia, first, on May 3, in Tashkent and then in Ashkhabad (Poltoratsk). At the beginning of June (or May 24), 1923 he was arrested in Tashkent and was imprisoned for a short time. At the end of June he was sent to Tedzhen in Turkmenia. There he organized and led an Orthodox community. In October (November) he was arrested in Tedzhen, and on November 5 (4), 1923 was cast into prison in Tashkent. In April, 1924 he was in cell no. 7 of the GPU in Tedzhen. On November 17, 1924 he arrived under OGPU convoy in Moscow. Then he was again exiled to Tedzhen, and then to Askhabad.

The Old Ritualists

Just after the February revolution, Archbishop Andrew presided over the All-Russian Congress of Yedinovertsy (that is, converts to Orthodoxy from the Old Ritualists who were allowed to retain the Old Rite) in Nizhni-Novgorod. In May, 1917, together with the future hieromartyr-bishop Joseph (Petrovykh) and the yedinovertets Protopriest (later bishop and hieromartyr) Simon (Sheev), he visited the Rogozhskoye monastery in Moscow, the spiritual centre of the Byelokrinitsky Old Ritualist hierarchy, and handed over a letter from the Congress expressing a desire for union. However, the reply of the Old Ritualist bishops was negative.

In January, 1919 Bishop Andrew was elected bishop of Satkinsk (Ufa diocese) and the first-hierarch of all the Yedinovertsy.

But Vladyka's sympathy for the Old Ritualists went further than these early actions would suggest, and further than the opinion, which was generally accepted in his time, that the anathemas on the Old Rite were unjust and should be removed. Influenced by one of his teachers at the Academy, Professor N. Kapterev, he adopted a still more "liberal" attitude towards the Old Ritualists which has been a subject of controversy to this day. While continuing to recognize the pre-revolutionary Church, he considered that it had fallen into caesaropapism, or the "Niconian heresy" as he called it, and that it was "Niconianism" that had led to the Russian revolution and to the renovationist and sergianist submission of the Church to Soviet power. He often referred to

the Orthodox as “Niconians”, while calling the Old Ritualists “Ancient Orthodox”, whose schism was not a schism, but precisely a protest against this unlawful encroachment on the freedom of the Church. Therefore Vladyka Andrew's attempted rapprochement with the Old Ritualists must be seen in the context of the main struggle of the times - the struggle of the Church against Soviet power and renovationist and sergianist caesaropapism.

Let us turn to Archbishop Andrew's own account of his dealings with the Old Ritualists: “In September, 1917 the so-called beglopopovtsi [i.e. those Old Ritualists who accepted runaway priests from the official Russian Church, but had no hierarchy of their own] approached me with the request that I become their bishop. At this time I was in Moscow at the 1917 Council. I agreed in principle, but on condition that my flock in Ufa should remain in my jurisdiction. It was Lev Alexeyevich Molekhonov who was conducting negotiations with me on the side of the beglopopovtsi. He assembled in Moscow a small convention of representatives of other communities of theirs. At this convention, after long discussions, they agreed that my union with this group of Old Ritualists should take place in the following manner: I would come without vestments to the church of the beglopopovtsi in Moscow (on M. Andronievskaja street). They would meet me with the question: ‘Who are you?’ I would reply at first that I was a bishop of the Orthodox, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and then I would read the Symbol of Faith and a lengthy confession of faith, which everyone ordained to the episcopate would read. Then I, at the request of the beglopopovtsi, would anoint myself with the same chrism which they in 1917 called and considered to be patriarchal, which remained [to them] from Patriarch Joseph [(1642-1652), the last Moscow Patriarch recognized by both the Orthodox and the Old Ritualists]. With this my ‘rite of reception’ would come to an end.

“My spiritual father, Archbishop Anthony of Kharkov, knew about all these negotiations, and Patriarch Tikhon was informed about everything. They approved my intentions.

“Thus from both sides everything was measured, calculated, thought out and humanly speaking worked out in a manner completely acceptable for all. After this I went to Ufa.

“But then the events of 1918 and 1919 took place. The beglopopovtsi lost me for a long time. I was in Siberia and then in a difficult incarceration... But in 1925, when I was in exile in Askhabad, the beglopopovets Archimandrite Clement came to me and began to ask me again that I should become bishop for the beglopopovtsi...

“I agreed to do everything that I had promised to L.A. Molekhonov... Moreover, I agreed to become bishop for the beglopopovtsi only on condition that Archimandrite Clement should himself receive consecration to the episcopate and would become de facto an active bishop, for I myself was chained to Askhabad or some other place for a long time.

“Clement accepted all my conditions and on August 28, 1925 we for the first time prayed together with him to God in a truly Orthodox, that is, not caesaropapist church [!!!]; I on my side had fulfilled everything that I had been blessed to do by Patriarch Tikhon. On September 3, 1925 I (together with Bishop Rufinus) consecrated Clement to the episcopate, giving him the authority to be my deputy, as it were, as long as I did not enjoy freedom of movement...

“After this we parted on the same day of September 3.

“But soon I received news from Bishop Clement that the beglopopovtsi recognised neither me nor him as their bishops and that he, Clement, had been received in his existing rank into the number of the bishops of the Belokrinnitsky hierarchy.”

It appears that the beglopopovtsi did not recognize Archbishop Andrew because “1) the chrismation was carried out incorrectly, and 2) although he renounced heresies and promised ‘to preserve myself from heresies’, he again fell into heresy, continuing to be in communion with the Nikonians.”

According to a letter of Metropolitan Sergius, Archbishop Andrew denied any chrismation: “he was anointed only, he says, as a sign of joy, like the anointing with oil during the All-Night Vigil”. Bishop Seraphim (Trophimov), in a letter to an Andrewite community in Birska, wrote: “Bishop Andrew is trying to assure all good people that he did not leave the Church, did not renounce it, and calls himself as before an Orthodox bishop.”

On October 31, 1925 Bishop Clement was received through repentance by Archbishop Meletius of the “Belokrinnitskaya” hierarchy.

The renovationist Vestnik Svysashchennago Synoda reported: "According to the report of Archimandrite Clement, Bishop Andrew did not agree to the second rite (i.e. chrismation) for a long time, and agreed only after sustained discussions with, or demands from Clement, based on the 95th canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council (which orders that heretics should be united to Orthodoxy only through chrismation).

"Archbishop Andrew said the following to Clement before the chrismation: 'It is not your hand that is being laid upon me, but the hand of that patriarch who consecrated your ancient chrism: when you read the proclamation, and when I recite the heresies and confession of faith before chrismation, then I immediately become your bishop and can commune with you. But since I am your bishop, that means that a priest cannot anoint a bishop.'

"After this, Archbishop Andrew anointed himself with the Old Ritualist chrism [more exactly: the chrism consecrated by the Orthodox Patriarch Joseph] and read out the following confession of faith: 'I, Bishop Andrew, of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, who was consecrated to the

rank of bishop on October 4, 1907 in front of the holy relics of the Kazan hierarchs Gurias and Barsanuphius and on the day of their commemoration, and who am now suffering persecution from the ruling hierarchy for the freedom of the Church of Christ, confess before the Holy Church that Patriarch Nikon in his wisdom disrupted the life and love of the Catholic Church, thereby laying the beginnings of the schism in the Russian Church. On the basis of Patriarch Nikon's mistake was established that caesaropapism which has, since the time of Patriarch Nikon, undermined all the roots of Russian Church life and was finally expressed in the formation of the so-called 'Living Church', which is at present the ruling hierarchy and which has transgressed all the church canons... But I, although I am a sinful and unworthy bishop, by the mercy of God ascribe myself to no ruling hierarchy and have always remembered the command of the holy Apostle Peter: 'Pasture the flock of God without lording it over God's inheritance'."

Hearing about the events in Ashkhabad, Metropolitan Peter, the locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne, supposedly banned Archbishop Andrew from serving, although a later search in the Synodal offices revealed no such decree, as witnessed by a "Spravka" by the Chancellor of the Patriarchal Synod, Archbishop Pitirim of Dmitrov on October 27, 1927 (№ 1799). However, Archbishop Andrew was not inclined to obey such a decree, whether genuine or not; for he considered Metropolitan Peter to be "an autocrat in clerical guise" who had ascended the ecclesiastical ladder by means of an intrigue, and the whole system of the succession of power in the Church by means of secret wills to be uncanonical – more precisely, contrary to the 23rd Canon of the Council of Antioch. Thus he continued to "ascribe myself to no ruling hierarchy", and to rule the Ufa diocese on an autonomous basis until the convening of a Council of the whole Russian Church, consecrating no less than 40 bishops for the Catacomb Church – about 30 already by the beginning of 1927.

As regards the supposed ban on Archbishop Andrew by Metropolitan Peter, we must conclude either, if we are to believe Metropolitan Sergius, that "it may have been lost on the road", or, much more likely, that it never existed. Unfortunately, however, this supposed ban by Metropolitan Peter caused him to be distrusted for a time by Archbishop Andrew. But this distrust did not last, as we shall see...

On April 26 (according to another source, July), 1926, Metropolitan Peter's deputy, Metropolitan Sergius, renewed the attack on Archbishop Andrew, and banned him from serving. He said that he "was subjected to ban by the patriarchal locum tenens [Metropolitan Peter] for communion with the beglopopovtsi and for receiving chrismation from them, and for unlawful ordinations". However, even if we assume that the charges against him were justified, this ban was invalid, since it transgressed the 74th Apostolic canon. According to this, a bishop must be first be summoned to trial by bishops, and if he does not obey, he must be summoned again through two bishops who are sent to bring him, and then a third time through two bishops, and only when he does not appear the third time will the Council pronounce its decisions

about him. In the case of Archbishop Andrew, he was not only not invited to a trial, but the sentence against him was passed, not by a Council, but by a single bishop like himself. From this it follows that his ban was invalid.

Archbishop Andrew wrote: "This Sergius, knowing that I was in Ufa, wrote to my flock a letter, filled with slander against me, as if I had fallen away from Orthodoxy, as if I by the second rite had united myself to the beglopopovtsi, etc. I had no difficulty in proving that this was a lie and that the deputy of the locum tenens was simply a liar!...

"And so Metropolitan Sergius slandered me, traveling along this well-trodden path of slander and lies. But in Ufa amidst the 'Niconians' there were some thinking people and they did not believe Sergius' slander, as they did not believe Peter's. Moreover, two things took place which served to help me personally and help the Church in general.

"At that time I had two vicar-bishops with me - Anthony [Milovidov, of Ust-Katavsky] and Pitirim [of Nizhegorod, later Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin)]. Both of them wanted to check out everything that related to me in the matter of the reunion with Old Ritualism. Anthony set off to check things out in Moscow, obtained the trust of people in the chancellery of the Patriarchal Synod and personally got into the Synodal archive, so as to study the documents relating to me.

"You can imagine his surprise when in the spring of 1927 he became convinced that there were absolutely no documents about me in the Synodal archives, neither about my 'departure into schism', nor about my 'ban', etc. He asked in the Synod what this meant, and received the exceptionally characteristic reply: 'Metropolitan Peter was probably only wanting to frighten Bishop Andrew'!...

"Bishop Pitirim, a 70-year-old monk who used to be on Old Athos, a clever man, although unlettered, went not to the sergianist Synod, which he did not recognize, but to Yaroslavl to Metropolitan Agathangelus, so as to tell him everything concerning Church life in Ufa in detail and to hear his opinion. Metropolitan Agathangel heard Bishop Pitirim out very attentively for several hours (two days) and told my vicar-bishop Pitirim (whom I had consecrated to the episcopate during my first exile in Tedzhen in June, 1925), that he should not be upset, that my ecclesiastical behaviour was irreproachable and that only in the interests of ecclesiastical peace he, Metropolitan Agathangel, advised me not to carry out any hierarchical consecrations but in the interests of the enlightenment of the flock in Ufa and other faithful sons of the Church, he, Metropolitan Agathangel, advised me to present my whole 'case' before the judgement of the nearest - at least three - bishops.

"'But this is only my advice, and it will be clearer how to act on the spot,'" said Metropolitan Agathangel to Bishop Pitirim.

“Bishop Pitirim, on returning to Ufa, told me about all this, and Bishop Habbakuk of Old Ufa decided immediately to carry out the advice of Metropolitan Agathangel and on February 3, 1927 he invited Bishop Pitirim and Anthony to a convention in Ufa, while he asked me for all the materials that would explain my ecclesiastical behaviour.

“On February 3, 1927 these three bishops issued under their signatures an ‘Act with regard to the Affair of Archbishop Andrew’, in which they laid out the circumstances of the affair and came to the conclusion that I had not ‘departed’ anywhere, and that Metropolitan Sergius’ slander was in essence a light-minded and shameful intrusion into a holy affair.”

Vladyka Andrew's own view of his episcopal authority is contained in his reply to the Address of the clergy-lay assembly of March 26, 1926: "I remain a bishop for those who recognize me as their bishop, who fed me for the six years I was in prison, and who need me. I don't impose my episcopate on anyone."

Archbishop Andrew returned from exile to Ufa at the end of 1926, and according to eyewitnesses, the people visited their Vladyka in unending streams. However, the Ufa clergy led by the newly appointed Bishop John met him with hostility and coldness. As one of his parishioners wrote in her diary: "The people search him out and revere him, and all the parishioners of various churches invite him to them, while the clergy does not accept him. There are many rumours, and no one knows what to believe..." Bishop Andrew took up his residence in the workers' quarter on Samara street not far from the Simeonov church. He served in the Simeonov church, and in such a way, according to another eyewitness, that "we ascended to heaven and did not want to come down."

On June 13, 1927 Archbishop Andrew was summoned by the OGPU to Moscow, where he was arrested and on July 8 condemned to three years in exile and was sent to Kzyl-Orda in Kazakhstan.

Meanwhile, from October 3-6, 1927 a large diocesan Congress took place in the Simeonov church in Ufa with the participation of Bishops Clement (Longinov), Habbakuk (Borovkov), Rufinus (Brekhov) and other "Andrewites", at which the "Act" was approved, Archbishop Andrew vindicated "as their true Ufa archpastor" and Metropolitan Sergius accused of lying. After interrogating Bishop Clement and Nun Theva, the Congress declared that: (1) there had been no transfer of an Orthodox community and church to Old Ritualism, (2) there had been no re-sanctification of the church, (3) Archbishop Andrew had not confessed with the beglopopovets Clement, but had confessed with Abbot Matthew, (4) Clement had also confessed with Abbot Matthew, and (5) Vladyka Andrew had not been received by the beglopopovtsi by any rite, and Clement had not chrismated him. The reunion had taken place, not according to a beglopopovtsi rite, but according to a rite specially composed by Vladyka Andrew and approved already in 1917 by

Patriarch Tikhon. The Congress confirmed Vladyka Andrew as their ruling archpastor, and Bishop Habbakuk as his deputy in his absence.

At the same Congress a decision was made about reunion with the Old Ritualists of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy. Representatives of these Old Ritualists were present at the Congress and suggested reunion. A special commission was formed to work out the bases for the reunion, a project of reconciliation was drawn up, which was to be confirmed at a future Council of both sides.

However, Archbishop Andrew's relations with the Old Ritualists did not end there. From 1928 to 1931 he was in prison, and on his release in October, 1931, he began to visit the Rogozhskoye cemetery again. He concluded "that I am for them not a stranger, but their own, and I am for them not a hostile and harmful 'Niconian', but a true bishop of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church". It seems that he then entered into communion with Archbishop Meletius (Kartushin) of Moscow, the first-hierarch of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, and together with him consecrated a secret bishop, Basil Guslinsky.

Soon, however, on April 14 he was arrested in Moscow in connection with the affair of Bishop Seraphim (Zvezdinsky), and on July 7 was exiled to Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan. At about this time, on April 1, Old Ritualist priests sent him the Holy Gifts and an omophorion. Archbishop Andrew now considered himself to be in full communion with Archbishop Meletius "in the holy ecclesiastical dogmas, and in prayer, and in ecclesiastical discipline (that is, in the holy rites)". At the same time, he rejected the idea that he had "transferred" to the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, and insisted on remaining Bishop of Ufa, retaining "full freedom of Church action, rousing the suspicions of nobody". Archbishop Meletius appears to have accepted this condition.

In reviewing the relations between Archbishop Andrew and the Old Ritualists, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the Old Ritualists used the good intentions and missionary zeal of the holy bishop to deceive him into making errors that have cast a shadow over his reputation both then and to the present day. He considered that, as a result of his actions, "the schism, as a schism, has ideologically speaking come to an end". But he was tricked by the beglopopovtsi, who rejected both him and the bishop he had consecrated for them, Clement. And there was not then, and has not been since then, any union between the Orthodox Church and the Old Ritualists of the Belokrinitsky hierarchy. Nor can there be, since the Belokrinitsky hierarchy, as the "Andrewites" themselves admit, followed the sergianists in becoming a tool of Soviet propaganda.

In striving, like the Apostle Paul, to be "all things to all men", Archbishop Andrew sometimes expressed extreme statements concerning Patriarch Nikon and the pre-revolutionary Church which have not been generally accepted by the Russian Orthodox Church (or even, paradoxically, by his spiritual father, Metropolitan Anthony, who considered Patriarch Nikon to be an uncanonized saint). This gave the opportunity to lesser, evil-intentioned men, such as

Metropolitan Sergius, to cast doubt on Archbishop Andrew's Orthodoxy. But in fact Vladyka maintained his good confession, as we shall see, was later accepted into communion by Metropolitan Joseph, the leader of the Catacomb Church, and finally gave his life in martyrdom for Christ...

Sergianism

On June 13, 1927, as we have seen, Archbishop Andrew was summoned to Moscow and arrested. On July 8 he was exiled to the town of Kyzyl-Orda in Kazakhstan. There he continued to tonsure monastics and ordain priests. And from there he continued to instruct his flock by means of letters, sermons and theoretical treatises, which were all transcribed by his numerous co-workers and distributed throughout Bashkiria. On July 29, 1927, Metropolitan Sergius issued his infamous declaration. Archbishop Andrew's response was unambiguous. Already at a meeting of deans in Ufa in 1926 he had called Sergius "a man of great capacities, capable of every kind of compromise. He was a Rasputinite with the Rasputinites - without the hint of a protest - for a whole 14 years. In 1922 he became a livingchurchman with the livingchurchmen, shamelessly recognizing the HCA and betraying Patriarch Tikhon - he recognized the thief Barabbas." In another place Sergius is called "a liar", and his declaration "a real quintessence of Niconian caesaropapist boorishness, which... by the depth of its anti-Churchness and treachery is something of outstanding and unheard-of scandalousness."

On November 8, 1927 Archbishop Andrew issued a "Circular Epistle" called "On the Joys of Metropolitan Sergius" against Metropolitan Sergius, which had a considerable influence, especially in the Vyatka diocese, where Bishop Victor (Ostrovidov) separated from Sergius.

According to one source, Vladyka Andrew signed the acts of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church through his vicar, Bishop Job. This Council anathematized the sergianists. And during the time of this Council, on June 18, 1928, he wrote the following "Epistle to the brethren": "Yes, we are all living through a fearful, terrible time, when lies and deceit rule and celebrate their triumph on the earth. The breath of the Antichrist can be felt in every corner of our life. Even Metropolitan Peter did not escape this breath of the Antichrist. But later he repented and now he is in a distant exile. As for the renovationists and Metropolitan Sergius, they have completely bowed down to that beast of which the holy book of the Revelation of John the Theologian speaks. Read the thirteenth chapter. Both the renovationists and Metropolitan Sergius are carrying out only the will of the atheists. And they do not hide this from anyone, but even write about it in their 'Declarations'. That is why every true son of the Church must flee from these betrayers of Christ without looking back; and all true children of the Church must give their parish communities foundations that are free and independent of the hierarch betrayers of Christ. There is no doubt that the hierarchs who have submitted to Metropolitan Sergius have all renounced the people of the Church and are serving the atheists and are only corrupting the believing people. That is why it is

necessary to carry out the command from the Revelation of John the Theologian: 'Come out from her, My people, so that you may not participate in her sins and not be subjected to her plagues' (Rev. 18.4). It is necessary that all parish priests should be elected and not appointed. It is necessary that all priests should give their signatures to the parish councils that they will do nothing without the knowledge of the parish council. It is necessary that bishops, too, should be elected by the people for their pious life, and not drunkards or betrayers of Christ whom the renovationists have appointed."

On October 17, 1928 Archbishop Andrew was arrested again in Kyzyl-Orda for anti-Soviet agitation with **Maria Dmitrievna Gerasimova** (who was sentenced to six months in prison). He was taken to Moscow and cast into Butyrki prison. On January 18, 1929 he was sent into solitary confinement for three years in cell no. 23 of Yaroslavl prison.

On February 15, 1930 Metropolitan Sergius gave his notorious interview for TASS, in which he denied that there was persecution against religion in the USSR and equated the Church confessors with common criminals, Archbishop Andrew wrote: "This interview morally oppressed all of us arrested churchmen. I draw the attention of the reader: the 'interview' was not with the patriarch, and not with his locum tenens, but with the deputy of the locum tenens and 'his (!!) Synod', that is, simply a warm company of Sergius' friends... But where was the patriarch? Where, at any rate, was his locum tenens? Cain, Cain, where is your brother?"

Then, after citing the question and answer at the interview, Vladyka wrote: "Such is the opinion of the false head of the false patriarchal church Metropolitan Sergius. Who, after all this, can recognize him as their head? For whom will this false head remain as such, in spite of his betrayal of Christ? Imagine, readers - they recognize him, many recognize him!... They curse him, but recognize him as their 'canonical' head. As if it were better to sit in hell with such a canonical head than without any head at all... But tell me, reader, is it possible to consider this company of hierarchs, these universal deceivers, as followers of Christ? - It goes without saying: no and no! All the followers of the lying Metropolitan Sergius are themselves filled to overflowing with lies and cunning and have fallen away from the truth of Christ - they have fallen away from the Church of Christ. The Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is in some other place, but not with Metropolitan Sergius and not with his 'Synod'. Let the reader himself search where she is... It is not so difficult to find her. But one can firmly say that Metropolitan Sergius has convincingly demonstrated that the Synodal government of the Church did not give, and could not give her anything but harm. Sergius has dug a deep grave for this kind of Church government. The Holy Church will recall the sins of Sergius and his co-strugglers with horror, placing his name next to the names of the ecumenical false-patriarchs - Nestorius, Dioscurus and the other terrible traitors against Orthodoxy. When the hierarch Athanasius of Alexandria was expelled from his see by an heretical emperor, then, of course, hierarchs were found who readily

carried out all the unlawful commands of the tsar. These hierarchs were called by St. Athanasius, not episkopoi [bishops], but kataskopoi (i.e. the emperor's spies) deprived of all the gifts of grace. Such are our contemporary kataskopoi; they are destroyers of the churches of God and of Church life in general. Such is Metropolitan Sergius."

On October 2, 1931, Archbishop Andrew's three-year term in Yaroslavl came to an end, but he was not allowed to go to Bashkiria or Siberia and had to stay in one place for three years. He was sent to Moscow, where there were at that time only four parishes which rejected sergianism. Archbishop Andrew visited the Nikolsky church in Podkopyayevsky pereulka on October 8, prayed there and confessed and received absolution from a certain Hieromonk Gregory. But soon, from fear of Metropolitan Sergius, they asked him to leave that church, too.

On April 14, 1932 Archbishop Andrew was again arrested for being "a participant in the Moscow branch of the True Orthodox Church" and cast into Butyrki prison.

We have the following account of a fellow-prisoner: "In May, 1932, I was transferred from the inner prison of the GPU to the hospital of the isolation wing, scurvy ward, of Butyrki prison. Within two days Bishop Andrew of Ufa... was transferred from the venereal ward to this ward. Before this transfer, Bishop Andrew had been kept from February, 1932 to May 1st in the inner prison of the GPU in solitary confinement, and then for four days he had been kept - supposedly because there was no other place - in the second ward of the Butyrki prison, the ward of the psychologically ill; then for several days he had been kept in the fifth (venereal) ward, and finally he was transferred to the fourth (scurvy) ward, since in fact he was ill of scurvy. In 1919 I had been with Bishop Andrew in the Omsk prison. But now he was unrecognizable; only a little hair remained on his head and face, almost all of it having fallen out as a result of scurvy; he had become completely grey, decrepit, so thin that he could not be recognized; but he was still as ever humble, encouraging, good, responsive. At the present time he was accused of organizing Orthodox communities [i.e. of the Catacomb Church], which was against Soviet law, and of agitation and propaganda against Bolshevism. During the evenings in the prison Vladyka Andrew would usually hold everyone's attention with his stories, and it should be said that he had such an effect on the prisoners around him that even the criminals, disgraced communists and others never dared to swear and curse in his presence. Bishop Andrew reacted actively and openly to all the injustices in prison (for which he was often deprived of parcels which had been sent him by friends outside). Bishop Andrew referred to the chief priest of Soviet Russia, the head of the Moscow Orthodox Church, as a betrayer of Christ. He responded calmly and in a philosophically reserved way to prison, banishment and other misfortunes. And he suffered more for those around him than for himself. He had an encouraging influence on his fellow prisoners. Large parcels would be sent him as the local residents quickly found out from the prison personnel concerning his arrival at a place of

imprisonment. The parcels were not always given to him, but those he received he shared with those who had none."

On July 7, 1932 Archbishop Andrew was exiled for three years to Alma-Ata, from where he conducted an extensive correspondence with his co-workers and admirers both in Ufa and throughout Russia. There, according to one source, he met Metropolitan Joseph, and they consecrated a bishop, Nicetas, together. According to the memoirs of the priest Alexander Bogoslovsky, which are preserved in the archive of Protopriest Valery Mokhov of the church of the Kazan Mother of God in Ufa, in Alma-Ata "Archbishop Andrew received endless parcels, which he distributed. There were some criminals there, and they also received of his largesse - they adored him. He was put in charge of the warehouses, but in a childlike manner he attached no importance to material values and so he was given another job as a sweeper." Another witness records that "Vladyka Andrew reacted in a lively and open fashion to all the injustices that took place in prison, for which the bosses did not love him, but feared him. He prayed a great deal. He entered into arguments with the atheists and always left them in a derisory position, for which he was often deprived of parcels."

At the beginning of January, 1934 Vladyka was transferred to Suzak, which was 120 kilometres from a railway station in Turkestan.

On October 4, 1932 he wrote: "After Peter, Metropolitan Sergius took his place, having obtained it in a completely anti-canonical manner. This administration of Metropolitan Sergius can be characterised in the words: hypocrisy and cynical dishonour. Whereas the Lord Himself demands from His followers, first of all, that they should avoid the leaven of the Pharisees (Luke 12.1) and the leaven of Herod (Mark 8.15), while honourableness is considered the elementary virtue of every citizen and a still more necessary virtue for a bishop (I Timothy 3.2). The same leaven of Herod has forced Metropolitan Sergius and all those communicating with him to violate the 30th Apostolic Canon, the 3rd Canon of the Seventh Ecumenical Council and very many others. In general the sins of Sergius and his dishonourable Synod are evident and all in all can be called 'the dishonourable heresy of the slanderers of Christianity' (The Seventh Ecumenical Council, canon 7). This heresy is more evil than the heresy of slandering the holy icons (iconoclasm). It is a new union with unbelief, bound up with the establishment of completely anti-eclesiastical kataskopoi. It is a hidden form of Arianism - a political... In view of the aforesaid, from July, 1927 I was forced (forced precisely by Metropolitan Sergius and his unrighteousnesses) to depart completely from these hierarchs, who do not want to be servitors of the Church, as the Apostle Paul commanded (Colossians 1.25), but wish only to lord it over God's inheritance, which the Apostle Paul so decisively forbade (I Timothy 5.3). I consider that there can be no concord between Christ and Beliar, between the faithful and the unfaithful (II Corinthians 2.16). And yet it is on this that all the 'Niconian' hierarchs, without distinction of groupings, establish this sinful agreement and wish to

set up the Church, and not on the Cross of Christ. Besides, they consider that they, that is, the hierarchs, are the Church, in spite of the teaching of the Apostle Paul (II Corinthians 5.4). But I consider that the holy Church is constituted by all the Ritualists, all the sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3.26), the whole people of God, the living stones from which the spiritual house is being built (I Peter 2.5), the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12.27; Hebrews 1.23).”

The Simeonovsky Church

In 1929-30 there many arrests of the active members of the Simeonovsky parish, including the members of the sisterhood attached to the church: **Olga Yakina, Nina Filimonova, Nelli Solovyova, Olga Antipina, Niura Vasilieva** – no less than fifteen in all. These young women were sentenced to administrative exile in Kazan and Central Asia for periods of up to 3 years. Not one of them renounced Archbishop Andrew or their religious convictions under interrogation.

Nun Anna (Gavrilovna Vasilyeva) was born in Ufa in 1899. In the sisterhood she would make copies of Archbishop Andrew’s sermons with copying paper and sell them at the door of the church on Sundays. With the money she gained from this she bought food and prepared meals for the poor in the trapeze attached to the church. . She was arrested in Ufa in 1928 and sent to prison in Kazan. On February 2, 1932 she was arrested and cast into the central labour correctional facility of Bashkiria. On April 13 she was condemned by the OGPU and sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 to three years’ exile in Kazakhstan. She was in Alma-Ata (or Tashkent) at the same time as Archbishop Andrew. Nothing more is known about her.

Nun Valentina (Petrovna Chalkina) was born on January 28, 1902 in Ufa. She finished three courses at a pedagogical institute and two courses at an institute in Petrograd. Then she worked as a physics teacher. She was arrested for the first time in Ufa in August, 1923 for “counter-revolutionary church activity”, but was released in December of the same year. She was again arrested for a short time in 1925. In 1926 she got to know Archbishop Andrew, who appointed her as a catechist in the Simeonovsky church. She also distributed his appeals. In October, 1927 she was a participant in the Ufa Congress of Oldchurchmen. On November 11 she was arrested together with Bishop Habbakuk (Borovkov), his sister and two parishioners (and three others, according to another source). They were all condemned for anti-Soviet activity according to article 58-11, part 1. Mother Valentina was given three years corrective labour in the camps in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 part 1. On August 1, 1937 she was again arrested. The certificate for her arrest stated that, “being an active participant in the counter-revolutionary fascist-monarchist organization of Andrewite Churchmen, she moved from the sect of the Baptists to the followers of Bishop Andrew and carried out the duties of his personal secretary. After the exile of Bishop Andrew she carried out the functions of a communications centre through whom links with Bishop

Andrew were maintained, his counter-revolutionary instructions were passed on to his followers and illegal religious communities were formed from people dissatisfied with Soviet power". On November 21 she was convicted by a troika of the NKVD for being "an active participant in the counter-revolutionary, rebellious organization of church people 'The Union of Free Christian Communities', aiming to prepare an armed uprising against Soviet power". The prosecutor's conclusion said that she, "being a participant in a counter-revolutionary organization, conducted active work in convening a Congress of participants in the organization in Ufa, at which a declaration was accepted including a whole series of political demands of a counter-revolutionary character, in which she played the role of secretary. At the orders of the leader of the organization, the former Prince Ukhtomsky, she conducted propaganda, spoke out with counter-revolutionary agitation and preached first among the Baptists, and then among the Old Ritualists, the idea of their union with the counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen..." Some senior clergy were also indicted in this, "The Case of the Ufa Churchmen, Ufa, 1937", but only Matushka Valentina received the maximum sentence of ten years in the camps in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11. On November 29 she was sent from the city prison in Ufa to Karlag in Kazakhstan. While in camp she was tonsured into monasticism. In 1939 Matushka Valentina's grandmother appealed for a review of her case, writing that "my granddaughter has her individual Christian convictions, she has never belonged to a single contemporary Church group and does not want to belong to one. But I suppose that her Christian convictions could not be counted as a political crime or serve as a reason for her being condemned a second time..." On July 31, 1947 she finished her sentence and went to Serdobsk in Penza province, where on January 13, 1949 she was again arrested and imprisoned. The indictment state that, being an active participant in a counter-revolutionary insurgent organization of churchmen, she conducted hostile work against the communist party and the Soviet State". In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 she was convicted of "belonging to an anti-Soviet insurgent organization of Churchmen". She was exiled to Krasnoyarsk region, where she lived until 1954 and perhaps longer. In 1960 she was living in Ufa and working in a park.

Olga Petrovna Romodanovskaya (Yakina) was born in 1911 in Ufa into the family of a doctor. After the activities of the sisterhood were cut off by the authorities in 1928, she was not arrested because she was still a minor. However, in May, 1930 she was arrested after the chance finding in her flat of the archive of Bishop Habbakuk of Old Ufa. During interrogations she refused to name any of the people to whom the manuscripts belonged. She admitted that after the arrest of members of the sisterhood she had continued her "counter-revolutionary activity" for eighteen months. When asked whether she was intending to continue it now, if she were put on trial, she replied that she would never give up this activity, on the contrary she would strive to develop it still more intensely. She was condemned for preparing and distributing anti-Soviet literature, and sentenced in accordance with article 58-10 to three years' exile in Tashkent. During her exile, she went illegally from Tashkent to Alma-Ata, where Archbishop Andrew was in exile.

Nina Filonova was a spiritual daughter of Archbishop Andrew, and took an active part in the work of the sisterhood. She was arrested in Ufa in 1928 and sent to prison in Kazan. She was condemned according to article 58-10 and sentenced to three years' exile.

Anastasia Alexandrovna Yevgraphova was born in 1890 and lived in Ufa, serving Archbishop Andrew and suffering many privations. In 1928 she was arrested and condemned for anti-Soviet activity. She was exiled to Kazan. In 1933 she was again arrested for keeping and distributing Church literature and conducting anti-Soviet agitation. However, the prosecutors did not succeed in proving her guilt, and she was not sentenced, although the following was preserved in the records of the case: "She sent a parcel to Ukhtomsky by post in time for the feast of Pascha. In about the month of April on her initiative a large parcel with food and various things was collected for [Bishop] Benjamin Troitsky in the town of Melekess, which she wanted to send with Nikolskaya and Artemyeva, but the latter were detained at the station by the GPU. But Yevgraphova was somehow able to escape and take all the letters addressed to Benjamin with her." A. Yevgraphova was arrested for the third time in 1937 and condemned. Her fate is unknown.

Many of the parishioners of the Simeonovsky church, whose numbers reached several hundred people, were subjected to repressions in 1928-31. But many suffered after the closure of the church in the middle of the 1930s.

It is amazing that, in spite of the repressions that had begun and the ever-increasing pressure of the authorities, Church life in the Simeonovsky parish not only did not cease, but even became still more lively. The protocols of the general meeting of the parish on 26 May, 1929, which expressed complete trust in Bishop Benjamin, indicate that 238 people were present at the meeting. The list of parishioners on March 29, 1931 numbered 663 people. Moreover, this list contained detailed information, addresses, etc.

The boldness of the parishioners compelled the NKVD to register the parish and allow it to function. When there were so many people, the authorities could not immediately decide to close it, although it represented for them a counter-revolutionary centre. Although the closure of the church was planned for the end of 1928, the parishioners succeeded in putting this off in 1929. When, at the beginning of 1929, information about the planned closure appeared in the newspapers, a huge crowd of about 500 people, moved towards the building of the city council demanding that the Simeonovsky church not be closed. At Bishop Benjamin's summons, the parishioners prayed fervently in the church and kept a three-day fast, as is the custom in Rus' in time of great woes.

In May, 1930 the parish asked to be registered in accordance with the new laws, and the NKVD of Bashkiria found it difficult to refuse them. On September 3, 1931, the authorities decreed the closure of the church, and Bishop Benjamin had already been arrested together with the warden of the church,

Olga Vonifatievna Vinokurova, and many nuns and active members of the parish. But the protests were so strong that it was only in 1932 that the authorities managed to close the church on the basis of a decree of June 10, 1932. After this, the remaining "Andrewites" entered the catacombs, although a large open parish existed in Sterlitamak under Bishop Rufinus until 1935.

Martyrdom

In March, 1934 Archbishop Andrew was arrested in Alma-Ata and taken to the Butyrki prison in Moscow. There, on May 14, he was condemned in accordance with article 58-10 to three years in the political isolator in Yaroslavl. On March 27, 1937 he was sentenced to another three years in a camp in the region of Rybinsk, Yaroslavl region, without right of correspondence, for creating an illegal counter-revolutionary organization and struggling against Soviet power. On the back of this paper Archbishop Andrew wrote: "I bitterly deplore Soviet justice and to this day I affirm that I have undertaken *no* counter-revolutionary activity. April 9, 1937. Ukhtomsky."

A prison report dated August 22, 1937 says that "during walks on feasts like Christmas and Pascha, he congratulated everyone and called on all the prisoners to celebrate the great feasts". And then one of his fellow-prisoners is named as "Novoselov" - that is, the Catacomb Hieromartyr Bishop Mark (Novoselov).

Finally another report from Yaroslavl prison states that on September 3, 1937 Archbishop Andrew was sentenced to be shot, which sentence was carried out on the following day...

Schema-Monk Epiphany (Chernov) writes: "Before the shooting the archbishop asked for permission to pray. The executioners gave the condemned man a few minutes. Vladyka fell on his knees. And it was as if a cloud covered him and he disappeared from view. The executioners were so upset that they had absolutely no idea what to do. He hadn't had the opportunity to flee, and at the same time he was not there... It was only about an hour later that the hierarch appeared on his knees in fiery prayer in the same place, as if covered by a radiant cloud which quickly dispersed. The murderers were glad that their victim was again in front of them, and that they did not have to answer for his disappearance. They hurried to carry out the sentence..."

Archbishop Andrew was glorified by the Russian Church Abroad in 1981.

In 1984 the elderly Nun Tabitha wrote in her memoirs: "Five years ago, Bishop Andrew appeared to me in my sleep and said: 'I've been assigned again to Ufa, I'm going to live with you.' What joy! The God-saved city of Ufa is under his supervision! Glory and thanks to the Lord God for this His care for Ufa and her people!"

**63. HIEROMARTYR MACARIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF
YEKATERINOSLAV (+1937)**

and those with him

Archbishop Macarius (in the world Gregory Yakovlevich Karmazin) was born on October 1, 1875 in the village of Zagoryany (Medzhibazh), Vinnitsa (or Ushitsky) uyezd, Podolsk province in the family of a land surveyor. Having finished his studies at the Kamenets-Podolsk theological seminary, he was tonsured and ordained to the priesthood on August 23, 1893, and was immediately sent to the village of Vitkovets, Kamenets uyezd, Podolsk province. On April 21, 1900 he was transferred to the village of Bandyshevka, Yampolsky uyezd, Podolsk province. In 1902 he became the priest of the 8th reserve cavalry regiment. On May 4, 1912 he was transferred to the 152nd Vladikavkaz infantry regiment. On March 2, 1915 he was concussed, and on July 21 was concussed for a second time and wounded. After recovery, on September 8, he returned to his regiment. From 1916 to 1918 he was priest of the 729th Novoufimsk infantry regiment. During his time as a military priest he was in Brest-Litovsk, Galicia, Warsaw, Riga and other cities. He was raised to the rank of protopriest for his pastoral labours and the personal courage he displayed during the war. From 1918 to 1922 he served in various parishes in the diocese of Kiev. In 1922 he became a hieromonk with the name Macarius.

In 1922 (according to another source, 1921) he was consecrated bishop of Uman, a vicariate of the Kiev diocese by Metropolitan Michael (Ermakov), the exarch of the Ukraine. Since Metropolitan Michael was arrested in 1922 in connection with the campaign for the requisitioning of church valuables, the whole burden of responsibility for the Kiev diocese fell upon Bishop Macarius. Soon, by virtue of his remarkable administrative abilities, limitless energy and devotion to the cause of the Church, he became an authoritative figure not only in Kiev diocese but also beyond its borders. In the period from 1922 to 1925, as the rightful successor of Metropolitan Michael, he had to resolve problems that went beyond the bounds of the Kiev diocese, which made him a key figure in the Church in the Ukraine and in effect the head of the Orthodox Church there at a time of persecution from the renovationists, "self-consecrators" and others. People turned to him from the regions of Poltava and Chernigov, Volhynia and Podolia, Odessa and Dnepropetrovsk.

After Pascha, 1923 several bishops were arrested. The volume of ecclesiastical problems was now so great that Bishop Macarius came to the conclusion that he had to consecrate new bishops to share the burden with him. And so in the autumn of 1923, under his direction, secret meetings of the clergy took place in Kiev, at which the question of the consecration of new bishops was discussed, as also the question of the relationship of the True Church to the renovationists. Then Bishops Macarius and Parthenius (Bryanskikh) of Ananiev secretly consecrated Bishops Sergius (Kuminsky), Athanasius (Molchanovsky), Philaret (Linchevsky), Theodore (Vlasov (or, according to another source, Vyshgorodsky)) and Varlaam (Lazarenko) - although

according to another source, the first two of these bishops were consecrated at an earlier date. Bishops Sergius, Philaret, Theodore and Athanasius were to rule parts of the Kiev region and the regions adjoining it of Podolia, Volhynia and Chernigov, while Bishop Varlaam was to rule the Poltava region. Only a small circle of trusted people in the localities were initiated into the work of the newly consecrated bishops, who also had to journey to their appointed regions in secret, revealing themselves only to the trusted people. Bishop Theodore (Vlasov), who was living in Kiev, was given a special role by Vladyka Macarius – he was to undertake his responsibilities only if the other bishops were arrested.

In 1923 Bishop Macarius was arrested and cast into prison in Kiev, where he spent four months.

Vladyka's closest assistant was his cousin, Raisa Alexandrovna Rzhhevskaya. During his arrests and exiles she kept his things, his papers and the addresses of the people he was connected with. She maintained the necessary ecclesiastical relations, and passed on to him in exile information on the situation of the Church. Bishop Macarius maintained links with Bishop Parthenius through M.N. Buraya from Kiev. His doctor, George Alexandrovich Kostkevich, was also close to him, but, as was revealed later, was not firm in his allegiance. He carried out various assignments, signed papers and distributed letters.

At this time the "self-consecrators" seized control of the large cathedral of St. Sophia in Kiev, while the small cathedral remained in the hands of the Orthodox, the supporters of Patriarch Tikhon. Here a powerful parish was formed under the direction of Bishop Macarius. Meetings took place in the flat of the widow of a cavalry captain, Julia Vasilyevna Davydova. The parish was joined by Priests E. Kapranov, and I. Zlatoverkhnikov, Protopriests Ioann Nikolayevich Tsererin and Chrysanthus Dementyevich Grigoryevich, A.G. Khadzitsky, Brailovsky, Protopriest Theodore Posnerovsky and Archimandrite Philadelphus. Links with Bishop Macarius were maintained by the rector of the cathedral, Fr. Alexander Dolzhansky. He was helped by the parishioners: A.S. Chernyavsky, L.A. Moroz, the president of the St. Sophia community A.F. Shcherbak, M.I. Shkaruba, A.M. Budovsky, N.N. Krivitsky, D.D. Neverovich, N.N. Dodonov and others. Thanks to their efforts, the necessary information came in time to the Orthodox of Kiev, and new and worthy candidates for ordination were formed and trained. Links with the villages were maintained by Archimandrite Averuk, and with the Chernobyl and Radomysl districts by I. Volkov. Under the direction of Bishop Macarius help was given to arrested clergy; N.E. Nedzvyadovskaya was given special permission to collect funds for this purpose in the Kiev parishes. Also, individual people were specially appointed to collect funds for the bishops in prison or exile: M.N. Buraya was responsible for helping Bishop Parthenius, A.V. Shuvarskaya – Metropolitan Michael, Pozderevyanskaya – Bishop Athanasius, Pudlovskaya and Ilyina – Archbishop Demetrius (Verbitsky), and so on. On the advice of Bishop Macarius, G.A. Kostkevich made contacts with V.A. Nevakhovich in Moscow

- she organized help to arrested bishops. Kostkevich regularly told her about the bishops who had been exiled to Moscow from the Ukraine, and she, A.S. Lepeshkina and Nun Lyubov (Golitsyna) gave parcels to them and to Bishop Sergius (Kuminsky).

In January, 1925 Bishop Macarius was arrested, and in February was in prison in Kiev. His duties were taken on by Archbishop George (Deliev), and Kostkevich began to carry out his instructions. Thus he went to Moscow to tell Bishop Parthenius, who was in administrative exile there, that Bishop Macarius had been arrested and that Archbishop George was taking over his responsibilities. Bishops Sergius, Philaret and Athanasius began to help Archbishop George as they had previously helped Bishop Macarius.

On coming out of prison in December, 1925, Bishop Macarius was shocked to find that Archbishop George would not hand back to him his responsibilities. It was at this time that a tendency to compromise with Soviet power was noticed in Archbishop George; he began to lose the trust of the other bishops, and remained in isolation. Almost immediately, in December, 1925, Bishop Macarius was arrested again. For the next ten months he was in prison (perhaps in Yekaterinoslav (Dnepropetrovsk), where he had been appointed bishop in 1925), and in October, 1926 he was exiled to Kharkov without the right to leave the city.

In 1926 there arose the Grigorian schism. Bishop Macarius blessed Fr. Nicholas Piskanovsky secretly to visit the Ukrainian bishops in Kiev, Kharkov, Poltava, Zhitomir and other cities in order to ascertain their views on the Grigorians, and then to send the result to Moscow. At the same time he sent Kostkevich several documents against the Grigorians, and also the epistles of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and his correspondence with the leaders of the Grigorians. In Kiev this literature was copied on many typewriters and distributed by Bishop Sergius and Kostkevich among the clergy and laity through groups organized earlier by Bishop Macarius. On February 27 / March 12, 1926, together with other Ukrainian hierarchs, Vladyka raised his voice against the Grigorians, signing an "Address of the Ukrainian Orthodox Hierarchs to the Deputy of the Patriarchal Locum Tenens Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) on the Question of the Condemnation of the Organizers of the [Grigorian] Temporary Higher Church Council": "... With great sorrow we have learned of the appearance of a new Church schism, the Temporary Higher Church Council, which, in our opinion, is one of the means of the destruction of the foundations of our Holy Orthodox Church... Having got to know the canonical actions of your Eminence... in relation to the schismatic Temporary Higher Church Council, we consider your actions completely correct..."

In the course of the autumn of 1926, foreseeing the possibility of further arrests in the Ukraine, Bishop Sergius (Kuminsky) sent Kostkevich to Bishop Macarius to discuss the possibility of further secret Episcopal consecrations. Bishop Macarius approved of the idea. Once again, Fr. Nicholas Piskanovsky was sent to the bishops to find out their opinions. The elections were held in

Kharkov, and the acts, signed by the Ukrainian bishops, were confirmed by Metropolitan Sergius. As a result, the following were consecrated to the episcopate: Arcadius (Ostalsky), Theodosius (Vashchinsky), Stefan (Protsenko) and Varlaam (Kozulya).

Kostkevich wrote in his memoirs: "At the end of February, 1927 I received from Bishop Macarius the suggestion that I go to Kharkov in view of his forthcoming arrest and despatch into exile. In Kharkov I learned from him that the purpose of my summons was to draw Archbishop Basil (Bogdashevsky) to the work of the centre since, with the departure of Bishop Macarius, only inactive people would remain, and they - this was the important point - were not capable of pursuing a sufficiently firm ecclesiastical line... For this reason I had to participate in two meetings, one in the flat of Bishop Macarius on M. Panasovskaya street, where Archbishop Boris (Shipulin) was present together with Archimandrite Hermogenes (Golubev) who happened to be passing through Kharkov, and the other - in the flat of Bishop Constantine (Dyakov)... In both meetings there was discussion of the question of the participation of Archbishop Basil (Bogdashevsky), and this was recognized to be desirable... I also had to inform Archbishop Basil of the opinion concerning the [new] candidates to the secret episcopate... Finally, the question was discussed at these meetings of the desirability of establishing links with abroad, of sending information there about the arrests of bishops taking place in the USSR and a request that they speak out in defence of the Church..."

In 1927 Vladyka Macarius was arrested, condemned according to article 66 and sentenced to three years in exile. From March, 1927 he was in exile in Gorno- Shorsky region, Tomsk province.

In about 1928 he separated from Metropolitan Sergius and Metropolitan Michael, the sergianist bishop of Kiev. According to a dubious source, he signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church.

In 1930, after his release from exile, Archbishop Macarius settled in the city of Vyazma, Smolensk province, where he continued to create house churches and prepare candidates for ordination. He celebrated secret services with **Nicholas Ilyich Serebryansky** as reader. The services were also attended by **Raisa Alexandrovna Rzhevskaya** and **Olga Lyudvigovskaya Rzhevskaya**.

On November 18, 1933 Vladyka moved to the village of Selishchi near Kostroma. In May, 1934, at the suggestion of Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich, he again began to rule the Dnepropetrovsk diocese. In the summer of 1934 he was leading True Orthodox communities in Vyatka, Kostroma, Yaroslavl and Vladimir dioceses.

On September 30 (or October 1), 1934, Vladyka was travelling by train to Moscow when he was arrested. The next day he was accused of counter-revolutionary activity and propaganda, and on October 7 he was imprisoned

in the arrest house Ardom in Kostroma province. On October 8 a search was carried out in his house in Selischi, and all his correspondence was taken. He was accused of being “the leader of a counter-revolutionary organization of a secret church in his house”, and also of “implanting illegal house churches”.

The details of Vladyka’s investigation are known to us from the files of the NKVD - although we cannot be sure that some of the confessions were not invented by his interrogators. In answer to a question about Soviet power Vladyka replied: “I am hostile to Soviet power. This attitude was elicited by the fact that Soviet power is by its essence an atheist, God-fighting power which is building Socialism, which bears within itself the growth of unbelief in God and in the end - the complete annihilation of religion. I do not recognize Metropolitan Sergius as head of the Russian Church because of his indecisive politics in relation to Soviet power and the incorrect interview he gave in 1930 to foreign correspondents. I find that Soviet power does not carry out the law on the separation of the Church from the State, it fights with religion by means of purely administrative measures. I affirm that there is no freedom of confession of faith in the Soviet Union, that the clergy are arrested and exiled for supporting religion, and that churches are closed, not in accordance with the will of believers, as is sometimes indicated in decrees for the sake of form, but against their will.”

“... I condemn the existing church tendencies (renovationists-sergianists) because they recognize Soviet power, and there are also canonical differences between us and them. As a follower of the True Orthodox Church I have waged and will continue to wage war with these tendencies. For a whole series of years I, together with other hierarchs, have been an ideologue of the True Orthodox Church. In 1934, through the priest [Nicholas] Piskanovsky, who was serving a term of exile in Archangelsk, I received a written order from Archbishop Seraphim (Samoilovich) of Uglich. In this order Seraphim, in spite of the fact that he is in exile, sees himself as the deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens and offered that I undertake the leadership of dioceses. Similar epistles were sent to metropolitans and bishops who stand on the platform of the True Orthodox Church... He suggested that I accept the Dnepropetrovsk diocese, which I administered before my arrest in 1927. Later, that is, soon after the arrest of Seraphim (Samoilovich), Piskanovsky offered that I take on the leadership of the Vyatka diocese and groups of the True Orthodox Church in the Ivanovo industrial area (IIA) [this territorial-administrative formation had been created at the end of the 1920s and included territories of the Yaroslavl, Kostroma and Vladimir provinces].”

At his interrogation on November 1, 1934, Bishop Macarius said: “The period that the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox clergy are living through we consider to be temporary, recognizing the October revolution to be an unlawful act condemned by the Local Council of 1917-18... From the very beginning we have stood on the platform of irreconcilable struggle with Soviet power and we take this position to the present time.”

In reply to a question concerning the programmatic-political principles of the True Orthodox Church, Archbishop Macarius listed: "1) The construction of the whole of Church life and activity on the platform of the decisions of the Local Council of 1917-18. 2) The illegal unification of the clergy, monastic and lay churchmen who are supporters of the True Orthodox Church. 3) The implanting of secret house churches on the model of ancient Christianity and the transfer to illegal service. 4) The spreading and strengthening among the broad masses of believers of the ideas of the True Orthodox Church by explaining to them the necessity for Orthodoxy, at the present critical moment, of multiplying the ranks of bearers and steadfast defenders of Christianity in the struggle with growing atheism. 5) The establishment of the principles of private property as the basis of the existence of a civilized society."

"In the IIA I chose the Kostroma region as the region which by its territorial position and the religious feelings of the population was good for receiving positive results from my activity. I learned about this from a personal conversation with a like-minded person, a formerly active member of the sisterhood founded by the (deceased) Archimandrite Spiridon attached to the church of the Brotherhood of Sweetest Jesus in Kiev - V. A. Andreyevna, who came to me in Vyazma from Kostroma, where she lived. Having arrived in Kostroma on November 13, 1933, and having settled in a flat found for me by the local priest and dean of the Kostroma city churches, Paul Ostrogorsky, I began by studying the most active members of the local church and attracting the most religious among them to myself, including, first of all, the priest Ostrogorsky and three nuns living as church guardians. This was the moment of the organizational formation of the group on which I depended in my activity. This group consisted of: the priest Ostrogorsky, Rzhetskaya and the nuns Rachel, Metrodora and Thaisia. Later this group increased in numbers with the addition of the former professor of history Serebryansky, who settled in Selishchi in administrative exile. I trusted all these people... At the same time I entrusted Serebryansky with learning and telling me all the news of Church life and the activities of the Sergianist synod, and also of the Kostroma diocese. He did this, and at the same time he gave me for my information the printed *Herald of the Moscow Patriarchate*, and copies of various decrees touching on the Church and the clergy, for example a copy of the government circulars 68 and 70. This gave me the opportunity not only to keep abreast of the news, but also served as material for my correspondence with like-minded members of the clergy. In reply to their complaints about the dreadful situation and the heavy taxes I gave them necessary advice..."

In their indictment the Bolsheviks said that Archbishop Macarius was "the inspirer and leader of the monarchist counter-revolutionary organization 'The True Orthodox Church', which has conducted developed anti-Soviet agitation and spread provocative rumours about famine in the USSR... He was an ideologue of the Orthodox Church... He actively conducted anti-Soviet work: he united reactionary-hostile parts of the clergy for active struggle against Soviet power... He implanted illegal house churches with the aim of preparing ecclesiastical cadres; he re-established ideological links with those who thought

like him and who were in exile and in other cities... He organized secret prayer services and anti-Soviet meetings in his flat."

In answer to a question about his links with Metropolitan Cyril, Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich and others, Vladyka replied: "My links with the leaders of the former counter-revolutionary organization, the True Orthodox Church, and with the bishops who formed part of this organization were accomplished mainly through letters sent to encoded addresses which were communicated to me in a timely fashion. For example, I wrote to Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich in Arkhangelsk to the address of the daughter of his personal secretary Piskanovsky, to Bishop Zhevakhov [a sergianist] in Borovichi - through his landlord Sinyavin, to Bishop Damascene - through Shpakovskaya, to Bishop Parthenius in Moscow region - through his mother Bryanskikh, to Bishop Anthony in Belgorod - through his mother Pankeyeva. I also had encoded addresses for correspondence with a series of other likeminded people and followers who lived in Kharkov, Kiev and other cities.

"In the interests of concealing our activities we introduced a corresponding code into our correspondence. For example, we called the GPU "Yekaterina Ivanovna"; arrest and isolation - "he was ill", "they put him in hospital"; exile - "he went to a spa"; release from arrest or from the camps - "he recovered"; Metropolitan Cyril - "uncle Kiryusha"; Metropolitan Sergius - "Ivan Nikolayevich", etc. This gave us the opportunity of carrying out practical work in an agreed manner while remaining unnoticed.

In answer to the question what instructions and assignments he received from Cyril and Seraphim, he replied: "I was entrusted by Seraphim with gathering various kinds of information. I collected this from the replies to my questions from numerous likeminded people who wrote to me about the difficult situation of the faith and the Church, about the wretched position of the clergy, especially the Ukrainian clergy, who were saved from repressions at the hands of the Soviet authorities and from famine only by fleeing, about the massive closure and destruction of churches in various cities, about the situation of the bishops and clergy freed from camps and exile, about the mood of the deportees, about the actions of Metropolitan Sergius and his subordinates. I periodically wrote about all this in letters to Piskanovsky, the secretary of Seraphim of Uglich, and to other bishops with the aim of informing the people abroad and working out our tactics, how to act...

"In the month of May, 1934 I was invited by Seraphim Samoilovich through Piskanovsky to go to Arkhangelsk for a meeting, but I decided against this trip for reasons of concealment and to avoid the collapse of the activity of the True Orthodox Church and its representatives. So I limited myself to a written communication to Seraphim to the effect that I would not betray the True Orthodox Church and would firmly carry out my work on the creation in Russia of a free True Orthodox Church. And I assured him that the trials which the Church and clergy were going through would unfailingly come to an end soon, and the Church would triumph, since the situation in our country was so

tense that a small explosion would be enough for the believing people to rise up against the Soviet government. The spark for these events in the mass of believers, as I supposed, could be a war, and then 'his Beatitude' Metropolitan Sergius, who was at present in power unlawfully, together with the Soviet authorities with whom he worked hand in glove, would be overthrown, and then the Orthodox Church of Christ would occupy the position that befitted her. Soon I received from Piskanovsky an order from Archbishop Seraphim concerning my acceptance of the leadership of the parishes and groups of the True Orthodox Church in Vyatka diocese and the IIA., and also a letter of instructions concerning the methods of our work which were aimed at the successful advancement of the programmatic-political aims of the True Orthodox Church - in particular, the organization of illegal house churches, secret services and the union of those who thought like us around them.

"Right up to my arriving to live in Kostroma and afterwards, I carried on a constant correspondence with Bishop Joasaph (Zhevakhov) and Anthony (Pankeyev), who tried to prove to me the possibility and necessity, especially at the present time, of a union between the representatives of the True Orthodox Church and Metropolitan Sergius. In objecting to this and desiring to convince them of the opposite, I presented to them my reasons and my information concerning the difficult position of the Church and clergy, etc., and I linked this with the name of Metropolitan Sergius, who covered himself with the actions of Soviet power. In trying to prove to Zhevakhov that his reasoning was unsubstantiated, I wrote to him that this was not the time to think about rewards, when thousands of clergy were suffering in exile and the camps."

"At the base of the illegal activity of the True Orthodox Church we placed the [antisergianist] declaration of 1928 signed by Metropolitan Agathangelus of Yaroslavl, the former deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich, Metropolitan Joseph (Petrovykh), Bishop Barlaam, formerly of Lyubimsk... and Bishop Eugene of Rostov. In this [declaration] the indicated group of hierarchs sharply condemned the epistle of Metropolitan Sergius of 1927 and spoke against the published programme of the Church's loyalty to the Soviet government, against the condemnation and excommunication from the Church of the counter-revolutionary clergy who had departed to the camps, and about the clear walling off of the Church from those who harmed her and the enemies of the Soviet people..."

On March 17, 1935 Archbishop Macarius, Fr. Paul Ostrogorsky, Raisa Alexandrovna Rzhevskaya and Maria Ivanovna Segerkrants were convicted on the basis of articles 58-10 and 58-11 and exiled for five years to Kazakhstan. This was "The Case of Bishop Macarius (Karmazin) and others, Kostroma province, 1934".

In 1937 Archbishop Macarius was living in exile at Ush-Tobe stanitsa, Karatalsky region, Kazakhstan. His relatives and those close to him (Vladyka had a son who was working in one of the factories of Tashkent) helped him to buy a small house in which he settled with R.A. Rzhevskaya and the exiled

priest Korolev. Through Rzhetskaya contacts were re-established with exiled hierarchs. Thanks to her efforts, material help, provisions and money was sent to them. Remaining constant in prayer, Vladyka remained unshaken, delivering himself completely to the Providence of God. Exceptionally cautious and attentive as always, he continued to receive all those who wished to receive spiritual instruction from him in spite of the fact that he was under constant surveillance. He conducted secret services in his house to which those closest to him and most trusted by him were admitted. After a time the exiled **Bishop Porphyrius** (Gulevich) of Simferopol arrived in Ush-Tobe, was received with joy by Archbishop Macarius and at his insistence settled with him in the same house. The two hierarchs became very close, having an identical opinion about the ecclesiastical situation.

On November 20, 1937 Vladykas Macarius and Porphyrius were arrested cast into prison in Alma-Ata. Two days later, R.A. Rzhetskaya and **Anna Petrovna Mikho**, Bishop Porphyrius' niece, were also arrested. On December 1, Vladyka Macarius was condemned for "anti-Soviet activity, anti-Soviet propaganda and discrediting of Soviet power, grouping around him counter-revolutionary and anti-Soviet elements and systematically receiving from them material help", and was condemned to be shot in accordance with article 58-10. Bishop Porphyrius and R.A. Rzhetskaya were also condemned to be shot, while Anna Mikho was sentenced to ten years in the camps. Bishop Porphyrius and R.A. Rzhetskaya were shot on December 2, and Archbishop Macarius – on December 3.

In spite of his complete rejection of the sergianist Moscow Patriarchate, Archbishop Macarius was "canonized" by the latter in August, 2000.

*

Priest Paul Fyodorovich Ostrogorsky. He was born on July 7, 1877 in the village of Priskokovo, Krasnoselsky region, Ivanovo province into the family of a church server. He was educated in Kostroma theological seminary, and served in various churches of Kostroma uyezd. In 1921 he was transferred to Selische, where he was arrested in 1923, but was not taken to court. According to one source, he was arrested again in 1924 in accordance with articles 68 and 69, but his case was closed. In 1930 he was arrested for a third time in accordance with article 58-10, but again was not taken to court. On October 7, 1934 he was arrested again in Selischi in "The Case of Bishop Macarius (Karmazin) and others, Kostroma province, 1934" and was taken by special convoy to the NKVD prison in Ivanovo. The next day he declared during interrogation: "I consider Soviet power to be antichristian, atheist, and sent to us for our sins as a trial. I am a supporter of the kind of state structure which would support religion as a power capable of aiding national unity. This feeling and conviction of mine I do not hide and do not intend to hide." "I personally believe that the Orthodox Faith will never fall, since there will remain truly Orthodox people whose faith will be supported by the sermons of spiritual fathers and illegal prayer services in houses until the authorities understand

that they are making a mistake with regard to the faith and the Church and recognize them and give them the position they need." He was accused of "participation in a counter-revolutionary group organized by Bishop Macarius (Karmazin)", but refused to say anything about Archbishop Macarius. On March 17, 1935 (according to another source, December 25, 1934) he was convicted on the basis of articles 58-10 and 58-11 and exiled for five years to Kazakhstan. Nothing more is known about him.

Nun Rachel (Petrovna Dobrovolskaya). She was born in 1872 in the village of Sretenye, Solikamsk *uyezd*, Kostroma province, the daughter of a priest. In 1880 she joined a monastery and was tonsured. She struggled in the Nazareth desert. From 1919 she was living in the village of Selischi and helping to clean the church. She was the eldest in the monastic community. According to one source, in October, 1934 she was arrested in a group case, and on October 10 was sent for further investigation to Ivanovo prison. On November 3 the investigation was stopped "in view of her advanced age and poor health". On December 2 she was released. According to another source, she was arrested on November 8, 1934, and on December 21 was convicted of "counter-revolutionary agitation". However, the case was shelved in view of her advanced age. Nothing more is known about her.

Nun Taisia (Fyodorovna Borisova). She was born in the 1970s, and was a nun in the Nazareth desert. In 1920s she was living in the village of Selischi, Kostroma province, and served in the church. In October, 1934 she was arrested for being "a participant in a church-monarchist counter-revolutionary group of followers of the True Orthodox Church", and was sent for further investigation to Ivanovo prison. On December 2 she was released "taking into account her advanced age", and the case was shelved. Nothing more is known about her.

Nicholas Ilyich Serebryansky was born in 1872, being a native of the village of Krekshino, Novo-Rzhevsky region. In 1894 he graduated from the historical-philological faculty of Warsaw University, and in 1898 - from the historical department of the Moscow Theological Academy. Until 1916 he was a teacher of history in various secondary educational establishments in Pskov. From 1916 to November, 1919 he was a professor in the Moscow Theological Academy. From 1920 to 1921 he was a professor of Western Slavic literature. From 1922 to 1925 he was a teacher at the pedagogical college in Pskov. From 1925 to 1930 he was a scientific worker at the Academy of Sciences in Petrograd. On December 22, 1930 he was arrested by the OGPU in Petrograd and accused of belonging to a counter-revolutionary monarchist organization head by Professor Platonov. He was condemned to ten years on Solovki with the confiscation of his property. During his interrogation he confirmed that the group led by Archbishop Macarius had as its aim "the construction of the whole of Church life on the basis of the decisions of the Local Council of 1917, which condemned the revolution and did not recognize Soviet power."

Maria Ivanovna Segerkrants was born on July 13, 1884 in Lodz, Poland into a noble family. In 1907 she completed her studies at a gymnasium in St.

Petersburg (or Lodz). She married a staff-captain in the army, and in 1914 moved with him to Russia, settling in Kaluga, where she worked as a senior sister of mercy and went to the front. She worked in the sanatorium-train named after the Tsarevich Alexis. From 1918 she was living in Kiev and working as a sister in a hospital. In 1921 she moved to Moscow and worked as a technician in various institutions, and then "Metalloimport". By this time she was divorced from her husband. On November 20, 1930 she was working as a nurse in the village of Selischi, Kostroma region when she was arrested for links with abroad (she corresponded with his mother and sister, who had gone to Poland) and "spying and anti-Soviet agitation". On April 10, 1931 she was sentenced to five years in the camps, and sent to Visherlag, Perm province. On June 23, 1933 she was released early and settled with her sister in Vyazma, and from November - in Selischi. In April, 1934 she married the exile Nicholas Alexandrovich Arakin, a former officer in the tsarist army, and moved with him to Kostroma. On October 7 (or 8), 1934 she was arrested again for participation in the counter-revolutionary group organized by Archbishop Macarius, for anti-Soviet agitation and for giving help to Archbishop Macarius and Raisa Alexandrovna from means obtained from Poland. On October 10 she was sent for further investigation to Ivanovo prison. However, on December 25, because of insufficient evidence against her, she was released, and on January 5, 1935, "in view of her advanced age and ill health", her case was shelved. On January 10 she was released. But on February 16 (or 13), 1935 she was again arrested and the case against her renewed, and on March 17 she was convicted by the NKVD of "participation in a counter-revolutionary group and anti-Soviet agitation". In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, she was sentenced to five years in the camps, and sent to Sibltag. On February 20, 1940 she was released. In 1962 she was in Mosalsk region, Kaluga province. Nothing more is known about her.

Raisa Alexandrovna Rzhevskaya was born in 1878 in St. Petersburg into a noble family. She was the widow of the chief doctor of the medical train in the name of the Emperor, and Archbishop Macarius' cousin, Constantine Konstantinovich Rzhevsky. In 1922, after the death of her husband, she went to Kiev where she became Archbishop Macarius' spiritual daughter and closest assistant. In 1927 she went to help him in his exile in Kuntsevo, Moscow province. In 1929, after his release, she settled in Vyazma, and from November, 1933 - in Selischi, where her mother lived. There she attended the archbishop's secret services until his arrest in October, 1934. On October 8, 1934 she, too, was arrested and was accused of "entering a church-monarchist group of followers of the True Orthodox Church", of "taking an active part in the illegal meetings of the participants of this group", of "distributing provocative rumours about famine, persecution against the Orthodox faith, clergy and the masses of believers", and of "conducting anti-Soviet agitation against collectivization and the undertakings of Soviet power", etc. On October 10 she was sent to Ivanovo prison for further investigation. On January 5, 1935 her case was shelved "in view of her advanced age and ill health". On February 13 she was again arrested, and on March 17, 1935, on the basis of articles 58-10 and 58-11, she was exiled for five years to Kazakhstan, and sent to Ushtobe, Karatalsky region,

Alma-Ata province. There she was arrested again on November 20 (or 22), 1937 “for anti-Soviet agitation”, and shot on December 2.

Another supporter of Archbishop Macarius, **Deacon Paul Victorovich Kalinnikov**, was interrogated in November, 1934, but nothing more is known about him. **Nun Seraphima** (Rozanova) settled in Selishchi in 1936, and found three True Orthodox nuns still alive: **Metrodora, Taisia and Tavrida**. Nun Seraphima died at the age of 97 on the eve of the Great Fast, 1996.

64. HIEROMARTYR PORPHYRIUS, BISHOP OF SIMFEROPOL
(+1937)

and those with him

Bishop Porphyrius, in the world, Polycarp Vasilyevich Gulevich, was born on February 2, 1864 in the village of Tokarevka, Litinsky uyezd, Podolsk province into the family of a clergyman. He finished his studies at Podolsk theological seminary in 1886, and on October 22, 1886 was ordained to the priesthood. For several years he served as a parish priest in Podolsk province. In 1914 he became rector, teacher of the Law of God and dean in the cathedral in the city of Olgopol, Podolsk province. When the renovationist schism arose, he stood up firmly against the schismatics and in defence of Patriarch Tikhon. He distributed leaflets calling on Christians to remain faithful to the patriarch, and then to Metropolitan Peter. In 1927 he was widowed and became a monk with the name Porphyrius. In June, 1927 he was imprisoned in Vinnitsa. In August he was exiled to Kharkov, but was released in September.

On June 25 / July 8, 1928 he was consecrated Bishop of Krivoy Rog, a vicariate of the see of Dnepropetrovsk, by Archbishop Constantine (Dyakov) of Kharkov and Akhtyrka, Bishop Onuphrius (Gagalyuk) of Yelizavettgrad and Bishop Paul (Kratirov). On May 18, 1930 he was transferred to the see of Kirovograd (Zinovievsk), a vicariate of the Odessa diocese. And on September 11, 1931 he was transferred to the see of Simferopol. He served in the Transfiguration cathedral in Simferopol, and was particularly zealous in exposing the dangers coming from the atheists and renovationists. He became the spiritual father of many. In 1933 he was arrested, but was released after two months. On October 9, 1936 he was arrested again for "encouraging the activity of certain underground monastic organizations", and cast into Simferopol prison. He was also accused of blessing priests to pray for people who had been condemned by the authorities, of being too zealous towards the renovationists and of much else.

On January 3, 1937 he was sentenced to five years' administrative exile in Ush-Tobe, Karatalsky region, Kazakhstan. There he met the Catacomb **Archbishop Macarius** (Karmazin), who was also in exile there. They settled together in one house, and came to a complete meeting of minds, so that soon the two bishops began to serve together as hierarchs of the True Orthodox Church. On November 20, 1937 he was arrested together with Archbishop Macarius and cast into prison in Alma-Ata for "anti-Soviet propaganda and discrediting Soviet power, links with counter-revolutionary elements and systematically receiving aid from them". On December 12 he was sentenced to death in accordance with article 58-10. He did not admit that he was guilty. On December 2 he was shot.

Also arrested and convicted with Bishop Porphyrius was his niece, **Anna Petrovna Mikho**. She was sentenced to ten years in the camps. Nothing more is known about her.

65. HIEROMARTYR BENJAMIN, BISHOP OF STERLITAMAK
(+1937)

and those with him

Bishop Benjamin, in the world Alexander Vasilyevich Troitsky, was born in the village of Tsyatskoye, Novotorzhsk uyezd, Tver province, in 1896 (or, according to other sources, 1893 or 1901), into the family of the priest of the Novotorzhsk Resurrection women's monastery. He was the youngest of three brothers. He finished his studies at the Tver theological seminary.

He was tonsured as a monk in 1922 or 1923 in the St. Nilus desert, and was the subdeacon of Bishop Theophilus (Bogoyavlensky), who ordained him to the priesthood. He then entered the Novotorzhsk Borisoglebsk monastery in Tver diocese.

In July or August, 1922 he was arrested together with Bishop Theophilus, and on February 23, 1923 was exiled for two years to Tashkent. According to one source, he was consecrated Bishop of Baikinsk in Ufa by Archbishop Andrew of Ufa and Bishop Nicholas (Ipatov) on November 16/29, 1922. (According to another source, he was consecrated to the see of Sterlitamak in 1927 or 1928, in Ufa, where he had gone after his release. His consecrators were Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin) and Bishop Job, and it was accomplished with the blessing of Archbishop Andrew, whose second deputy he became.) In October, 1928 he ordained the future Bishop Gurias (Pavlov) to the priesthood in the Simeonovsky church in Ufa, where he used to serve after the arrest of Bishop Habbakuk of Old Ufa.

He continued the work of his spiritual father, Archbishop Andrew, was a fine preacher, and struggled with renovationism. According to one (dubious) source, he signed the acts of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church in 1928.

He was arrested on March 21 (January, according to another source), 1930 in connection with the Ufa branch of the True Orthodox Church. Many monastics and laypeople were arrested with him. They tried to present him as the leader of a peasants' rebellion in the Troitsk region and wanted to shoot him. But the accusation was not sustained. Instead, on December 3, 1930, they gave him ten years in the camps with confiscation of property, and sent him to the Vishera camps (Krasnovishery, Urals district). There he remained for two years, doing general work. He fell ill with pleurisy and had only one lung left. He also almost died from appendicitis.

*

Also condemned in 1930 for being members of a "counter-revolutionary organization" headed by Bishop Benjamin in "The Case of Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) and others, Ufa, 1930" were:

Priest Gregory Nazarovich Mikheev. He was born in 1887 in the village of Saninskoye, Ufa uyezd, Ufa province into a peasant family. In 1927 Bishop Benjamin ordained him to the priesthood, and he began to serve in his native village. On June 20, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 was convicted and sentenced to death in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13. The sentence was carried out on the same day.

Priest Peter Vasilyevich Konfetkin. He was born in 1878 in the village of Knyazevo, Ufa uyezd, into a peasant family. He is called an Old Ritualist, but appears nevertheless to have been in Bishop Benjamin's diocese. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1917, and served in Ufa province. In 1925 he was arrested for "anti-Soviet activity" and exiled for three years. In January, 1930, while serving as a priest in Bashkiria, he was arrested and sentenced to six months' forced labour for "late payment of taxes". On July 23, 1930, while living in Birsk, he was arrested and cast into the domzak in Birsk. When Bishop Benjamin declared a hunger strike on November 26, he declared one in support of him three days later. On December 3 he was convicted and sentenced to ten years in the camps in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13. He was sent to a camp, where on October 28, 1937 he was arrested again. On December 10 he was sentenced to death and shot.

Priest Ivan Ignatyevich Kanafyev. He was born in 1888 in the village of Turgeneyevo, Duvansky region, Ufa canton, Ufa province into a peasant family. In 1928 he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Benjamin, and was sent to serve in the village of Troshkino, Ufa canton. His family was composed of four people. On June 17, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 convicted and sentenced to ten years in the camps, commuted to ten years' exile in the north, in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13. Nothing more is known about him.

Priest Andrew Stepanovich Baranov. He was born in 1892 in the village of Dmitrievka, Ufa uyezd, Ufa province into a peasant family. During the First World War he served in the tsarist army. On June 4, 1930 he was arrested and cast into the isolator in Ufa. On November 29, 1930 he declared a hunger-strike in protest against the sentence against Bishop Benjamin. On December 3, 1930 he was convicted and sentenced to ten years in the camps with confiscation of property in accordance with articles 58-2 and 19. On February 7, 1946 he was arrested again in Ufa, and on May 17 was sentenced again to ten years in the camps with confiscation of property in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11. He served this second sentence in a camp in Komi, and then, from January 25, 1949 in special camp no. 1 at Inta station on the Pechersk railway station in Komi. On March 10, 1955 he was released under the care of his relatives and the surveillance of the MVD of Bashkiria. Nothing more is known about him.

Priest Paul Petrovich Monastyrev. He was born in 1875 in the village of Kurochkino, Iglinskaya volost, Ufimsky canton, Ufa province into a clerical family. He himself had a family consisting of four people. He studied at a

theological seminary. In July, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 he was convicted and sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13 to ten years' exile to the north with confiscation of his property. The indictment said that this group of churchmen "at underground sessions discussed plans for an uprising planned for the spring of this year". Nothing more is known about him.

Priest Basil Sergeyevich Poletayev. He was born in 1882 in Ryazan province, and served in Zagorsky, Iglinsky region, Bashkiria. On July 7, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 he was convicted and sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13 to ten years' exile to the north with confiscation of his property.

Priest Quadratus Danilovich Pokhitun. He was born in 1883 in Kiev province. He was ordained to the priesthood before the revolution, and served in the village of Kaltovka, Iglinskaya volost, Ufcanton, Bashkiria. He was married; there were six people in his family. On July 17, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 he was convicted of "adhering to a counter-revolutionary 'five' headed by Michael Rezanov. He knew of the preparation of a counter-revolutionary plot, and together with the members of the 'five' organized mass demonstrations of believers in defence of the church from closure". In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13, he was sentenced to ten years in the camps. Nothing more is known about him.

Priest Michael Alexeyevich Popov. He was born in 1888 in the village of Andomskaya Gora, Vytegor'sky uyezd, Olonets province into the family of a priest. He went to Olonets (Petrozavodsk?) theological seminary, and became a people's teacher. In 1914 he was ordained to the priesthood and went to serve in the village of Koran, Byshbul'yakovskaya volost, Belebey'sky uyezd, Ufa province. In March, 1917 he was transferred to Kamenka in the same volost, and in November, 1917 - to Petrozagorye in the same volost. In 1922 he stopped serving as a priest for a while and worked in a state farm in charge of a warehouse, but in the same year, after the liquidation of the farm, renewed his priestly service in the village of Rublyevka, Davlekanovskaya volost, Belebeyevsky canton. He was a widower with two children. On July 17, 1930 he was arrested and cast into the GPU isolator in Ufa. On December 3 he was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13 to five years in the camps with confiscation of property. On November 26 he declared a hunger strike in protest at the sentence against Bishop Benjamin. Nothing more is known about him.

Priest Timothy Strelkov. On December 3 he was shot.

Deacon Ulyan Vasilyevich Gordilovsky (Gradilovsky?). He was born in 1896 in Iglinsky region, Bashkiria. He was a Belorussian. He served in his native region until 1930, when he was arrested on July 7. On December 3 he was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13 to eight years in prison. Nothing more is known about him.

Deacon Daniel Ionovich Perminov. He was born in 1884 in the village of Saninskoye, Ufa uyezd into a peasant family. He went to the village school. He had a family consisting of five people. In 1927 he was ordained to the diaconate by Bishop Benjamin. He was deprived of his voting rights and “dekulakized”. On June 20, 1930 he was arrested in Saninskoye, and on December 3 was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13 to ten years in the camps with confiscation of property. Nothing more is known about him.

Nun Natalya (Vasilyevna Demidova). She was born in 1893 in Ufa into a trader’s family. In 1917 she joined a women’s monastery in Ufa. After the closure of the monastery she continued to live in Ufa. On July 22, 1930 she was arrested, and on December 3 was convicted. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13, she was sentenced to five years in the camps with confiscation of property. Nothing more is known about her.

Nun Xenia (Dmitrievna Kobyzeva). She was born in 1893 in the village of Bulgakovo, Ufa uyezd into a peasant family. In 1921 she entered a women’s monastery in Ufa province. After its closure she lived in Ufa, where, on July 22, 1930 she was arrested, and on December 3 – convicted. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13, she was sentenced to five years in the camps. Nothing more is known about her.

James Davydovich Schmidt. He was born in 1869 in Latvia, and was elder of the church in Baltiysky stanitsa, Bashkiria. On September 15, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 was convicted. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13, was sentenced to death, and was shot on December 3, 1930.

Michael Pavlovich Larionov. He was born in 1863 or 1864 in Simsky factory, Zlatoustovsky region, Ufa province. He was a former peasant landowner, and married. In 1905 he became a member of the monarchist “Union of the Russian People”. From 1918, while an invalid of the second category, he worked in the Anna-Balashovsky factory, Zlatoust region, as an agent for the reception and dispatch of freight in the factory. In 1923 he moved to the Simsky factory, and until January, 1930 was “without definite occupation”. In January he began to serve as a church warden. On July 13, 1930 he was arrested, and was imprisoned in the Zlatoust DPZ. The indictment said that this group of churchmen “at underground sessions discussed plans for an uprising planned for the spring of this year”. On December 3 he was sentenced, in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, to ten years’ exile in Siberia with confiscation of his property.

James Sergeyevich Rozhentsov was born in 1869 in the village of Nolinskoye, Ufa canton, Ufa province into a peasant family. He had a family of five people. He was accused he was arrested and condemned. The indictment said that this group of churchmen “at underground sessions discussed plans for an uprising planned for the spring of this year”. On December 3, 1930 he was sentenced to death in accordance with article 58-10 part 2 and 58-13.

James Lavrentyevich Berestov. He was born in 1878 in the village of Nolinnskoye, Ufa uyezd, Ufa province. He was a kulak and had a family of seven people. He was disenfranchised and dekulakised. On April 15, 1930 he was arrested, and on December 3 was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13 to ten years in the camps, commuted to ten years' exile in the north with confiscation of his property, with a labour norm for the rest of his family. Nothing more is known about him.

*

In 1932 (or 1933), after a serious operation, Bishop Benjamin was exiled for the rest of his sentence to the town of Melekess in Ulyanovsk region (Dimitrovgrad). He was visited there by his brother, **Protopriest Michael** and his family (his other brother, **Archimandrite Paul** (in the world Peter Vasilyevich), also belonged to the Catacomb Church). He was also visited in exile by Natalya Pavlovna Nikolskaya, who had formerly been the headmistress of a gymnasium in Ufa. She sold her house in Ufa and bought herself a house in Melkess, where she lived with some nuns. She also gave Vladyka some money to buy a house.

According to one source, Vladyka Benjamin was arrested and shot in Melekess in 1937. According to another, he was killed by a falling pine while logging and was buried in the camp. According to a third source, he died on September 6, 1940 in Magadan district, North-East Siberia (Magadan).

*

Also condemned with him in "The Case of the Counter-Revolutionary Group Headed by Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky), Melekess, 1937" were:-

Protopriest Michael Vasilyevich Troitsky, the brother of Bishop Benjamin. He was born on July 19, 1890 in the village of Tsyatskoye, Novotorzhsk uyezd, Tver province. After the death of his father in 1909 Michael became the support of his mother and sisters, who had nothing to live on and were forced to sell their things. He became a priest and went to serve in the village of Gorki, Novotorzhsk uyezd, and then in the village of Churilovo, Kamensky region, Tver province. He was married to Capitolina Flavianovna (born 1888) and had two daughters. In 1934 he was arrested for "counter-revolutionary activity" and cast into prison. He was freed without trial because of illness, and went to live in Melekess, not serving in church, but living with his children. On December 9, 1937 he was arrested and cast into prison in Melekess. On December 22 he was condemned for being "a participant in the counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen" founded by Bishop Benjamin, of "conducting anti-Soviet agitation and having rebellious and terrorist views". In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death. He was shot in Ulyanovsk on February 20, 1938.

Hieromonk Neophytus, in the world Nicholas Petrovich Kulikov. He was born in 1905 in the city of Merv in Turkestan in a large family with four boys and a girl. After the death of his parents he was helped by Bishop Benjamin. In 1924 he entered the Tashkent agricultural institute and completed three classes there. In 1929 he became a monk with the blessing of Bishop Benjamin. In June, 1930 he was ordained to the priesthood. On June 29, 1930 he was arrested in Ufa (or Tashkent) and cast into the isolator of the GPU prison in Ufa. At his interrogation on July 18, 1930 he said: "In about September, 1928 I arrived in Ufa with Bishop Benjamin, whom I got to know already in Tashkent. During the first days of my service in the Semyonovskaya church I gave a sermon of an instructive nature on Gospel subjects, and called on the believers, among whom were many young people, firmly to believe in God and actively to visit the church." In support of Bishop Benjamin, who declared a hunger strike on November 26, Fr. Neophytus went on hunger strike on November 29. On December 3, 1930 he was convicted of "being a member of a counter-revolutionary organization, and joining a group of churchmen headed by Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky)". In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13, he was sentenced to ten years in the camps with confiscation of his property. The indictment said that this group of churchmen "at underground sessions discussed plans for an uprising planned for the spring of this year". After being released from camp, Fr. Neophytus returned to Bishop Benjamin in Melekes, where, in 1936, he was arrested again. On October 3 he was sentenced to five years in the camps. In 1937 he was shot.

Hieromonk Paul, in the world Peter Timofeyevich Predannikov (or Pridannikov). He was born in 1903 in Ujskaya stanitsa, Troitsk uyezd, Orenburg province into a family of Orenburg Cossacks. He went to elementary school. In 1921 he moved from Ujskaya stanitsa to the city of Miass in Bashkiria, where he served as a reader. In 1925 he moved to the city of Sadok, Bashkiria. At that time, at the suggestion of Bishop Rufinus, he joined the Andrewite orientation. In 1928 he was ordained to the priesthood with the name Paul, and began to serve in the church of St. Nicholas in Nikolayevsky, Bashkiria. At the beginning of 1930 he was transferred to the Simeonovskaya church in Ufa, where he served with Bishop Benjamin as reader. On July 28, 1930 he was arrested in Ufa and cast into the GPU's isolator in the city. On November 26 he declared a hunger strike "in protest at the accusation levelled at [Bishop Benjamin] Troitsky". On December 3 he was convicted by the PGU of "being a member of a counter-revolutionary organization, and joining a group of churchmen headed by the accused Troitsky, on whose instructions he conducted anti-soviet activity with the aim of inciting the population against Soviet power". In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-13, he was sentenced to five years in the camps with confiscation of his property. His was part of the group case, "The Case of Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) and others, Ufa, 1930". On returning from exile, he began to serve in the Spasskaya church in the village of Medvederovo, Kushnarenkovsky region, Bashkiria. On July 30, 1937 he was arrested, and on November 25 was sentenced to death in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11. On December 29, 1937 he was shot.

Priest Daniel Afanasyevich Andreyev. He was born in 1863 in the village of Khorody (Khorady), Alkivsky region, Tataria into a peasant family. He had no family. In 1893 he became a novice in a monastery, then a reader and deacon. In 1906 he was ordained to the priesthood. In 1929 he was serving in Melekess, Samara province, when he was arrested for “counter-revolutionary activity” and sentenced to three years’ exile in accordance with article 58-10. Having served his term, he returned to Melekess in 1932 and began serving in the village of N-Maine, Melekess region. In September, 1933 the church was closed, and he returned to Melekess, where he continued to live without fixed occupation. On December 11, 1937 he was arrested and cast into Melekess prison. He was accused of being “anti-Soviet” and “in touch with a counter-revolutionary organization operating in Melekess”. On December 22 he was sentenced to death in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11. He was shot in 1937 or 1938.

Priest Alexander Vasilyevich Rumyantsev. He was born on August 24, 1903 in the village of Karmala, Simbirsk province (now Zelenodolskaya region, Tataria). (According to other sources, he was born in the village of Kozhmar, Krasnoyarsk region, Tataria.) He worked as a peasant, when he became a reader in Simbirsk province. In 1932 he was ordained to the priesthood. He had a wife, Justina Mikhailovna, and they had three sons and three daughters. On December 9, 1937 he was arrested in the village of Sabakayevo, Melekess region, and was cast into prison in Melekess. On December 22, 1937 he was convicted by the UNKVD of being “a participant in the counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen created by the former Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) of Gorky, on whose instructions he created an anti-Soviet group in his village”. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out on February 20, 1938 in Ulyanovsk.

Deacon (Priest?) Nicholas Konstantinovich Vladimirsky. He was born on December 1, 1872 in the village of Mamonino, Simbirsk province (now Tataria). In 1888 he finished his studies at the Kazan theological school, and in 1895 began teaching in a theological school in Simbirsk province. In 1925 he was ordained to the diaconate. He was married to Maria Alexandrovna (born 1877) and had three children. On July 2, 1931 he was arrested in Kazan and sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment, in accordance with article 58-11, in the Kem camps. In 1933 he was released early, and exiled to Melekess for the rest of his term. On December 9, 1937 he was arrested again and cast into prison in Melekess. On December 22 he was convicted of being “a participant in a counter-revolutionary organization of churchment created by the the former Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) of Gorky”. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out in Simbirsk (Ulyanovsk) on February 20, 1938.

Deacon George Akimovich Noskov. He was born on November 21, 1888 in Simbirsk into a peasant family. In 1910 he became a novice in the Zhadovsky Kazansko-Bogoroditskaya Desert, Korsun uyezd, Simbirsk province. From 1910 to 1918 he worked in the army as a clerk, and from 1919 to 1921 in the Red

Army, also as a clerk. Then he worked in various institutions. He was married to Maria Semyonovna (born 1890), and had a daughter Tatyana (born 1927). In 1924 he was ordained to the diaconate for the All Saints church in Simbirsk. Then he moved to the St. Nicholas church in Melekess. On December 9, 1937 he was arrested in Melekess, and cast into Melekess prison. On December 22 he was convicted by the UNKVD of being "a participant in a counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen created by the former Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) of Gorky". In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out in Simbirsk (Ulyanovsk) on February 20, 1938.

Nun Tatyana (Mikhailovich Ryzhkova). She was born on January 12, 1881 in the village of Travniki (Drovniki?), Orenburg province into a peasant family. On July 1, 1930 she was arrested in Ufa, and on September 27 was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in accordance with article 58-10. In 1937 she was arrested again in Melekess and cast into Melekess prison. On December 22 she was convicted by the UNKVD of "living in one flat with Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky)" and "being a participant in the counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen created by him, sharing his views". On May 8, 1938 she was shot.

Nun Tatyana (Sergeyevna Knyazbeyeva). She was born in 1897 in the village of Matakhi, Simbirsk province into a Chuvash peasant family. She was deprived of her mother early, and lived in her native village until the death of her father in 1921, after which she became a nun in Kazan. In 1931 she was arrested in her native village and convicted of "counter-revolutionary activity", and sentenced to three years in the camps in accordance with article 58-10. She was in the prison in Spassk for seven months. She ran away from camp and went to live in Melekess. On December 18, 1937 she was arrested in Melekess and cast into prison there. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11, she was sentenced to death. The sentence was carried out in Ulyanovsk on February 20, 1937.

Ivan Efimovich Loginov. He was born on July 12, 1878 in the village of Sabakayevo, Stavropol uyezd (now Ulyanovsk province, Melekessky region), Samara province. He was the son of a peasant wood merchant, and served for seven months in the Russian army during the First World War. He was married to Anna Trophimovna (born 1884), and had five children: Alexander (born 1921), Nicholas (born 1923), Alexis (born 1929), Claudia (born 1933) and Ivan (born 1912). He worked as a watchman in the collective farm "Forward to Socialism". However, in 1937 the church of which he was the president of the church-parish council was closed, and Ivan Efimovich began gathering signatures among the parishioners for its reopening. On December 14 he was arrested in Sabakayevo, and cast into prison in the city of Melekess. On December 22 he was condemned to death in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11. On May 8, 1938 the sentence was carried out in Saratov (Kuibyshev), where he was buried.

Gabriel Vasilyevich Panshin (Panin). He was born on March 25, 1899 in Sterlitamak, Simbirsk province into a peasant family. He had a wife, Anna Vasilyevna, and four children. He served in the army of Kolchak for nine months as a private. From 1919 to 1926 he served in the RKKA. In 1932, while living in Troitsk, he was arrested and sentenced to five years in the camps. He spent three-and-a-half years of that sentence on the White Sea canal and in the Far East. On December 8, 1937 he was arrested in Melekes, and cast into prison in Melekes. On December 22 he was convicted of being “a participant in the counter-revolutionary organization headed by Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) of Gorky. In accordance with articles 48-10 part 2 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death. On February 20, 1938 he was shot in Kuibyshev (Ulyanovsk).

Theodore Fyodorovich Shitikov. He was born on February 12, 1888 in the village of N. Matyushkino, Stavropol uyezd, Samara province into a peasant family. He was married to Agatha Andreyevna (born 1889) and had four children. At the age of twelve, having lost his father, he went to work in Melekes. In 1916 he was enrolled as a private in the army. After the revolution he returned to his native village. In March, 1919 he went to serve on the Council of the People’s Economy in Melekes. However, in April he was called up into the Red Army, where he worked as a groom. Until 1930 he worked in various places. For twenty years, from 1913 to 1933, he belonged to the sect of the Evangelical Baptists. Then he left them and returned to Orthodoxy. On December 19, 1937 he was arrested and cast into Melekes prison. On December 22 he was convicted of being “a sectarian preacher”, “conducting anti-Soviet agitation” and “spreading provocative rumours”. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death. On February 20, 1938 he was shot in Ulyanovsk.

Barbara Mikhailovna Terekhina. She was born in 1884 in the village of Kondakovka, Nik-Cheremshansky uyezd, Samara province into the family of a smith. In 1929 she was “dekulakized” and exiled to Arkhangelsk together with her husband Demetrius Efimovich Terekhin. In 1933 her husband was released because of illness, and in the same year Terekhina fled from exile, returned to her homeland, and then, fearing arrest, moved to Melekes. There she took various forms of temporary work until her arrest on December 9, 1937. She was cast into Melekes prison. On December 22 she was charged with “anti-Soviet intentions” and “spreading provocative rumours”. In accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11 she was sentenced to ten years in the camps. Nothing more is known about her.

Some other people close to Bishop Benjamin were arrested and kept in winter in cold cells with broken windows and with no hot food for eleven days. Then they were all taken for interrogation in one night. Bishop Benjamin's brother, Fr. Michael, was cruelly beaten until it was impossible to recognize him - his face was like a baked apple and one could not see his eyes. He was condemned by a troika. Fr. Michael was sent together with a 62-year-old **Nun Philareta** to Arkhangelsk. There were rumours that he died there. **Natalya Pavlovna Nikolskaya** died in a transit prison.

*

One of the clergy close to Bishop Benjamin, **Fr. Theoctistus**, settled in Irkutsk and served in the Catacomb Church until his death on January 13, 1978.

**66. HOLY HIEROMARTYR DAMASCENE, BISHOP OF
GLUKHOV (+1937)**
and those with him

Bishop Damascene, in the world Demetrius Dmitrievich Tsedrik, was born on October 29, 1878 (or 1877), in the hamlet of Mayaki, Odessa uyezd, Kherson province, in the family of a poor postal official. The mark of grace lay on the whole family. His brother **Nicholas** became a priest at the beginning of the revolution and was soon shot by the Bolsheviks for his fearless denunciation of them.

Demetrius finished his studies at Kherson theological school in 1893, and was then for two years Odessa theological seminary before entering Kherson pedagogical seminary in 1895. Then, under the influence of Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), he studied eastern languages and missionary work in the Kazan Theological Academy. After graduating, on June 9, 1902, he was tonsured into monasticism, on June 10 he was ordained to the diaconate, and on June 30 - to the priesthood. Then, according to one source, he went to Bei-Guan, as a member of the Orthodox Mission in Peking. Here he worked so successfully as a missionary that the journal Niva made special mention of the activity of the young hieromonk and a small lifeboat was named "Damasykhoshen" in his honour. According to another source, however, on October 26, 1902 he was sent as director of the Chita missionary school. On November 15, 1903 he became a missionary in Chita district, and on January 1, 1904 - in Bargusinsky district, Trans-Baikal province. On September 12, 1905 he became a student at the Eastern Vladivostok Agricultural Institute, while teaching singing and the Law of God in a men's gymnasium. On February 1, 1907 he was appointed to serve in the Hierarchical House in Vladivostok, while carrying out the duties of rector of the church of the Vladivostok Eastern Institute and serving in the church in Sedanka. On July 1, 1907 he was appointed dean of the Kamchatka and Gizhiginsky districts, but on August 2 was released from this post and left in Vladivostok. In November, 1908 he became rector of the church in the men's gymnasium. After graduating from the Vladivostok institute as an agronomist in 1909, he went on leave to St. Petersburg, where he expressed the desire to enter the fourth course of the Eastern faculty of St. Petersburg University. Then he went to Moscow, where he took part in a congress organized by Protopriest John Vostorgov from October 27 to November 4. On May 31, 1910 he was sent as a missionary to the village of Boltun-San, Chernoyarsk uyezd, Astrakhan province. On October 20, 1910 he was appointed missionary among the Kalmyks, living in the Hierarchical House of the Don diocese.

In 1914 he joined the Red Cross in the Caucasus, and in 1915 he was appointed head of the medicinal-nutritional section of the Red Cross, and (from 1916) of its section for fighting infectious diseases, on the Caucasian front. At the beginning of 1917 he was appointed military priest and medical orderly in the Tenth Armenian Reserve regiment on the South-Western front. In June,

1917 he took part in a congress of learned monastics in the Moscow Theological Academy. On May 9, 1918 he was demobilized.

During the revolution he returned to Russia just at the moment when his brother was martyred. Whether together with his brother or on his own, he was arrested for the first time in Orel province in 1918 and condemned to death. We do not know how he escaped. Perhaps it was through the intervention of the White Armies. In any case, the experience had a lasting effect on him:

"In those minutes the whole of a man's life passes in front of him," he recalled.

He arrived in Kiev, where his beloved Metropolitan Anthony appointed him as diocesan missionary. At the same time he became a student at the Kiev Theological Academy and was numbered among the brethren of the Zlatoverkhov St. Michael monastery. Already he had a keen sense of the apocalyptic nature of contemporary events, regarding them as the fulfilment of the prophecies and citing Soloviev's Three Conversations about the Antichrist.

Hieromonk Damascene founded a small brotherhood in the name of St. Vladimir not far from the monastery. Every feastday he would come to the brotherhood at six o'clock, serve a moleben and akathist and give a sermon. One stormy winter evening he was about to leave when gunshots sounded on the street. The door onto the street was instantly locked. After some time, since nothing more was heard, everyone went out onto the street. On the opposite side, against the brilliant white snow, there could be seen the dark figure of a murdered man. Fr. Damascene cried out:

"What kind of Christians we are! Around us they kill people, and we hide instead of helping!"

In the autumn of 1919, after the retreat of the White Army, Hieromonk Damascene left Kiev for the Crimea, where, in 1920 (or December, 1919) Archbishop Demetrius (Abashadze) of Tauris raised him to the rank of archimandrite and made him superior of St. George's monastery near Balaclava.

When the Soviet armies captured the Crimea, Archbishop Demetrius and Archimandrite Damascene remained in Simferopol, and in 1922 they were arrested. On November 5 they were brought to trial together with the ruling hierarch of the Tauris diocese, Archbishop Nicodemus, and Bishop Sergius (Zverev) and other clergy. However, they were then freed under guard because the Bolsheviks had begun a propaganda campaign aimed at tempting the émigrés to return, and the imprisonment of these notable churchmen was harmful to their plans.

At the beginning of 1923 Archimandrite Damascene was again arrested in Simferopol, was condemned for "resistance to the requisitioning of church

valuables” and cast into prison together with Bishop Eugene (Rozhdestvensky) of Stavropol. After nine months in prison, he was released under guard but exiled beyond the bounds of the Crimea. He went to Moscow where he lived in the Danilov monastery. Soon he would be called to serve as a bishop in the Ukraine...

O.V. Kosik writes: “In the 1920s the Church in the Ukraine was torn by many church schism. On its territory the renovationists, the self-consecrated Lipkovtsyites, Lubentsy and others struggled for power over the parishes. The spread of the false diocese of V. Lipkovsky, the pressure exerted on the believers by the autocephalists and renovationists, and the forcible removal from their diocese of the Tikhonite bishops stirred the Orthodox of the city of Glukhov to send their representative to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon in October, 1923, asking him to take them “under your spiritual leadership”. The patriarch expressed his agreement, and recommended that they elect a candidate for the episcopate.

“At first the clergy of Glukhov put forward Bishop Matthew (Khramtsov) as candidate, ‘on condition that he does not belong to the Living Church...’ This qualification was not by chance. Protopriest Matthew Khramtsov of the Exaltation church in Chernigov had been appointed Bishop of Glukhov and Novgorod-Seversky, a vicariate of the Chernigov diocese, on February 15, 1923 by a decree of the Council of Ukrainian Bishop on the recommendation of Archbishop Pachomius (Kedrov) of Chernigov and Nezhin.

“His consecration on April 23 of the same year in Chernigov was carried out by Archbishop Pachomius and Bishops Nicholas (Mogilevsky) of Borza and Nicephorus (Bogoslovsky) of Gorodnyan. Nine days later, ecclesiastical authority in Chernigov passed into the hands of Bishop Alexander (Migulin), who had been appointed by the just-formed renovationist All-Ukrainian Higher Church Administration in Kiev (the canonical archbishop of Chernigov Pachomius had by this time been removed from his see). Bishop Matthew (Khramtsov) subjected himself to the authority of Alexander and on May 1 of the same year was sent to Novgorod-Seversky to administer his district. In September, Bishop Matthew broke with the renovationists.

“In his letter of repentance to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon written at the beginning of the following year, he said: ‘My close acquaintance with them [the renovationists] has convinced me that their slogans about the return of the Church to the purity of the first Christian times were only fine words, and that they are not pursuing the good of the Church, but exclusively their own sinful intrigues. Having suffered heavy days of great emotional torments of repentance, in the middle of September 1923 I de facto broke all links with them and firmly decided to offer sincere public repentance for my sin both before the people and the clergy and before Your Holiness, and to ask you to accept me, the greatly sinful one, into your lofty communion. I have already partly carried out this decision of mine: after the liturgy I publicly declared from the see of the cathedral of Novgorod Seversky that I was breaking with the renovationists

and that I was intending to seek canonical communion with Your Holiness and the other bishops who have courageously stood for the God-established order of Church authority. Meanwhile, I have addressed a special epistle to my co-worker pastors on the field of Christ in my vicariate district. I confessed my serious sin of apostasy to my spiritual father before the Holy Gospel and the Life-giving Cross.'

"Nevertheless, the reunion of Bishop Matthew to the Orthodox Church did not take place that autumn. In spite of that, he agreed to the suggestion of the Orthodox of the Glukhov uyezd, declaring, however, that he would consider himself Bishop of Glukhov only nominally. Therefore representatives of the Glukhov communities wrote to Bishop Macarius (Opotsky), the former vicar of the Novgorod diocese, asking him to resolve the disagreements in the Glukhov region, accept the whole uyezd under his leadership and unite the Orthodox, 'thereby creating peace and love in the Glukhov region'. His Eminence Macarius accepted the election on principle. But neither did this candidature bring the peace and love they longed for the inhabitants of Glukhov. Having been ordained in 1922 as Bishop of Cherpovets, a vicariate of the Novgorod province, Bishop Macarius was for some reasons retired, and shortly after this joined the renovationists.

"A representative of the Orthodox organizations of the Glukhov region was sent to Patriarch Tikhon. He brought a request that an Episcopal see be opened in the city of Glukhov. He also informed [the patriarch] about the unanimous election of Bishop Macarius (Opotsky) and asked that he be confirmed in the rank of Bishop of Glukhov.

"However, His Holiness did not confirm the choice of the Glukhov communities and named Archimandrite Damascene, who was at that time in Moscow, having been exiled there from the Crimea by the authorities. Vladyka Damascene became the beloved hierarch of the Glukhov region and the whole of the Chernigov diocese. {According to one source, he was also given the temporary administration of the Starodub diocese.} In his report to His Holiness Archbishop Pachomius asked that Archimandrite Damascene, superior of the St. George monastery in Balaclava, be consecrated on one day in the near future as Bishop of Glukhov, a vicariate of the Chernigov diocese, 'so that the dean arriving in Moscow can take the future Bishop of Glukhov away with him'. On the reverse side of the petition there was written the resolution of Archbishop Nicodemus (Krotkov), under whose leadership Archimandrite Damascene had served in the Crimea and together with whom he had been put on trial: 'I have no objections to the transfer of Fr. Archimandrite Damascene to the Chernigov diocese. While serving in the Tauris diocese, Fr. Archimandrite recommended himself by his special zeal in defending the interests of the Church before the civil authorities, for which he suffered privations. He is a lover of beautiful church serving (he is a fine reader and chanter), and is a fervent preacher and skilful practical activist. I myself hope to have him as a vicar bishop, but circumstances have hindered this. Nicodemus, Archbishop of Tauris. November 1/14, 1923.'

“Another document reads: ‘November 14 (new style), 1923. We fully recognize the autonomy given to the Ukrainian Church by the Council of 1917-1918, but, taking into account that at the present time it has neither a metropolitan, nor an Exarch to take his place, nor a Holy Synod, His Holiness the Patriarch and the Higher Church Administration attached to him blesses the opening in Glukhov of a see for a vicar-bishop of the Chernigov diocese, to which Archimandrite Damascene (Tsedrik) is to be appointed, as indicated by the Archbishop of Chernigov. His induction as bishop is to be carried out by members of the Higher Church Administration, while his consecration is to be assigned to the decision of His Eminence the Archbishop of Chernigov, with the provision that the group of ordaining bishops should be headed by his Eminence Metropolitan Seraphim [signatures: Archbishop Tikhon, Archbishop Seraphim, Archbishop Peter, Archbishop Hilarion].’

“The Episcopal consecration of Archimandrite Damascene as bishop of Glukhov, a vicariate of the Chernigov diocese, was carried out on Sunday, November 18, 1923, in the Donskoj monastery in Moscow by His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, Archbishop Pachomius (Kedrov) of Chernigov and Nezhin and Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh) of Ananiev. Vladyka Nicodemus (Krotkov) wrote with regard to the consecration: ‘I was sorry to let him go, such a lively and active person, but it was not fitting to detain him, since a broader field of activity was opened to him. He speaks Little Russian [Ukrainian], they don’t know him there, perhaps he will succeed in doing some work there.’

“Soon Vladyka was elected as their hierarch by the Orthodox communities of Nezhin, Novgorod-Seversky and other districts, and was appointed temporary administrator of the whole of the Chernigov diocese. In December, 1923 Vladyka Damascene arrived in Glukhov in Chernigov province. He began his archpastoral work by putting the diocesan administration and chancellery into order and organizing the vicar and deanery administrations.

“In May, 1924 the Soviet press printed stories about Patriarch Tikhon’s receiving V. Krasnitsky, the leader of the renovationists, into communion, the letter of ‘His Holiness the Patriarch’ about the inclusion of the renovationist churchmen into diocesan councils that was written by Krasnitsky, and the decree of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the Holy Synod about the formation of higher organs of Church administration – the Holy Synod and the Higher Church Administration – with the inclusion of Krasnitsky and others into it. These publications were actively used in the Ukraine by the self-consecrators in order to undermine trust in the Russian Orthodox Church.

“In order to clarify the situation that had arisen in the Church in connection with the activity of Krasnitsky and Vvedensky, his Grace Damascene again went to Moscow and spoke to the Patriarch. On his return, he wrote an epistle to the pastors and flock of the Church of Chernigov, in which he completely exposed the slander concerning the recognition of the ‘Living Church’ by His

Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and conveyed the call of the Patriarch firmly to stand on guard for Orthodoxy.

“The principal question was the commemoration of the name of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon at Divine services. In December, 1923 there came out a circular from Narkomiust, in which ‘the public honouring of people who have been condemned or are under trial for the committing of serious crimes against the State (section 1, chapter 1, special part of the Ukrainian Codex), in particular in relation to Citizen Bellavin (Tikhon)’ must be regarded as a criminally punishable act’. Although the Patriarch was released, the circular on the ‘criminality’ of raising the name of Patriarch Tikhon at Divine services remained in force. After the exile of Bishop Pachomius, the diocesan administration headed by Bishop Alexander had distributed an order round the communities concerning the non-commemoration of Bishop Pachomius and Patriarch Tikhon as counter-revolutionaries. With the arrival of Bishop Damascene in the Chernigov diocese, everyone except the renovationists began to commemorate Patriarch Tikhon.”

Vladyka said about the "Living Church": "At its base is a lie, its weapon is violence, its aim - the disintegration of the Orthodox Church".

“Vladyka travelled much around the diocese. He often visited the community of the Exaltation of the Cross created by the well-known public activist N.N. Neplyuev [+1908] as an attempt to construct a model of society on the basis of Christian morality and social justice. Bishop Damascene saw in this community a means of spiritual defence against the onset of atheism. Vladyka spoke to A. Sekundov, a member of the Sacred Council of the Russian Orthodox Church of 1917-18 and other members of the community. He especially loved spending time with children, and taught them the Christian faith.

“In September, 1924 the hierarch again went to Moscow. He served with Patriarch Tikhon and the Ukrainian hierarchs exiled to Moscow: Archbishop Pachomius (Kedrov) of Chernigov, Archbishop Procopius (Titov) of Odessa, Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky) of Kamenets-Podolsk and Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh) of Ananiev in the Trinity cathedral of the Danilov monastery. On September 12, 1924 he took part in the consecration of Archimandrite Stephen (Znamirovsky) as Bishop of Shadrinsk.

“But on his return to the diocese on September 15, 1924 Vladyka was arrested in Nezhin and put in the Chernigov DOPR. While he was being searched Vladyka threw out of the window the seal of his diocesan administration - the creation of a chancellery without the permission of the authorities to register was a chargeable offence. The formal reason for his arrest was a denunciation against Vladyka made in June, 1924 by Priest Maltsev of the city of Oster, who had joined the ‘Living Church’ and at the same time renounced his priesthood. Vladyka suggested to the church council that they find another priest. In his denunciation Maltsev told the GPU that Vladyka

during services commemorated the names of Bishops Pachomius, Parthenius and Procopius, and that even before his consecration Bishop Damascene had left Kiev together with Metropolitan Anthony [Khrapovitsky] (the informer knew what links with the émigré metropolitan meant for the GPU). Maltsev also touched on a sermon which he himself had heard in which Vladyka, speaking about the removal of the relics of St. Theodosius [in 1921], called for repentance, and foretold that 'there will come a time when people return to God and then the holy hierarch Theodosius will return to us'.

"Vladyka spent many long months in prison without trial. One invented accusation was followed by another. He wrote a letter to 'The All-Ukrainian Warden Petrovsky' entitled 'A Voice from the Chernigov Region': 'Now I have already been about six months in DOPR. Does that mean that I am really a criminal in the eyes of Soviet power? The representative of the GPU immediately put a whole mass of accusations in front of me. But what kind of accusations were these, if three months after the raising of my case before the Chernigov Procurator they have all fallen away? The GPU is bringing forward a new accusation on the basis of a denunciation by a defrocked renovationist priest. But this accusation, too, fell away when it was investigated by the procurator. Now, in the sixth month of my imprisonment, the GPU has brought forward new accusations (I have not been told them yet) in connection with a case brought by the GPU against the Neplyuev workers' community (the only Christian commune in Russia, which came into being forty years ago and has now been disbanded). I dare to affirm that these new accusations will also be dispelled, for my relations with the Brotherhood were only of an ideal-ecclesiastical character... But what is characteristic of the whole of this case is the consistency of the accusations, as if they are counting on keeping me in prison.' In this Vladyka was absolutely right.

"They also interrogated the members of the community of the Exaltation. From them they obtained witnesses to the monarchist and anti-Soviet convictions of the bishop. In the records of the protocols of the interrogations there are indications on how the investigation was conducted, and how it was necessary 'to make the questions detailed' [so as] 'to clarify, down to the smallest details, even the words and expressions used by him [Bishop Damascene] in his sermons', to establish the whole content of each sermon, and to interrogate even ordinary listeners.

"Stories about his walks with children were interpreted as education which 'tears the children away from contemporary life and does not prepare to make them citizens of the Soviet state, but on the contrary, makes them slaves of individual personalities (testimony of one of the members of the artel). Another witness said: 'He charmed everyone on his arrival. He has a fine voice. He delivers sermons well, and often touches on Soviet power in them. He almost always prayed "about the difficult, troubled time" that "is now in Rus"', and called on people to struggle against this time, so as to be able to overthrow the existing authorities. And he always said that the radiant moment would come

in Rus' when Soviet power would be overthrown.' The last words were probably written by the investigator.

"The representative of the GPU was very dissatisfied with the course of the investigation. He wrote on the protocol: 'All these are general phrases or simply empty. We have to find concrete phrases, acts, etc.' And again they tried without success to extract some kind of information which would convict the bishop of monarchist convictions, but such was simply not to be found. And yet, paradoxical as they may be, the whole community, whose life was constructed on communist and religious principles, was declared to be monarchist. The majority of the members of the artel were arrested.

"In the 'Summing-Up on the Case of Bishop Damascene' dated February 19, 1925, which was drawn up by the provincial procurator, it was affirmed that 'Citizen Tsedrik illegally organized vicar and deanery administrations without registering them in the local organs of Soviet power, united the clergy of Tikhonite orientation and tried to prove that the renovationist movement was heretical and therefore supported by Soviet power. He warned the citizens to be careful in relation to the communications of Soviet power on the situation of the Tikhonites, calling these communications deliberately false and made up. During Divine services he commemorated bishops in prison on counter-revolutionary charges "as martyrs for the faith and Christ" who were persecuted by Soviet power. And in general he tried by every means to undermine its authority.'

"However, the representative was forced to admit that he did not have enough evidence to bring the bishop to trial, in spite of the fact that as a whole 'all his work within the confines of the Chernigov region was directed to undermine Soviet power and had a counter-revolutionary character'.

"The Orthodox people stood up for their bishop. In October, 1924 the believers of the Nezhin, Glukhov and Novgorod-Seversky regions brought a petition before the provincial procurator signed by five thousand people asking that 'the bishop should be brought to trial, or, if there are no accusations against him, be released'. The petition produced no result.

"On February 24, 1925 the Orthodox communities of Chernigov, Nezhin and Glukhov delivered a declaration to G.I. Petrovsky. They wrote: "The communities are well acquainted with the personality of Bishop Damascene, his activity and the profound moral influence he exerts on the broad masses of believers... The communities of believers are unshaken in their conviction that no criminal act can be linked with the personality of Bishop Damascene that would require the bishop's isolation - and what is more, his isolation before his trial.'

"The believers asked that Bishop Damascene be released from prison under the guardianship of the community councils. If proven accusations were discovered, then a public trial should be brought forward. The authors of the

letter especially insisted on this, 'rejecting the administrative resolution of the question concerning him, which would lie as a heavy burden on the psychology of the broad masses of believers'.

"However, what the Chernigovians feared took place. There was no public trial. On February 13, 1925 the indictment was finally published. It summed up 'the counter-revolutionary activity' of the bishop. It said that the material collected was insufficient 'for the conviction of him (Damascene) by means of a public hearing'. Therefore, taking into account that Damascene in his world-view was a socially dangerous element, exerting a corrupting influence on the population, and that his continued remaining in the Chernigov region could create open opposition to Soviet Power and the Communist Party, as expressed in the formation of illegal circles of a monarchist organization', the decision was taken at a special meeting of the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR to ask the GPU of the Ukrainian SSR to petition the Central Commission for exiles to exile the bishop beyond the bounds of the Ukrainian SSR to the north.

Only three months later, on May 14, 1925, the bishop was released. The next day was the feast of the Ascension of the Lord. 'The Chernigovians always remembered with compunction how, when first release from prison before a great feast (of course, only because the GPU forgot about this), Bishop Damascene served the all-night vigil. Exhausted by many months of imprisonment and interrogations, Vladyka was not able to stand. Therefore he anointed people sitting. In the altar he had a heart attack. But this did not stop him from serving the liturgy the next day - for him there was no greater joy than to celebrate a Divine service, moreover it did not have to be in a church.'

"In July, 1925 Vladyka was again arrested [for "counter-revolutionary propaganda"], but was soon released. On August 4 he was again searched. Bishop Damascene signed a document to say that he would leave for Moscow and to the OGPU not later than September 4. In the short period that remained to him he succeeded in consecrating, with Archbishop Gregory (Lisovsky), Archimandrite Basil (Zelentsov) [the future hieromartyr] as Bishop of Priluki in Poltava. On August 25, 1925 Bishop Damascene arrived in Poltava on the morning train, and went straight to the cathedral from the station. He took part in the consecration, and then returned by the first train. Bishop Basil continued the work begun by Bishop Damascene, and composed a refutation of Lubensk schism.

Meanwhile, Bishop Damascene arrived in Moscow in September, 1925, and began to live in the Danilov monastery. On November 30 he was arrested with a large group of bishops in connection with "The Case of Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky) and others, Moscow, 1926". He was accused of being in the so-called "Danilov Synod", of "serving in the capacity of a messenger of all the instructions of the two former over-procurators Samarin and Sabler" and of "arranging meetings among them to discuss questions of the practical implementation of the Samarin-Sabler line".

Vladyka was cast into the inner prison of the OGPU in Moscow and in Butyrki prison. His only consolation there was an English Bible which someone had given him. He never used to talk about these periods of imprisonment, but on being asked by his cell-attendant usually replied:

"There were good people there, and I'm ready to go there again."

On May 21, 1926 he was condemned to three years' exile in Poloi on the banks of the Yenisei in Siberia, 200 kilometres north of Turukhansk and 10 degrees north of the Arctic Circle. On the way there, in September, Vladyka stopped in Krasnoyarsk, where he had to spend some time until the river froze solid. The clergy and the people met him with great honour and offered him a good flat in the city. They invited him to serve in church, and his services were especially well attended.

In November, the bishop set off north, accompanied by a convoy of the GPU. They travelled in long, narrow sleds pulled by six or twelve dogs. The journey to Poloi lasted six weeks. Poloi was a tiny settlement consisting of a single house in which lived the family of a hunter, another little house in which two exiled bishops lived, and, some distance away, a half-ruined cabin, the roof full of holes, with a broken-down stove and holes two inches wide in the board walls. It was in this cabin that Vladyka Damascene settled.

In the spring Vladyka's cell-attendant arrived. He told him how even he, a young novice, had been met with burning love and attention by the local clergy and people on his way through Krasnoyarsk. The two of them then began to repair their dwelling-place.

Vladyka knew a lot about carpentry, and repaired the hole in the roof himself. He taught his cell-attendant how to prepare bricks by hand; with them they reconstructed the stove. They left the holes in the walls - the snow did the best repair job on them. Being a lover of labour and inventive, Vladyka Damascene with the help of his cell-attendant made the things they most needed, including a wooden altar-table, which was glued together with fish glue. Then, using particles from his own pectoral cross, Vladyka was able to make an antimins from a simple cloth with a cross drawn upon it.

The mail, which came from Turukhansk by dog-sled once a month, brought Vladyka several parcels with wheat flour and grape wine from his numerous friends and admirers. Now he was able to celebrate the Divine Liturgy every day in a place where previously there had not stepped a single Christian foot. And he wrote to his clergy: "I see all of you, my near and dear ones, standing with me at the altar-table."

When the Liturgy was celebrated for the first time, the few inhabitants of the village of Poloi attended. They had no idea of Christianity, being for the most part pagans of Mongol blood. However, on hearing the church chanting, the

children leapt up and down and began to chant themselves, and it required much effort to quiet them down.

Vladyka was in exile together with Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov) of Vladimir and, perhaps, Bishop Joasaph (Udalov) of Christopol.

Bishop Damascene had some knowledge of medicine and was able to give the local inhabitants medical help. With the coming of sunny days they cultivated a small kitchen-garden. The greens from this garden and the parcels which came to him from his Chernigov flock, who remained devoted to him, gave Vladyka the ability to survive in this remote arctic settlement and to save, not only himself, but also the local inhabitants from the scurvy which usually raged there. Gradually his health, which had been severely undermined by his cruel trials in prison, recovered.

It was in Poloi that Vladyka Damascene wrote his famous inspired epistles, which made him well-known and loved, not only in the whole of believing Russia, but even far beyond her borders. The first of these that is known to us was written in the spring of 1927 with regard to the closing of a church in Nizhin. In August, 1927, Vladyka received news of Metropolitan Sergius' notorious declaration, in which he placed the Russian Church in submission to the God-hating Bolsheviks. This declaration made a terrible impression on him; he understood immediately that the Russian Church had been dealt the heaviest of blows. About 150 of his epistles are devoted to the denunciation of the declaration.

In the best-known of these he wrote: "There is one important thing we need to know: does Metropolitan Sergius, and do those with him, all believe what they say and write? Could Metropolitan Sergius swear, before the Cross and the Gospel, that what he writes, including his giving thanks to Soviet power, is truly the voice of his conviction, the witness of his unconstrained and pure pastoral conscience? We are convinced and we affirm that Metropolitan Sergius and his co-pastors could not do this without oath-breaking. But can anyone, in the name of the Church, from the height of the ambon, proclaim something that he could not swear to be the complete truth?

"What will those who have come to the Church say? What will they feel when, even from there, from the height of the last refuge of righteousness rejected by the world, from the height of the ambon, there sound words of hypocrisy, of man-pleasing and slander? Will it not seem that falsehood is achieving its final victory over the world, and that there, in the place where the image of Incarnate Truth flashed for them with the Unwaning Light, there now laughs in a disgusting grimace the mask of the father of lies?

"It is one or the other: either the Church is truly the immaculate and pure Bride of Christ, the Kingdom of truth, in which case the Truth is the air without which we cannot breathe, or, like the whole world which lies in evil, it lives in

lies and by lies, in which case everything is a lie, every word is a lie, every prayer, every sacrament.

"It seems to us that Metropolitan Sergius and those with him are enslaved by a terrible fantasy, the fantasy that it is possible to build the Church on man-pleasing and untruth. But we affirm that a lie can give birth only to a lie, and that it cannot be the foundation of the Church. Before our eyes we have the shameful path of "the church of the evil-doers" - renovationism. And this shame of the gradual immersion in the engulfing mud of ever more terrible compromises and apostasy, this horror of complete degradation awaits the community of the Church if it goes along the path marked out for it.

"It seems to us that Metropolitan Sergius has wavered in his faith in the omnipotence of the All-conquering Truth, in the omnipotence of God. And this wavering has been transmitted in the form of a terrible jolt to the whole body of the Church, making it shudder. There will be more than one heart that on hearing the words of untruth within the walls of the church will shake in its faith and perhaps be wounded in its most secret sanctuary; it will tear itself away from the Church that has deceived it and will remain outside her walls. The silence of thousands will utter a terrible word to the very heart of the people, wounding their much-suffering soul, and the rumour will spread to all the ends of the earth that the Kingdom of Christ has become the kingdom of the beast.

"What a pitiful and unworthy existence. Truly it is better to die than to live in this way. A black cloud has come to threaten the Church. There in the heavenly dwellings the Russian hierarchs, the champions of the Church in past ages, together with the martyrs and confessors of the recent past, are weeping over our earth. There in the underworld the dark forces are preparing to celebrate a new and decisive victory. O Lord, my heart sinks at the fate of Your Church. And yet she is still Your Bride..."

It was unthinkable to send this epistle and all 150 letters on this same theme by Soviet post. So Bishop Damascene decided to sacrifice what was most valuable for him - the company of his friend and brother cell-attendant. He dispatched him to Moscow to deliver some of them personally to their addressees and distribute others by post in various towns on his way.

"Soon after the publication of Metropolitan Sergius' declaration," writes E. L., "Bishop Damascene had thought about the fate of the Russian Orthodox Church in the image of two of the churches of the Apocalypse: those of Philadelphia and Laodicea. The Church of Patriarch Tikhon was the Church of Philadelphia... And next to the Church of Philadelphia was the Church of Laodicea - that of Metropolitan Sergius."

In his essay, "The Seal of Christ and the Seal of the Antichrist", Bishop Damascene wrote: "Why is it that the seal of the Antichrist, as St. John the Theologian affirms, will be placed not upon the forehead and the hand

simultaneously, but upon the forehead *or* the hand? Likewise, St. Andrew, archbishop of Caesarea, writes: 'He will strive so that the mark might be place upon everyone... In some it will be on the right hand, so as to instruct those who have been deceived to be bold in their deception and darkness.' This will occur because at that time there will be people who will affirm that it is possible and permissible to recognize the God-fighting authority of the Antichrist if only one remains a Christian in one's soul. From such ones the Antichrist will not demand that they share his way of thinking; in other words, upon all such ones he will not place the seal on their forehead, but will demand of them only the recognition of his authority, which is, according to St. Hippolytus, the seal on the hand, since through the recognition of the human authority which will be God-fighting and against God, lawless and filled with every impiety, a Christian by this very fact will cut off from himself every possibility of doing good and righteous deeds, for in his faith there will be missing the chief sign of uprightness - the confession of God as God and the recognition of Him as the Being Who stand above all. All such ones, even though they might bear the name of Christian, in very deed will be, according to the works of their hands, true servants of the Antichrist, who has deceived them by the worship of his image, which is the mark of the beast. Repentance is impossible for such ones, according to the teaching of the Holy Church; and it is impossible only because the seal of Christ and the seal of the Antichrist are incompatible with each other. The banishing of the Grace of the Holy Spirit through the mark of the beast fills the heart of all such ones with the first sign - fearfulness - which will bring them to an easy destruction. St. Hippolytus writes: 'On the contrary, if anyone is deprived of the Holy Spirit, that is, if he does not have upon himself or has lost the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit which was given in Holy Chrismation, he will fight with fear in a cowardly manner, will hide, will be afraid of the present temporal death, will conceal himself from the sword, will not endure chastisement, since he is constantly thinking about this world...'

In the winter of 1928, the greatest of all the contemporary Russian martyrs, Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, passed by Poloi on his way still further north. The two holy champions of God's truth met and from that time on were bound by the closest bonds of spiritual friendship and complete mutual understanding. This meeting of the two martyr-hierarchs had the greatest significance for the future history of the Russian Church, for it was precisely then, in the course of these few days of Metropolitan Cyril's stay in Poloi, that the foundations were laid and the principles set out of that movement which refused to make any compromise with the God-fighting authorities or with the church administration that had been enslaved by them.

In November, 1928, Bishop Damascene's term of exile came to an end. He arrived in Krasnoyarsk and there for the first time met that corrupting atmosphere that had infected the Church of Metropolitan Sergius, the consequence of his compromising politics. Instead of the courage and decisiveness and fearless loyalty to the Church and her martyrs which had reigned there two years before, now in the Church circles of Krasnoyarsk there reigned fear, double-mindedness and indecisiveness. The believers of

Krasnoyarsk had fearlessly confessed their unity with the exploit of the exiled hierarch. But in November, 1928, these same people were frightened and avoided him.

That which Vladyka had so clearly foreseen was coming to pass; the wavering in the truth of the official head of the Church, Metropolitan Sergius, was being passed on with a terrible jolt to the whole body of the Church. Vladyka wrote about these bitter impressions from Krasnoyarsk: "I have absorbed a lot of bitterness in this short period while observing the church life of Yeniseisk and Krasnoyarsk. What shall I meet in Moscow and beyond?"

He was forbidden to return to Chernigov province. But he received an invitation from the nearby town of Starodub, which belonged to the Chernigov diocese but by Soviet law was in Bryansk province. On the way there he stopped in Moscow, where he fell ill with pneumonia. This illness gave him the chance to have a long conversation with Metropolitan Sergius on December 11.

As he wrote: "I see something providential in my illness - otherwise I could not have gone to Moscow, while now I not only have been there and have seen some necessary people, but I even had a prolonged conversation with Metropolitan Sergius. As for the result of this conversation, I will say the following: If from afar I still assumed the possibility of facts which might justify his conduct, now these assumptions also have been destroyed. Now for me there is no justification whatsoever for Metropolitan Sergius and company!"

Arriving in Starodub in December, 1928, Bishop Damascene began to serve in the monastery of St. John the Forerunner. He adopted an uncompromising position in relation to sergianism. As Archbishop Stephen (Protsenko) of Chernigov said in the course of his interrogation by the NKVD in August, 1936: "Damascene Tsedrik... did not recognize not only Metropolitan Sergius, but also Metropolitan Constantine [Dyakov, exarch of Ukraine] and myself, the ruling bishop. This fact became concretely known to me from the village of Bereza in Glukhov region."

On March 29, 1929 Bishop Damascene wrote to Metropolitan Sergius: "The situation is such that all those who have set off on the path of your declaration have somehow lost the will to live, as it were expired, deprived of energy. Church life carries on with them somehow only through inertia, with their complete inability to oppose anything. This is the mood both of the pastors and of the laity. On the part of the pastors it is explained by the loss of firm ground under their feet; on the part of the laity - by the loss of trust for the personality of Your Eminence and those hierarchs with you. It is therefore not surprising that the minority that has separated from you speak with confidence of your loss of grace..."

"It is frightening to think the degree to which you have shockingly undermined the authority of the Church Hierarchy by your Declaration; what a rich harvest our enemies are gathering in these circumstances; how many

believers, not seeing a good example for themselves in their pastors, have doubted their belief in the Eternal Truth; and how many of them have fallen away from the Church and are perishing in the swamps of apostasy and streams of sectarianism! The enemies skilfully take advantage of the confusion you have created in the Church and increase their impudence tenfold as they carry out their godless plans... In Christ's Name, consider it, think about what is happening in the Church, and the results of the course you have selected! Pay heed to the cries and prayers heard from all sides! If not, it will be too late to correct your mistakes and too late to repent of them...

"Alas, if you insist on the path you have chosen and openly ignore the voices of the Church, then the Church, as it continues the way of the Cross, will reject you, as accomplices of those who choose to crucify the Church.

"You have gone far beyond the bounds which you yourself set, and your path ahead will lead precipitously outside the dominion of the Church. This truth will be revealed eventually to all. We stopped and did not go further with you and continue to plead, to ask you to return and join with us again. We remain near you and are prepared to reach out to you. If, nevertheless, you do not heed our call, do not turn back, and continue down your path, you can go, *but without us.*"

In May, Bishop Damascene wrote again to Metropolitan Sergius, urging him to distance himself "a long way from the Declaration, since it has produced such disturbance among the believers, and since it has already created such divisions".

Bishop Damascene defined sergianism as "the conscious trampling on the ideal of the Holy Church for the sake of preserving external decorum and personal well-being, which is necessary as a result of the so-called legalization".

On May 29, 1929, Bishop Damascene wrote from Starodub: "I received an invitation from Metropolitan Seraphim (Chichagov) of Petrograd to be his helper, and of course I refused, as before I refused all the offers of the sergianists."

Also in 1929 Bishop Damascene wrote in a "Letter to the Legalized Ones": "Fathers and brothers! While it is still not too late, do think and look into the essence of the 'legalization' that was graciously granted to you, lest you should later bitterly repent of the mistake that all of you with Metropolitan Sergius at your head are now committing! What you are accepting under the name of 'legalization' is, in essence, an act of bondage that guarantees you no rights whatsoever, while imposing upon you some grievous obligations. It would be naïve to expect anything other than that. The Communist Soviet Power is frank and consistent. It openly declared itself hostile to religion and set the destruction of the Church as its goal. It never stops stating openly and clearly its theomachistic tasks through its top governmental representatives and all of its junior agents. This is why it is very naïve and criminal to believe that the so-

called legalization by the Soviets is even partially seeking the good of the Church."

In the summer of 1929 **Fr. Gregory Seletsky** visited Bishop Damascene, and established that there were only "insignificant" differences between him and the Josephites, since Bishop Damascene mistakenly thought that Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov considered that all those who did not belong to the True Orthodox Church, including those who did not agree with Metropolitan Sergius, were graceless. However, Bishop Damascene did not openly join himself to the Josephites under Archbishop Demetrius.

It was while Fr. Gregory was with Bishop Damascene that the latter, with the help of Deacon Cyril Tsokot, Nun Irina (Burova) and others, organized the sending of parcels to Metropolitan of Krutitsa, the *locum tenens* of the Patriarchal Throne and legal head of the Russian Church, who was in exile in the remote village of Khe, Obdorsk region. Through Deacon Cyril he sent Metropolitan Peter twenty-two documents, including letters from Metropolitan Cyril to Metropolitan Sergius, in which he painted a terrible picture of ecclesiastical collapse and inner enslavement to the atheist government. Vladyka also gave Metropolitan Peter copies of all the orders and speeches of Metropolitan Sergius from July, 1927 to the summer of 1929, and asked him to raise his voice against the anti-ecclesiastical actions of his deputy.

With great difficulty Deacon Cyril reached the little village situated 200 kilometres from the railway and the old, sick monk sheltering in the corner of a log-cabin amidst the numerous family of his Samoyed landlord. The inhabitants of Khe, Nentsi-Samoyeds, were pagans and semi-pagans, and had no idea who it was that was living in their midst. Metropolitan Peter had not received any news or money or parcels from Russia since 1927, although he knew that such things addressed to him arrived in Tobolsk. So what Bishop Damascene sent was complete news to him. As Bishop Damascene wrote from the words of Deacon Cyril: "After acquainting himself with the contents of the documents, granddad [that was what Bishop Damascene called Metropolitan Peter in his letters] spoke about the situation and the further consequences deriving from it in almost my own words."

However, Bishop Damascene did not succeed in obtaining a written reply from Metropolitan Peter; for Fr. Cyril could not stay longer than 24 hours in Khe without risking being discovered by the unsleeping eye of the GPU and subjected to arrest, which could have had disastrous consequences both for him and for many clergy.

Bishop Damascene continued to wait for Metropolitan Peter's reply. But in October, 1929 he wrote: "What actually am I waiting for? I am coming to the conclusion that even a decisive word from Metropolitan Peter would not substantially change the situation, because the essence of the great sin which is being committed is not understood by many."

And yet the revealing to Metropolitan Peter of the true state of affairs in the Church was not completely fruitless. In 1930 Metropolitan Peter managed, by means unknown to the GPU, to get a letter to Metropolitan Sergius in which, after expressing his negative attitude towards his compromise with the communists, he demanded: "If you don't have the strength to defend the Church, step aside and give your place to a stronger person." Metropolitan Sergius never published the letter, apart from the cited phrase. The GPU did everything in their power to find out how this letter reached Metropolitan Sergius, but without success. As a punishment, Metropolitan Peter's exile was extended by three years.

In October and November, 1929, there matured in Bishop Damascene a clear thought which he would repeat in all his later epistles: "Christianity in Rus' must go underground." It had become impossible to exert influence on the broad masses of the people. Only a small flock could be saved from moral corruption and the gangrenous disease of the lie. The masses would at any rate know that somewhere there existed "a refuge for the righteousness that the world has rejected, where the Unwaning Light still shines."

On November 29 (or 27), 1929, Bishop Damascene was again arrested, cast into prison in Smolensk and accused of "counter-revolutionary opposition to Metropolitan Sergius and leading a church counter-revolutionary grouping". He had been betrayed by a member of the sergianist church, Protopriest N., who denounced Bishop Damascene before the GPU, declaring that he had given counter-revolutionary sermons.

On May 28, 1930 he was sentenced to ten years in the camps in "The Case of Bishop Damascene (Tsedrik), 1930". The indictment claimed that Bishop Damascene had given his "grouping" two tasks: (1) "the organization of active opposition to the undertakings of Soviet power that are directed against the Church", and (2) "the preparation of the transfer of all church activity to the underground (catacombs)". At the investigation he rejected denunciations that he had organized "conspiratorial counter-revolutionary meetings", and in a letter to the provincial section of the OGPU he emphasised the non-political character of True Orthodoxy: "Not wishing to serve as a weapon of your party aims, it [True Orthodoxy] at the same time does not want to be a political weapon. It places spiritual-moral aims above all others." He also said: "It is impossible to annihilate the age-old idea of Christianity, for it dwells in the spirit of man."

In June, 1930 Bishop Damascene arrived on Anzer island on Solovki. There he met many clergy who thought as he did and whom he had known up to then only by correspondence. But it was very difficult to correspond with prisoners at that time, and letters neither reached Bishop Damascene nor were received from him. **Igumen Barsanuphius (Yurchenko)** arranged for material help to be sent to him. He said almost nothing about his time in Solovki, except that hunger had often forced him and the other prisoners to collect mussels and

snails on the sea-shore. His fellow-prisoners said that he used every moment of his freedom during work to leave the working group and pray in the depths of the forests. They said that when the martyr-bishop was praying not far away, an atmosphere of unusual peacefulness and quiet radiance reigned in the crudest of the working groups, although they were not inclined to any form of piety.

In November, 1933, Bishop Damascene was released from camp because he was now "an invalid completely incapable of work". According to one source, he went to Chernigov province and settled in Nezhin. Then in January, 1934 he visited Kiev and got to know **Protopriest Demetrius Shpakovsky**. He ruled five secret communities in Kiev, and considered it inadmissible for believers to work in state institutions and be in Soviet public organizations. He then went to Glukhov, Gzhatsk, Moscow and other cities, carrying out secret services in the flats of believers.

However, according to another source, on his release he went to Kherson (according to another source, Starodub), arriving on January 1, 1934. He was now an invalid, and at the end of February told the authorities that he was not intending to undertake any church-administrative work. After this he moved to the village of Bereza, Glukhov region, Sumy province, and then to Svetly khutor, Glukhov region, and finally to the city of Nezhin, although he was still registered in Kherson.

He went round the towns known to him, visiting those of like mind with him and calling on priests to join the Catacomb Church. One of these was a venerable protopriest, a professor in the Kiev Theological Academy. The latter's refusal to join Bishop Damascene's underground flock so grieved Vladyka that he suffered a heart attack, and his health began to decline.

Some time after this, the protopriest who had refused to join the Catacomb Church was arrested by the authorities and died in prison, having become convinced from his own experience that honourable church work necessitated departing into the underground, however difficult that was in Soviet conditions.

During his travels, Vladyka visited towns which he was forbidden to enter, without registering with the local organs of the NKVD but staying with members of the True Church. And he never took off his rasson or shaved his long beard, as almost all the secret clergy in Russia did. Moreover, he would walk around Kiev with his bishop's staff even though he was not allowed to show himself anywhere in Ukraine.

Vladyka was no longer able to write long epistles, or address large assemblies, or serve in crowded churches, although it is known that he celebrated secret services in flats in Kiev. A friend of his quoted him as saying: "The general anti-religious degeneration, including intra-ecclesiastical degeneration, has forced me to think of the salvation, not of the majority, but

of the minority." And again he said: "Perhaps the time has come when the Lord does not wish that the Church should stand as an intermediary between Himself and the believers, but that everyone is called to stand directly before the Lord and himself answer for himself as it was with the forefathers!"

E.L., writing about the Bishop Damascene, comments: "He warmed the hearts of many, but the masses remained... passive and inert, moving in any direction in accordance with an external push, and not their inner convictions... The long isolation of Bishop Damascene from Soviet life, his remoteness from the gradual process of sovietization led him to an unrealistic assessment of the real relations of forces in the reality that surrounded him. Although he remained unshaken himself, he did not see... the desolation of the human soul in the masses. This soul had been diverted onto another path - a slippery, opportunistic path which led people where the leaders of Soviet power - bold men who stopped at nothing in their attacks on all moral and material values - wanted them to go.. Between the hierarchs and priests who had languished in the concentration camps and prisons, and the mass of the believers, however firmly they tried to stand in the faith, there grew an abyss of mutual incomprehension. The confessors strove to raise the believers onto a higher plane and bring their spiritual level closer to their own. The mass of believers, weighed down by the cares of life and family, blinded by propaganda, involuntarily went in the opposite direction, downwards. Visions of a future golden age of satiety, of complete liberty from all external and internal restrictions, of the submission of the forces of nature to man, deceitful perspectives in which fantasy passed for science... were used by the Bolsheviki to draw the overwhelming majority of the people into their nets. Only a few individuals were able to preserve a loftiness of spirit. This situation was exploited very well by Metropolitan Sergius..."

On August 1, 1934 Vladyka Damascene was arrested in Nezhin and cast into prison in Chernigov. At his investigation he did not hide his convictions, but categorically denied participation in any counter-revolutionary organizations. On August 14 he was transferred to the Lukyanov prison in Kiev at the disposal of the NKVD. On February 15, 1935 he was sentenced in accordance with articles 54-10 and 54-11 to three years' exile in the north for "organized work directed against the undertakings of Soviet power" and for being "a member of the illegal organization of churchmen, 'The True Orthodox Church'". He was sent to Arkhangelsk, where, on June 23, 1935 he wrote an epistle arguing for the necessity of a complete transfer to the catacombs. There he looked after believers of the Vyatka diocese, followers of **Archbishop Victor** of Vyatka.

On March 3, 1936 he was arrested again and cast into prison in Arkhangelsk. In April he was transferred to a prison in Vyatka (Kirov), where he wrote a note to the authorities on "The Abnormal Situation of Believing Citizens of the USSR", in which he accused the state organs of "unconstitutional forms of relationship towards the Church". On October 27, 1936 he was sentenced in accordance with article 58-10 to five (or three) years in the camps in "The Case of Bishop Damascene (Tsedrik), 1936". He was accused of "illegally heading

‘The Vyatka Diocese of the Orthodox Church’ of Victorite orientation” and of “illegally leading this through a counter-revolutionary group of churchmen, giving them instructions of a counter-revolutionary character”. Bishop Damascene rejected the accusations as “artificial”.

He was sent to Karlag, Karaganda, Kazakhstan, arriving at the Burminksoye section on December 7, 1936. At that time not only was correspondence with prisoners forbidden, but also the sending of parcels. News about the prisoners only came from people who had been in prison with them and had later been released. According to one of these reports, Vladyka Damascene worked as an accountant and even as an agronomist.

He was transferred sometimes to the north, sometimes to the south. During one such transfer, when weakened exiles were falling exhausted onto the road and the armed guard were shooting stragglers, Vladyka Damascene heaved his fellow-prisoner and spiritual son, Fr. John S., onto his shoulders. And then, although he was himself exhausted, he carried him all the way to the station.

Fr. Andrew Boychuk, a priest of the Catacomb Church, witnessed that Bishop Damascene had been in one of the Siberian prisons, but had been taken out of the common cell and put into a punishment cell without windows or lighting. There was ice on the floor of this cell, and hoar-frost covered the walls. He was put there "for preaching and prayer", that is, because he had had spiritual conversations with his fellow-prisoners. According to Fr. Andrew, Bishop Damascene contracted frostbite in his feet, which then became gangrenous and led to his death.

According to another witness, Vladyka had been transferred north when he was already ill. Perhaps he was taken out of the punishment cell referred to by Fr. Andrew. In late autumn the convoy stopped on the bank of a great Siberian river, waiting for a ferry. At the last minute a priest dressed only in a light cassock was brought onboard. He was shivering from cold. Then Bishop Damascene took off his own outer rasson, and with the words: "Whoever has two garments, let him give to him who has none," put it on the priest. But his ruined health could not endure the cold, and there on the ferry, on which the convoy was to travel for several days, he died. His body was dropped to the bottom of the river.

However, the most authoritative sources present a different story. On August 13, 1937 Vladyka Damascene was arrested in Karlag. The reason was that he and his fellow-prisoners had celebrated Pascha. On September 10, 1937 he was sentenced to death for “anti-Soviet agitation” and “the organization of illegal meetings”. The sentence was carried out on September 15 (or 10) at 23.00.

67. HOLY HIEROMARTYR ARCADIUS, BISHOP OF LUBNY
(+1937)

and those with him

Bishop Arcadius, in the world Andrew Iosifovich Ostalsky, was born on April 25, 1888 in the village of Yankovitsy, Zhitomir uyezd, Volhynia province (or the village of Skakovka, Solotvinsky volost, Zhitomir uyezd). Shortly after his birth, his father, **Priest Joseph Ostalsky**, was transferred to Zhitomir, where he was arrested in 1919, contracted typhus and died soon after his release. His mother, Sophia Pavlovna, was a pious woman who supported Arcadius spiritually to the end of her life. There were three children in the family, two boys and a girl (who died at the age of three). They lived in Zhitomir in a small three-roomed house with a straw roof.

From his youth Arcadius had a calling to monasticism, but following the desire of his parents he married and became a priest, having finished his studies at the Volhynia theological seminary. From September 14, 1911 (according to another source, 1910) he was pastor of the church in the town of Old Konstantinovo, Volhynia province. During the war he was a regimental priest. In 1917 he became rector of a small church in the centre of Zhitomir. He was also superior of the yedinovertsy church of St. Nicholas in Poltava.

When his wife left him and married a Bolshevik officer, Fr. Arcadius quietly gave her a divorce and moved in with his mother, but continued to pray for both his former wife and her husband.

He served every morning and evening, first in the Seraphimovskaya church, and then in the Nikolaevskaya church, which was not far from the Transfiguration cathedral. Fr. Arcadius was noted for his fiery sermons in defence of the Orthodox Faith, which attracted large numbers of the faithful. There were no conversations or moving about in the church; everyone prayed with concentration. Often everyone would fall to their knees spontaneously. Everyone would sing.

Women knew the strictness of Fr. Arcadius. They knew, for example, that he did not like them coming into the church in hats and with an important air - these he often drove out of the church. Everybody knew that, and for that reason they came to the church in scarves (including eminent ladies).

When one woman was bold enough to enter the church in a dress with short sleeves, Fr. Arcadius immediately asked:

"What - are you intending to wash the floor?"

Fr. Arcadius organized a lay brotherhood on the model of St. John of Kronstadt's house of labour. It was situated in Vilenskaya street, where there was a house church. The brotherhood carried out charitable activities and

buried poor people. There were no paupers in the brotherhood - everyone was given the help they needed. Fr. Arcadius personally took a very active part in the work of the brotherhood.

Fr. Arcadius was an exceptionally kind, responsive person. His kindness was touching, and sometimes had an element of humour. Thus when he was still a married protopriest, he could give a pauper clothes from his wife's wardrobe. And that was not all he gave away.

Once in Zhitomir some people who were close to him decided to have a fur coat made for him. Fr. Arcadius put this coat on twice in all, then it suddenly disappeared. It turned out that he had given it to a poor widow with two tubercular children. He told the mother that the coat was hanging in the altar. And when they asked in the church where the coat was hanging, he replied:

"It's hanging where it should hang."

His mother, Sophia Pavlovna, used to say that there was nothing in her son's room. Once Fr. Arcadius came into his mother's room, saw a carpet on the wall and asked carefully:

"Is this our carpet?"

"It's ours, not yours," replied his mother, feeling that he wanted to give it to one of the needy.

Once Fr. Arcadius went from Zhitomir to Kiev in bast shoes. It turned out that on the way a pauper had asked him for boots, and they had exchanged footwear.

Once they sewed a beautiful cassock for Fr. Arcadius. Some drunkard asked him for it. A short time later, this drunkard was seen selling the cassock. Perhaps they bought it from the drunkard and returned it to Fr. Arcadius.

On seeing a pauper on a cold night with his trousers ripped, Arcadius would not hesitate to give him his own. And since he always wore his ryasa and cassock, he could get away with it without being detected. His mother, however, would discover his philanthropy when doing his laundry and would jokingly tell her neighbours:

"Last night Arkasha again came home without his trousers."

But after the revolution Fr. Arcadius' charitable activity aroused the violent displeasure of the new local authorities, and he was put in prison, where he remained for two years. At about the same time his father was also arrested, and it happened that father and son were sitting in neighbouring cells. But they did not realize it: they were taken out of the cells at different times.

On being released from prison, Fr. Arcadius threw himself into the work of the brotherhood. Those who wanted to join the brotherhood were solemnly received by giving their vow to carry out the aims of the brotherhood, which required, first of all, devotion to the purity of Orthodoxy - never to renounce it, even under threat of death; secondly, the wearing of modest attire; then fasting, and so on. The acceptance into the brotherhood was conducted very solemnly. Everyone had to make the necessary preparation for Confession and the reception of Holy Communion. Then everyone would remain in church, and before the reading of the Gospel they had to repeat the words spoken by Fr. Arcadius - the rules of the brotherhood - and to confirm them with a vow. We were then given large lighted candles, which we were to treasure until death. Afterwards we would receive Holy Communion.

In the St. Nicholas Brotherhood there were several groups: one was a missionary group, conducted by Fr. Arcadius himself, whose aim was to fight sectarians, atheists and the Living Church; then there was a group of singers; a group which visited hospitals, taking care of the lonely and sick and those poor people who had many children; then a burial group, whose duties were not only to bury the faithful and see that they received the Church's burial service, but also to obtain and deliver coffins to the grave; and since the times were very hard, often they had to drag the coffins on little carts or sleighs to the cemetery, and even dig the grave. Then there was also a philanthropical group. And to some of his novices in the brotherhood Fr. Arcadius entrusted the copying of the appeals of the bishops, including the letters from exile of Metropolitan Peter.

At that time Archimandrite Arcadius served not only in Zhitomir, but often also in Moscow and Kiev. In Moscow he loved to serve in the Pimenovsky church, and there he delivered his sermons. In the Kiev Nikolsky monastery, which used to stand next to what is now the Arsenalnaya metro station, he sometimes delivered four sermons a day. These sermons were out of the ordinary, and when he delivered them people in the crowd would shout:

"You're a Chrysostom".

His confessions were also unusual, lasting until two o'clock in the morning.

At this time the Church entered into battle with the renovationists. Archimandrite Arcadius completely shared the point of view of Patriarch Tikhon, but did not express his views openly. Fr. Boris, who was at that time serving in the Vvedensky monastery, asked Archimandrite Arcadius to lead the Tikhonite Church in Kiev, but Arcadius refused, saying: "I have no blessing for this. We are following church events very carefully. The apostolic canons have not been broken yet. If we declare ourselves too early, we could be thrown out of the Church."

However, at times this restraint was punctuated by active resistance to the enemies of the Church. Thus he was once called to the authorities and asked

what his attitude was to those clergy who did not pray for the civil authorities during the services. On this score Archimandrite Arcadius expressed his position clearly and openly:

"You issue a decree that you are turning to God and are asking people to pray for you. But if you try to annihilate the Church, that means that we have to introduce a new petition into the litany: 'For our self-annihilation, let us pray to the Lord'."

In 1922 Patriarch Tikhon gave the order forbidding the giving of church vessels into the hands of unbelievers, especially the holy chalices which had been blessed by the grace of God. Fr. Arcadius, as a devoted son of the Church, obeyed the patriarch's instructions and would not give over the Church's valuables. And so, one day in Bright Week, immediately after the Divine Liturgy, he was arrested by the Cheka, the Secret Police. When the chekists took him, the whole mass of people moved together with the arrested Fr. Arcadius to the Cheka building. Then the chekist soldiers took rifles and yelled with hatred:

"Everyone go home or we will start shooting!"

Everyone was silent, clinging to one another and holding their breath. And then out stepped a nun by the name of Seraphima and bravely said:

"No! We will not leave until you release our Fr. Arcadius or arrest us all together with him."

Then the soldiers put down their rifles and did not push them away, and the people formed a wall which began to push into the Cheka building. But since the crowd was enormous, they began to close the doors, and thus they arrested 35 women and 17 men. They put them in the basement of the building. The choir leader was there, so instantly the dark building was filled with paschal singing. Then they took them out and pushed them into the yard near the garage, and began to conduct them, one by one, to be interrogated; and then they were pushed out into the street. They were given a statement to sign which said that Fr. Arcadius had started a riot, but not one person signed it. Then a note was added to the statement, saying that the people themselves had refused to leave their spiritual father. And this every single person signed individually, as if by mutual consent. Among those imprisoned were young girls about 16 years old, who also signed.

The news of Fr. Arcadius's arrest instantly spread through the city, and the Cheka building was besieged by an endless amount of food parcels for the arrested ones. Thus all the arrested ones, as well as the guards, were fed on these parcels.

Fr. Arcadius was put on trial both for the uprising and for resisting the requisitioning of church valuables. Many witnesses were called. They all said

the same thing, speaking of Fr. Arcadius as a fine man, an unmercenary, a priest who devoted his whole life solely to the service of God and men. Many examples were brought forward of his goodness and exceptional self-sacrifice. There was no evidence against him at all. But the judge, who was very young, proud and self-assured, with cynical frankness declared that the whole description of Fr. Arcadius given by the witnesses was not a justification of him, but rather added to the accusations against him; for the ideas which he so warmly preached and put into practice contradicted the ideals of the Soviet regime, and such people were not merely unnecessary to the Soviet government, but even extremely harmful to it.

During the trial Fr. Arcadius fell asleep. They sentenced him to execution by shooting - and he was still asleep. They woke him up and told him that he had been sentenced to death. He replied:

"Thanks be to God for all things. For me death is gain, I am passing to another world!"

However, members of the brotherhood went to Moscow to petition on his behalf, and one of them succeeded in changing the course of events. His sentence was changed to ten years in prison.

For five years he was imprisoned in Zhitomir, which made his lot somewhat easier, since there was constant contact between him and the St. Nicholas Brotherhood. In prison he gained the love not only of the prisoners, but also of the jailors and guards, and thanks to this he managed several times to give Holy Communion to the condemned, who were then led out to be shot. He saved many souls. And, of course, the food given him by the brotherhood helped his fellow prisoners.

On being released from prison, Fr. Arcadius went on pilgrimage to Sarov and Diveyevo. There he met the eldress Maria Ivanovna, who prophesied:

"You will become a bishop, but you will not get out of prison."

Then, in 1925, he received the monastic tonsure with the name Arcadius in the Sarov Dormition desert, and was raised to the rank of archimandrite (according to another account, this took place after his divorce from his wife).

According to one account, Fr. Arcadius was consecrated Bishop of Lubny, a vicariate of the Poltava diocese, by Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd on September 15, 1926. He was arrested in October and exiled to Kharkov, and then, in February, 1927 - to Tuapse. In April, 1927 he was arrested, and on May 9 he was arrested again in Moscow. On August 23, 1928 he was sentenced to five years in the camps by the OGPU, who later extended the sentence for another five years, so that he was on Solovki until January, 1937.

According to another source, however, on the way to his new flock, having arrived in the city of Lubny, he was arrested and sent to Kazan in April, 1927, from where he managed to escape, living in hiding for a long time in Petrograd, secretly celebrating Divine services at the Kiev-Caves metochion and inspiring Catacomb brotherhoods. Then he left for Moscow, where he was arrested and put into the infamous Butyrki prison, being later exiled to the Solovki concentration camp.

But according to a different account, in 1926 he went to Moscow, where, on September 15/28, Metropolitan Sergius consecrated him bishop of Lubny. Bishop Arcadius knew that he would not be allowed to serve in Lubny. Nevertheless, in 1927 he decided to serve Pascha in his own diocese. He arrived secretly in Lubny and at 11.30, before the beginning of Mattins, he went into the church altar. He was wearing a coat and blue goggles. In this guise he did not, of course, look like a bishop, and it was not surprising that the deacon immediately threw out the stranger - we're waiting for the bishop, he said, but you get out. But the stranger insistently asked for the priest to be called, and when he appeared, Bishop Arcadius revealed himself to him.

Immediately the bishop vested himself and started the service. But he did not succeed in completing it before representatives of the authorities appeared in the church, and he was forced to hide.

This was his only service in the diocese he had been appointed to.

According to one witness, Bishop Arcadius did serve some paschal services that year in Zhitomir.

But soon he set off for the Caucasus, where he wandered in the mountains and talked with the hermits. But while there he came to understand the danger of his situation, and that he could be killed at any moment. And so he concealed his photograph in the lining of his boot, so that in the event of his death people would be able to learn about his fate.

After two years in the Caucasus, two weeks before Pascha in the year 1928, Bishop Arcadius unexpectedly turned up at the podvorye of the Kiev Caves Lavra in Petrograd, where the future Archbishop Leontius of Chile gave him lodging and accompanied him on trips round the city. But the position of Bishop Arcadius was complicated by the fact that according to the existing legislation an unregistered clergyman could not serve, and if the authorities found out about it they would tear up their agreement with the community where he served and transfer the building in which they prayed to another community, usually a renovationist one. But, to the amazement of all, the president of the community succeeded in obtaining permission for Bishop Arcadius, "who has come as a guest", to serve at the podvorye for the space of two weeks.

"On Paschal night," writes Archimandrite Benjamin (Voznyuk), "our majestic church, which could hold about 2000 people, together with the embankment, was so full of people that Fr. Justin had to serve on the street, too, since it was impossible to squeeze oneself into the church because of the crowd. All the candelabras and candles were lit, and the whole numerous throng of clergy, vested in paschal vestments and headed by Vladyka Arcadius, went out of the altar chanting: 'Thy Resurrection, Christ our Saviour'; while, as a subdeacon standing near Vladyka, saw the tears streaming down his face. And I came to understand that there are moments in life for the sake of which one could sacrifice the rest of one's life, whatever lies ahead. And it was difficult to expect anything good ahead, but at that grace-filled hour he, as the leader of this spiritual festivity, was happy. For this moment at any rate he and the people, who were tormented as he was, could pray and glorify Christ the Life-Giver risen from the dead."

According to one (dubious) source, in 1928 Bishop Arcadius expressed his agreement with the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church, but refused to sign them.

In the same year he wrote a letter to a novice in Kiev in which he asked her to buy some icons for him in the Lavra. The novice set off for the book stall, where books and icons were being sold by Hieromonk Jeremiah. As if quite casually, Fr. Jeremiah asked the novice whether she knew where Bishop Arcadius was. At that very moment Bishop Arcadius was standing hiding in the book stall, and he heard this conversation between the hieromonk and the novice.

Suddenly she heard someone quietly calling her by name. Looking round, she unexpectedly saw Bishop Arcadius in front of her. At that moment he had come out of hiding.

Bishop Arcadius looked very ill. And in fact he had pleurisy. And his legs were very swollen. He had to be treated straightaway; so the novice suggested he stay in her flat, where she lived with her mother. The house was on the territory of the Lavra, which was convenient for Bishop Arcadius. So as not to constrain Vladyka, the novice left her flat to live with a friend of hers. In daytime, however, she visited the sick man, and together with her mother gave him the necessary medical treatment.

Bishop Arcadius lay for three weeks in this house; and here, thanks to the care of the two pious women, he recovered from his illnesses.

However, he decided against staying in Kiev. He knew that they were looking for him and would perhaps find him soon. And he decided to go to Moscow and ask Metropolitan Sergius to plead before the authorities that his previous convictions be expunged. Metropolitan Sergius did not advise him to present himself to the authorities, but Bishop Arcadius, not being conscious of any wrong-doing, went to E.A. Tuchkov at the Lubyanka.

Tuchkov immediately arrested him (on May 9, 1928) and on August 23 he was sentenced to five years in the camps of Solovki. A group of armed soldiers conducted him to the prison car fenced with barbed wire. As the train pulled out he thrice blessed the group of women who had gathered to see him off.

Many years later, Bishop Arcadius related that they were taken out of Moscow in a livestock carriage filled to overflowing with prisoners. It was so crowded that it was even difficult to stand. Sometimes at stops the guards pulled back the bolts of the carriage and threw out those who had died.

For many years Bishop Arcadius was employed in difficult physical work digging out drainage canals on Solovki. It goes without saying that they were very badly fed. Besides, there were frequent searches to see whether they had forbidden paper or pencils on them.

In 1929 there arrived on Solovki **Priest Michael Danilovich Savchenko**. He was born in 1882 in Poltava into the family of a priest, and served in the village of Velikaya Buromka, Cherkassk district, Cherkassk province. He was sentenced to ten years in the camps. In 1929 Metropolitan Michael (Yermakov) of Kiev had given him an award, but it had not been given to him because of his arrest. When the camp heard the news of the award, Bishop Arcadius decided to give it to Fr. Michael. Then he served a moleben, after which Vladyka said that the clergy in the camps should support each other. On November 21, 1930 Fr. Michael took part in a service with Bishop Arcadius. In 1931 he was given two years in the Shizo... Nothing more is known about him.

Bishop Arcadius' mother, Sophia Pavlovna, and the president of the St. Nicholas Brotherhood, Natalia Ivanovna Orzheskaya, went to Solovki to see him. But they were not allowed even to receive a blessing from him. Two rows of tables were placed in a large room. At one row the visitors were seated, at the other - the prisoners. Between them a whole crowd of guards were constantly walking back and forth, making such a noise that one had to scream to be heard. And, of course, they were not allowed to approach for a blessing because of the "danger of infection". Years later, Bishop Arcadius related that they proposed that he remain voluntarily at Solovki as a cashier, and that they even promised to stop spying on him - provided he renounced his priesthood. But he preferred life in total deprivation, keeping the Lord God in his heart.

Bishop Arcadius lived in a barracks with criminals. His influence on those around him was always great, and here, in the camp, he also had an influence on those next to him. Many hardened criminals, after meeting Bishop Arcadius, rethought their lives, and from wolves were turned into sheep.

Once, he decided to serve a Paschal Mattins with them (he could not serve the Liturgy - there was no antimins). During the service the criminals sang, as far as they were able helping the bishop to carry out the festive service. However, this incident was not allowed to pass without punishment for the

bishop. On April 7, 1931 he was arrested, and on August 14 he was given an extra five years imprisonment and transferred to Pole-axe Mountain in the company of 37 Catholic priests who were also in prison.

Bishop Arcadius was released after ten years in camp, on January 26, 1937. He was an almost unrecognizable, grey-haired old man. He was forbidden to return to the Ukraine and to 15 major cities. He was also deprived of the usual Soviet identity permit, without which one's very existence becomes illegal. Finally, he was allowed to settle in the town of Klin (Tver), near Moscow (according to another source, in Kasimova, near Moscow), but under the following conditions: no one was to visit him, he was forbidden to enter the altar of the local church, and every two weeks he had to appear before the local authorities. Once he was seen by Zinaida, the daughter of the Kiev priest Sabbas Petrunevich. She wanted to come up to receive his blessing, but Bishop Arcadius made a warning gesture - he did not want to be seen talking with anyone.

And yet, in spite of these restrictions, Bishop Arcadius did go to Kiev and Zhitomir. In Kiev he stayed with **Vera Vladimirovna Skachkova**, a very pious woman who worked as a music teacher. She had a house in Zhitomir which was at the disposal of the brotherhood, and when Kievans went to Zhitomir on the affairs of the brotherhood they stayed there.

From Kiev Bishop Arcadius went to Zhitomir. Before his departure he asked Vera Vladimirovna to warn the novice whom he knew and her mother that he would visit them on his return. In Zhitomir he visited the graves of his father and mother, who had also died by that time. Although the last church used by the brotherhood had been closed in 1937, the members would still gather secretly in the cemetery chapel. They were served by two secret priests, **Fr. Julian Krasitsky** and **Fr. John Sirov**.

On returning to Kiev, Bishop Arcadius did not forget his promise to visit the two women who had looked after him in his illness. As the novice recalled, one winter evening he appeared in their doorway in blue goggles and with the collar of his coat turned up to hide his face. He had decided to come and congratulate her on her namesday. He sat down, ate a pie and drank some tea. That was all. He refused to drink the home-made wine:

"My heart is weak," he said, "I get drunk on kvas."

He did not stay long in Kiev, he had to return to Klin. The authorities did not notice his absence. But he could not stay in Klin and continued his wandering life.

Once, when his strength was undermined from this constant loneliness, homelessness and fear of the next day, being secretly in Moscow, he was tempted to visit Metropolitan Sergius. In order to see the metropolitan, one had to go through great difficulties and dangers. And when he finally saw him and

told him about his situation, the metropolitan, without listening to him, asked abruptly:

"Have you registered with the GPU? Until you are registered there, I will not speak with you."

As Vladyka Arcadius was leaving the metropolitan's office, he noted that both the metropolitan and all his clergy were well fed and wore clean clothing. And when he looked around at the miserable, destitute people who were waiting outside his office in the hope of seeing the metropolitan and receiving some help from him, he understood that his path was different, and that he had to return to his wandering...

According to one account, in 1937 he was appointed Bishop of Bezhetsk, but refused to accept the appointment.

Two accounts exist of his final arrest. According to one, he was spotted in the city of Kostroma on the Volga in 1938, was arrested, and never heard of again. According to another, he had bought a ticket for a train leaving Klin. However, his intention was in some way known to the authorities, probably from his landlady. They rang the station and stopped the train. Together with the landlady they searched the train and found Bishop Arcadius in the first carriage from the locomotive.

On the same day they wanted to catch his cell-attendant, too, but he escaped through a window into the garden. Nobody knew his name, so it is unlikely that they caught him at that time.

In the same year of 1938, according to one source, Bishop Arcadius was seen walking with a knapsack on his back out of Butyrki prison. And according to another, he died in the 1940s.

However, it is now known that he was shot on December 29, 1937 in Butovo polygon, near Moscow, where he was buried.

According to one source, Bishop Arcadius took the schema with the name Anthony.

Bishop Arcadius wrote a series of works. Here are the names of three of them:

1. "On the existence of God".
2. "Is it true that scientists do not believe in God?" (In this work the opinions of 140 scientists affirming the existence of God were cited.)
5. "Is it true that religion hinders culture and the development and establishment of the life of a free people?"

He also wrote a guide for preachers and a work on church oratory.

68. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PROCOPIUS, ARCHBISHOP OF ODESSA AND KHERSON (+1937)

and those with him

Archbishop Procopius, in the world Peter Semyonovich Titov, was born on December 25, 1877 in Kuznetsk, Tomsk province, in the family of a protopriest of the cathedral church in Tomsk (according to another source, of a priest serving in Kuznetsk), Fr. Simeon Titov. He was named in honour of the St. Peter of Moscow. From his first years he was immersed in an atmosphere of parental love and ecclesiastical piety. He received his first education at home, in his family. When he was nine he entered a spiritual school, and then Tomsk theological seminary, from which he graduated in 1897. Having entered Kazan Theological Academy, he came under the influence of its rector, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who instilled in him a love for the Holy Fathers, theology, asceticism and monasticism.

In 1901 he graduated from the Academy with the degree of candidate of theology, and was soon appointed a teacher in the Tomsk theological school. On August 21, 1901 he was tonsured into monasticism in the Dormition monastery in Ufa with the name Procopius, and on August 23 was ordained to the priesthood, and went to serve as the director of a church pedagogical school attached to the Hierarchical House in Tomsk at a time when the ruling hierarch was the dynamic Enlightener of the Altai, Bishop Macarius (Nevsky). There were about 150 pupils in the school, whose aim was to give the pupils the necessary training to become teachers for the Tomsk, Omsk, Tobolsk and Yeniseisk dioceses. Fr. Procopius also directed a Sunday school attached to the church school for teachers. In 1906 he became a teacher of Holy Scripture in the Irkutsk theological seminary, whose rector at that time was Archimandrite Eugene (Zernov). In the same year he was appointed a member of the commission attesting the relics of St. Sophronius of Irkutsk. During this period Fr. Procopius acquired the reputation of being a great preacher, and at the gatherings of the Irkutsk Brotherhood in the name of St. Innocent, hundreds of people gathered in order to hear him. He served akathists in the hierarchical church of the Cross, and his serving was distinguished by great prayerfulness, and after each service he gave a deeply instructive word. Fr. Procopius was also the inspirer and organizer of a charitable department attached to the Brotherhood, which helped many poor people. All this earned for him the particular praises of Archimandrite Eugene.

On August 30, 1909, at the request of Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia and Zhitomir, Hieromonk Procopius was raised to the rank of archimandrite and transferred to Zhitomir, where he was appointed assistant director of the Zhitomir pastoral school attached to the Theophany monastery, serving under the future hieromartyr, Bishop Gabriel (Voyevodin). In 1913 the over-procurator of the Holy Synod, V.K. Sabler, visited the school and was greatly impressed. In 1914 the school was visited by the leaders of the educations committee attached to the Holy Synod. On becoming acquainted

with the life and constitution of the school, it came to the conclusion that its constitution should be laid at the base of all the pastoral schools in Russia. The success of the school was owing in no small part to efforts of Fr. Procopius.

On August 30 / September 12, 1914 he was consecrated bishop of Elisavetograd, a vicariate of Kherson diocese. Bishop Procopius immediately won the lasting respect and love of his flock through his humility and compassion. This love lasted through the terrible years of the revolution.

In 1917-18 he participated in the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church, voted in favour of the restoration of the patriarchate, and put his signature to the act of the canonization of St. Sophronius of Irkutsk on April 5/18, 1918.

During the Council Bishop Procopius was appointed superior of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in Petrograd. Immediately after his appointment he created the Brotherhood for the Defence of the Lavra, of which he was elected president, and together with other members of the brotherhood gave an oath, while standing before the relics of St. Alexander Nevsky, to defend the community to his last breath. When the Bolsheviks tried to seize the Lavra, with the blessing of Bishop Procopius the alarm was sounded and many people came rushing to the Lavra, compelling the soldiers to flee. Towards the end of January, 1918 he was arrested together with Metropolitan Benjamin of Petrograd and the whole spiritual council of the Lavra for his refusal to leave the Lavra and allow a field hospital to be put in it.

Having been miraculously saved from death, and come out to freedom, on January 26 / February 8 he was appointed Bishop of Nikolayev, a vicariate of the Odessa diocese, by the Church Council. During the Civil War Patriarch Tikhon gave an order for the temporary self-government of the dioceses, and in connection with this order Bishop Procopius carried out the duties of administrator of the Ekaterinoslav diocese. In 1921 he was appointed ruling Bishop of Odessa and Kherson.

The purity and irreproachability of his moral life, his firm convictions and his asceticism acquired for him a reputation as an archpastor of lofty spiritual life. Until 1923 he regularly served in the parishes of the Odessa-Kherson diocese. Many people were converted by him and became his devoted spiritual children. And many, inspired by his fearless and complete devotion to serving Christ and His Holy Church, decided to accept the priestly rank.

In 1922 he met **Priest John Georgievich Skadovsky**, and this meeting became the beginning of a deep spiritual bond which lasted throughout their lives until their martyric deaths. Fr. John was born on May 30, 1875 in Kherson. His father, **George Lvovich Skadovsky**, was the marshal of nobility in Kherson, the owner of extensive lands, who completed the building of a women's monastery that was begun by his father on land donated by the family. In 1919 he was killed on the porch of his house. The future Priest John

went to the real school in Kherson in 1888, and then, in 1896, to the Kherson agricultural school. In 1899 he went to Yalta to study chemistry and wine-making. In 1902 he returned home and helped his father on his estate for two years. In 1905 he served as an official helping the provincial governor with special tasks. From 1906 he occupied the post of zemstvo leader in Kherson uyezd. In 1909 he retired and took up agriculture, which, as he used to say, attracted him by its patriarchal style of living. He was married to **Catherine Vladimirovna**. During the war John Georgievich was mobilised and was sent to the 457th Tauris infantry militia. The militia lived in Kherson in expectation of being sent to the front. But then the February revolution broke out, and John Georgievich was released because of his age and went back to his estate. Soon Soviet power confiscated his estate, leaving him and his family with a house and some agricultural equipment, but without hired hands. In 1918 John Georgievich decided to accept ordination to the priesthood and gave all his agricultural property to the peasants. He was ordained in 1918 by Metropolitan Plato and sent to the Annunciation women's monastery not far from Kherson. However, Fr. John refused this appointment and was sent instead to the hierarchical church in Kherson as the third priest.

In 1922 there began the struggle of the renovationist heretics against the Orthodox Church, and on February 16, 1923 Bishop Procopius was cast into prison in Kherson for opposition to them. In prison Vladyka displayed complete absence of fear before the executioners. This angered the chekists, who decided to use another tactic. At that time there was a certain red-haired Jewish beauty in Kherson called Sonka, a professional thief with an unorthodox life-style. Having been arrested for something, she was given the choice: "If you seduce the hierarch, your case will be closed." She accepted the proposal, and was put in the cell of Bishop Procopius. On the first day she tried hard to win the approval of the bosses by applying all her skills of seduction... On the next day she did the same, but with no success. All her efforts came up against the meek silence of the hierarch, who seemed to be sorry for her for something. Gradually, coming to like her fellow prisoner, she began to ask who he was and what he had been arrested for. A conversation began, and with each word it became clearer it was not he, but she who was being conquered. She was becoming a Christian... The bosses summoned her for interrogation. "What scumbags you are," she said, "if such people sit in your prisons!" The chekists' plot had failed. Soon, to the amazement of many, Sonka became the servant of God Sophia, a constant parishioner at the Kherson cathedral and a spiritual daughter of Bishop Procopius...

On August 26, 1923 Vladyka Procopius was transferred to Odessa prison and brought to trial. The excuse was that in the past he had served molebens for the Whites and had collected contributions for them. In August, 1923 he was condemned for "resistance to the requisitioning of church valuables", moral and material support of the Russian Volunteer Army, collecting contributions for its soldiers". He was sentenced to death, but this was commuted to exile beyond the frontiers of the Ukraine.

Later he told the story of his arrest: "In 1923, in connection with the appearance in the Church of renovationism, which I did not join out of conviction, I was brought to trial for helping the White Guard movement. I was accused of arranging prayer services and the collection of offerings for the Whites. Offerings were collected in the churches, but not by my order, but by the order of the Vicar-Bishop Alexis Bazhenov, who is ruling the diocese, and who is now serving as the renovationist metropolitan in Kazan. He was not brought to account, because he was already a renovationist by that time. The local governing organs were better disposed to the new tendencies or orientations of an ecclesiastical character than to the Church. They were given more privileges in the hand-out of churches. Even if the group of believers was small, they were given a church, but they rejected the petition of our group. They were allowed to convene meetings... Here is the example of Alexis Bazhenov: he was not called to account, while others, guilty of the same offence, were called to account."

The Orthodox population of Kherson and Odessa elected a large group of representatives to petition for the release of Vladyka Procopius. They gave their petition to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, writing: "We dare to petition your Holiness to send the attached address of ours to the Soviet authorities for the release of our dear archpastor, Bishop Procopius (Titov). And we ask you for your part to assist as far as you are able in obtaining the speediest possible return of Bishop Procopius to his loving flock." On October 25, 1924 Patriarch Tikhon's petition was handed in to the OGPU.

On January 12, 1925 Vladyka Procopius was exiled to Moscow. Although he had no parish, he took an active part in Church life, and regularly expressed his opinions at meetings of bishops in the Danilov monastery. Vladyka's was one of the names that had been put forward for membership of the Synod by Patriarch Tikhon, and preparations for convening this Synod were proceeding. However, in April the Patriarch died. Bishop Procopius served a pannikhida with a host of clergy at his burial. He was also present when the patriarch's will was proclaimed, and together with other hierarchs signed the transfer of power to Metropolitan Peter on April 25. In June, 1925 he was raised to the rank of archbishop. He now became one of the closest assistants of Metropolitan Peter, helping him in the struggle against the Bolshevik-inspired renovationist schism.

In Kherson, meanwhile, an illegal religious organization was formed of the spiritual children of Vladyka under the leadership of Fr. John Skadovsky and Deacon Michael Zakharov. They included **Nun Maria** (Grigoryevna Khodanovich), who was born in Odessa in 1888, **Constantine Yakovlevich Kulida**, who was born in 1870, **Demetrius Grigoryevich Klimenko**, who was born in 1896, and **Anna Kirillovna Kulida**, who was born in 1887.

In 1925 the renovationists occupied the cathedral and Fr. John had to leave. At first he served in the cemetery church. However, when a chanter from the renovationists was accepted without the established rite of reception, he left

and went to serve in the flat of Fr. Michael, where Fr. John and his matushka also lived. The parish consisted of between fifty and sixty people. Vladyka Procopius' name was always commemorated. This group established a constant connection between Vladyka and his Kherson flock, gathered parcels for him, accompanied him on convoys and gave him parcels and letters, thanks to which he knew what was happening in the diocese. The archbishop replied to letters at the first opportunity. He comforted the sorrowful, issued instructions, gave advice and blessings. Right until his martyric end he remained, not formally, but in reality the head of his diocese.

On November 19 (or November 25), 1925 Vladyka Procopius was arrested "for being a member of, and taking part in, the activity of a monarchist group of bishops and laity, who set as their aim the use of the Church and its apparatus to harm the dictatorship of the proletariat". He was arrested together with Metropolitan Peter, Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov), Archbishop Pachomius (Kedrov), Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh), Bishop Gurias (Stepanov), Bishop Damascene (Tsedrik), Bishop Herman (Ryashentsev) and other bishops, clergy and laity, in "The Case of Metropolitan Peter and others, Moscow, 1926". He was cast into Butyrki prison, where he was visited by Fr. John Skadovsky.

The defendants were accused of "creating the so-called 'Danilov Synod' and of serving in this capacity as conveyors of all the instructions of the two former over-procurators Samarin and Sabler, organizing conferences and meetings among themselves in order to discuss questions of how practically to carry out the Samarin-Sabler line - as, for example, the question of leaving the metropolitan see of Kiev with the White Guardist émigré Anthony Khrapovitsky, and in order to discuss and correct documents of Metropolitan Peter that were being prepared for publication - as, for example, his declaration, and to give these documents an anti-soviet character, and in order to convey and distribute information about the movements of the émigré part of the Church and to read counter-revolutionary documents, and in order to discuss questions of how to exert pressure on people who did not obey the Samarin-Sabler line - as, for example, the exerting of pressure on Metropolitan Michael, etc..."

Archbishop Procopius later recalled: "On November 19, 1925 I was arrested among others together with Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, and was accused of belonging to a counter-revolutionary group of clergy and laity. No concrete counter-revolutionary actions were mentioned to me. Perhaps they did not like the conversations I had had with Tuchkov, the representative of the OGPU, who was present at our meetings. After the investigation had been conducted, I was given three years on Solovki."

During the investigation, Archbishop Procopius was questioned whether he had visited the former over-procurator Sabler, and what church questions they had discussed. Archbishop Procopius replied: "As far as I can remember, during my stay in Moscow I was three times at the house of Vladimir Karlovich

Sabler. I went to visit him the first time in March, 1925. There was not special reason for visiting him that time except the desire to give some comfort to the old man. I was with him for the second time in the spring or the beginning of the summer of 1925. I met nobody else there. The conversation centred around recent church events – the burial of the Patriarch and his last epistle (or, as it was called in the newspapers, his testament). We spoke about the testament of the Patriarch. Our opinion about this was as follows: the tone of the epistle and its exposition were not successful. The very style of it was not the patriarch's; it was not restrained, and not sufficiently solid. As regards certain points of a practical character, as, for example, the trial of the churchmen abroad, there was not conversation about this at that time. The conversation that time probably revolved in a general way around the churchmen abroad. Sabler directly condemned the Karlovtsy Council and the emigration, as well as Cyril's undertaking [Great Prince Cyril Vladimirovich Romanov had proclaimed himself emperor in 1924], calling him 'loathsome'. I did not ask in what respect he was loathsome, and he did not tell me.

“During my last visit to Sabler, which took place in October, somewhere round the middle of the month, I spoke with him about the current Church situation; we spoke about the relationship between the Church and the state, about the renovationists, about the unfitting behaviour of Bishop Boris [Rukin] in relation to Metropolitan Peter, about his intrigues, and finally about Metropolitan Michael [Yermakov], who by this time had begun (out of self-will) to sign himself 'Metropolitan of Kiev' and to wear two panagia, and about the possibilities of legalization. Sabler had a negative opinion of Michael's actions. As regards the question of the legalization of the Church, we spoke about the impossibility of conducting a church trial on the émigré clergy as being the main obstacle to legalization. We thought that this trial was impossible, first because Metropolitan Peter, the patriarchal locum tenens, has little authority, and secondly because a trial from a distance is not allowed according to the canonical rules. On parting Sabler asked me to convey his bow to Metropolitan Peter and say that he, Sabler, was praying for him, Peter, and advised him to keep hoping and be patient in this question, waiting for the authorities themselves to become convinced of the loyalty of the Church and legalize her. I conveyed this bow and these words of Sabler to Metropolitan Peter when I last visited him, which was at the beginning of November, 1925.”

The investigation lasted for about a year. During this period Archbishop Procopius was in Butyrki prison being constantly interrogated, tortured and humiliated. However, he was not broken. On November 5, 1926 in accordance with article 68 he was sentenced together with Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky) to three years on Solovki.

On Solovki Vladyka met his director at the Irkutsk seminary, Bishop Eugene (Zernov), after whose release he was elected the senior bishop in the camp. He took part in the composition of the “Solovki epistle” of the Orthodox bishops on Solovki to the government. When Metropolitan Sergius' “Declaration”

appeared in July, 1927, he rejected it together with other hierarchs, saying that Sergius had "exceeded his rights".

Since Archbishop Procopius rejected his "Declaration", in October, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius in the name of his self-called "Synod", created with the cooperation of the OGPU, ordered him to be removed from the see of Odessa and Kherson. In his place he appointed Archbishop Anatolius (Grisiuk), who accepted the "Declaration". This anti-canonical act elicited the resistance of many clergy in the Odessa-Kherson diocese, especially among those who disagreed with the "Declaration". Some of them separated from Archbishop Anatolius and Metropolitan Sergius. When Archbishop Anatolius first arrived in Kherson on October 26, 1927, Fr. John Skadovsky, as dean and protopriest, together with the clergy of the cathedral: Priest Demetrius Miroshuk, Hieromonk Athanasius and Protodeacon Michael Zakharov (born in 1879 in Uryupinsk, Volgograd province into a peasant family), refused to allow him to serve with them. In a conversation with him they rejected his right to rule the Odessa-Kherson diocese. Archbishop Anatolius waited for several months for their written promises, but eventually lost patience and banned the "rebels" from serving within the bounds of the diocese. Father John was expelled with the help of the authorities from the cathedral church and began to serve in flats. He looked after the True Orthodox believers in Kherson (about 100 people) and the surrounding villages. The group tried to obtain a church for themselves, as a "special independent tendency", from the authorities, but were refused. Later Fr. John and the clergy with him were arrested for "organizing underground cells of the True Orthodox Church".

Vladyka Procopius told his flock in Nikolayev that he was in correspondence with Metropolitan Peter, the lawful head of the Church, but rejected Metropolitan Sergius. Following his lead, the antisergianist movement gained a definite following in the Kherson, Golopristsansky and Tsurypinsky regions. It was joined by the majority of the nuns in the Dormition monastery in Aleshki and in the Annunciation monastery. By 1928 these communities had already been closed and their inhabitants lived in various villages of the okrug, above all Arnautki and Aleshki. Especially active in the antisergianist movement were Nun Maria (Khodanovich) from Arnautki, Nuns Hippolyta (Barkovskaya) and Filareta, who lived in Kherson, and Nuns Anna (Kulida) and Metrodora (Kobylkina) from Maliye Kopani. In 1930 there were several women's uprisings in Maliye Kopani in connection with work in the collective farm, and Fr. Demetrius was arrested, and then sentenced to be executed. The church passed to the sergianists and the nuns stopped going to it.

Fr. John Skadovsky's views were shared by **Priest Cyril** of the village of Novo-Zburyevka. By January, 1931 the superior of the church in the village of Arkhangelskoye, Kherson okrug, was the Josephite **Priest Constantine Parokonev**, who had earlier served in Elizavettgrad okrug. Fr. John was in constant contact with Fr. Gregory Seletsky, who was his spiritual father.

In Odessa the leader of the True Orthodox Church was the dean, **Priest Orlov**. Into his deanery there came: in Odessa – **Protopriest Alexander Vvedensky** (the “Botanical” church); in Ananiev – **Priest Benedict Korolchuk** (in 1929 he and his whole community came under the omophorion of the Catacomb Bishop Paul (Kratirov). In the village of Mutykhi in Shevchenko region – **Hieromonk Thaddeus** (Tarasenko); in the village of Matyasy – **Hieromonks Gudail and Dositheus**. From 1927 to 1931 a secret church of the True Orthodox Church operated in the village of Belvedery in Novoarkhangelsk region. And there were other priests and communities that did not recognize Metropolitan Sergius or Archbishop Anatolius in Odessa province. They were all arrested by the God-hating Soviet power.

On December 3, 1928, without having been indicted again, Archbishop Procopius was sent under convoy into exile in the Urals for three years together with Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky). They were taken from Solovki to Petrograd, and then from Petrograd to Tobolsk, during which stage the bishops were accompanied by the wife of Fr. John Skadovsky, Ekaterina Vladimirovna. “She came from Kherson to serve us,” recalled the archbishop. “On the road we travelled under convoy, while she was in freedom. When we stopped – in a house of detention – she brought us parcels. And so she came with us from Leningrad to the city of Tobolsk.

“In Tobolsk the three of us – Polyansky, Skadovskaya and I – were arrested and accused of anti-soviet agitation, and, most importantly, that we had supposedly reviled the local clergy for doing nothing. There, at the arrest, Church literature was found during a search. It was in manuscript form and typed on a typewriter. It described the general situation of church life in its various tendencies, and of course it also touched on the existing political system in the question of the relationship between the Church and the state. This literature had been brought by E. Skadovskaya... We had had many conversations with her about church life, since we, while on Solovki, had been cut off from church life, while she, being in freedom, and being interested in these questions, knew all the latest news, especially about Kherson.

“We were kept in an isolator in the city of Tobolsk for one and a half months, after which, because of the shelving of the case, we were released [in February, 1929]... We were then sent to the village of Obdorsk, while Skadovskaya returned to Kherson. We spent a month in Obdorsk. I was sent off to the village of Muzhi, while Polyansky was sent to the village of Shuryshkary.

“In Muzhi I lived for five or six days, and from then was sent to Kievat, where I lived from 1929 to July, 1931. In Muzhi we stayed at first in the house of Dyachkov, but on the second day we were transferred to a flat which belonged, I think, to Konevaya. There I got to know Christina Terentyeva, a member of a church council. I was in her house when I had only just arrived in Muzhi, and when I arrived in Muzhi from Kievat on personal business. It was very difficult to explain myself to her since she did not speak Russian well. She was also once in my house; she dropped into my flat since I had agreed with

her that she should collect all my post and sent it on to me. She did me a great service in this.”

It was through Christina Terentieva that Vladyka maintained links with Metropolitan Peter and other exiled bishops. And through Catherine Vladimirovna Skadovskaya he continued to rule the Kherson-Odessa diocese. “Catherine Vladimirovna Skadovskaya came to me from the city of Kherson in October, 1929. She brought me food, church vestments and church utensils, including an antimins. She took the antimins for me in my diocese. In essence nobody can deny me this, since nobody has removed me from ruling the Kherson diocese and I have not been deprived of the rank of archbishop of the Kherson-Odessa diocese. When I had been with her in Tobolsk, I had asked her to bring (or send with someone else) church utensils and an antimins, which were necessary for me in exile. She brought the church utensils and antimins, and also for Bishop Ambrose Polyansky, and also vestments, which she left with me, and I passed on to Polyansky. Earlier, according to Church law, an antimins could not be given into the hands of anyone, but in connection with the war and the latest events we have allowed the clergy to carry antimins in their hands.”

On January 21, 1930, Catherine Vladimirovna returned to Kherson, but on was arrested on the way and sent to Tobolsk, and only in the summer, after many savage trials, did she rejoin her husband – in prison, because at the end of 1929 Fr. John, Fr. Michael and other members of Vladyka’s flock in Kherson, including Nun Maria, had been arrested and cast into prison in Kherson.

However, according to another source, Fr. John, Fr. Michael and Nun Maria were arrested on January 15, 1931. Fr. John was accused of being “a participant in the Kherson group of the Odessa branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church” and of “maintaining relations with Archbishop Procopius and helping exiled clergy, organizing a religious community consisting of more than one hundred anti-Soviet-minded elements, serving Divine services in a flat and anti-Soviet agitation.” Fr. Michael received the same accusation. Fr. John did not deny the influence he had on his spiritual children, but refused to name them. He did not consider himself guilty of anti-Soviet agitation. At his interrogation Fr. John said: “I entertain monarchist convictions, but I do not protest against other forms of government and I accept them as the will of God. I consider Soviet power to be a God-fighting power, a satanic power, which has been sent to men for their sins...” On January 2, 1932 the two men was sentenced to five (or eight) years in the camps and sent to the Vishera camp in Perm province. Then, on February 16, 1933, they were released early, and in 1934 they were exiled to Kamyshin, Volgograd province. In spite of the arrest of Fr. John, Archbishop Procopius kept up a close spiritual bond with him even from prison and exile.

Also convicted were **Nuns Maria** (Grigoryevna Khodanovich), **Anna** (Kirillovna Kulida), who were given three years in the camps, and **Metrodora** (Macrina Ignatyevna Kobylkina), and the laymen **Demetrius Grigoryevich**

Klimenko and Constantine Yakovlevich Kulida, who were given five years in the camps.

This “Case of Priest John Skadovsky, Deacon Michael Zakharov and others, Kherson, 1931” was part of “The Case of the True Orthodox Church in the Ukraine”, which was fabricated by the OGPU of the Ukraine in January to June, 1931. 140 “Josephites” were indicted: two bishops, 52 priests, 19 monastics, 7 deacons and readers and 60 laity. On December 14, 1931 the first trial of the True Orthodox Christians of the Ukraine took place. The indictment declared that “the counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen, ‘The True Orthodox Church’, has many branches and covers the whole of the Soviet Union, including the Ukraine.” In the republic there existed a strictly organized net of groups and cells of the TOC that were directly administered from the Petrograd and Moscow centres. 126 were convicted of anti-soviet activity – 53 were sentenced to three years in the camps, 58 to three years’ exile in the north, and 5 to being banned from living in 12 populated places and confinement to a definite place of residence. 10 people were released under guard.

On June 30, 1931, at the same time as the mass arrests in the Odessa-Kherson diocese of his supporters, Archbishop Procopius was himself arrested again in exile together with Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky) and cast into prison in Alma-Ata. The OGPU began to summon witnesses to interrogation and gather material against him. One of those summoned was Demetrius Ilyin, the owner of the flat in which Vladyka was living. He witnessed:

“In his conversations there crept through dissatisfaction with Soviet power, that they had exiled him from his native land and did not give him the opportunity to serve the Church. In separate concrete conversations with him I remember the following. He described the reasons for his exile thus: ‘Soviet power by its decree separated the Church from the State, but it itself constantly interfered and interferes into Church life. Take the closing of the churches. This takes place under pressure from the authorities. They oppress servers with taxes, and accuse them of various crimes. But since the Church is separate, they should have nothing to do with Church life, they should put pressure on believers to close the churches; what goes on within the Church should also not interest them, and yet they relate differently to various church orientations. For example, when the Church was divided into the renovationists and the oldchurchmen, the government did everything it could to strengthen the renovationists, while oppressing us, the oldchurchmen.’

“Last year, when Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa was taken from Khe and I informed him about this, saying that they had taken away the metropolitan and, apparently, released him, he replied: ‘What difference is it if they took him from one place, they’ll still send him into exile in another. Look, I served my sentence on Solovki, but after that, look, they sent me into exile. When I have served my term of exile, they’ll still send me to another place. At the present time we clergy who have fallen and are falling into exile, will never serve out

their exile, the authorities will not only not allow us to serve in the churches, but also not to be in our homeland.'

"In 1930 they began to close the church in the village of Muzhi. In a conversation I told him about this, and he said to me: 'This is new for you, but it's old news for me, since in Russia and in the centre they have already been closing churches for a long time.'

"Once I was talking with Archbishop Procopius about the faith and the ideas of the communist party. He replied to me: 'What's happening now its not new for us, what is being done now will all pass, as it is written in the Sacred Scriptures, where it says that there will be persecutions against religion. We see this now with our own eyes - and we endure this persecution even though it is unjust. After all, we also are for brotherhood. Take what you now call communes and collective farms. Why are they unsuccessful? Because they are filled with loafers, layabouts and every kind of trash. But take the monasteries. They have a lot in common with communes. One can build collective farms without repressing religion, but as a result of this hostile attitude to religion their collective farms and communes are born. If the authorities left the faith in peace and paid no attention to it, it would be better. When the people became more cultured and literate, it would itself decided whether it needed faith or not, and a cultured people would of itself relate in a different way to religion, and would in no way hinder new beginnings.

"At Christmas, 1929 he performed a service in his flat, put on all his vestments and sang in such a way that he could be heard throughout the house. There was nobody with him except one woman who came to him from Kherson, the wife of a priest [Protopriest John Skadovsky]. She brought him the vestments and food.

"He knows masses of people from the local population of Kievat village. He is invited to their namesdays and if they need medical assistance, because he has masses of various remedies. I don't know what he says there. But he gets on with all the locals, since he has more than once said to me that he likes it here and feels at home. When parcels come - and they come to him frequently - he always gives the children presents. In particular, he gave me and others semolina, since there is no semolina in the shop in winter."

The investigators also summoned some prisoners for interrogation from the prison. One of them, Ibrahimov, witnessed:

"When I was in a cell with the arrestee Procopius Titov and Ambrose Polyansky on August 15 of this year, they unashamedly conducted anti-Soviet conversations among the arrestees. Thus Titov said: 'The communists consider themselves not bound to carry out any of the laws issued by VTsIK; if you demand something from them in accordance with the law, they arrest you. The OGPU plays a particularly big role here.' He assured ten arrestees that Soviet laws are simply pieces of paper, and none of the arrestees objected. Titov used

to say that 'history has never known such an authority as the USSR... the prisons are overflowing, Solovki is full of honourable, industrious people.'

The prisoner Basil Lozhkin, who had been dekulakized, said at his interrogation:

"I know Bishops Procopius Titov and Ambrose Polyansky, who were in one cell with me. But I had no conversations with them and did not hear them say anything, since I was always working outside. They sometimes said something, but quietly amongst themselves, so that it was difficult to understand their conversation. During the mornings and evenings they prayed. Sometimes they read books. I heard nothing else."

Vladyka Procopius was firm during interrogations, and tried to avoid direct replies so as not to give anyone away. He denied the investigator's accusations of criminality, saying openly:

"The politics conducted by the existing political order with regard to religion oppresses church-religious activity and puts the clergy into exceptionally difficult conditions, burdening them with taxes, limiting church processions and closing churches that have a small number of believers... I don't remember that I ever said to anyone that they give clergy indefinite terms of exile, thereby wishing to emphasize that the authorities treat us, the clergy, differently from other exiles. I personally can tell you only about myself, since in accordance with the order that has been established after Solovki they gave me exile, and after exile a minus. I don't remember with whom I talked about this, but perhaps I said something to the owner of the flat.

"I once had a jokey kind of conversation with Ilyin, the owner of the flat, in which I said: 'The commune you've found, and which you boast of, existed earlier - coenobitic monasteries have much in common with contemporary communes from an external point of view.' There was no serious conversation with him on the question of collectivization, and I did not express my opinions and suggestions on how to make a contemporary commune religious.'

"The painfulness of the new conditions of Church life undoubtedly depend in part on the fact that the whole of life is being reconstruction, and all conditions are changing, to which the forms of religious life have not yet adapted."

Certain sergianist publications cite the following words of Vladyka Procopius, which were said by him during an interrogation in prison in reply to the investigator's question what were his views on contemporary Church life:

"I did not advise the inhabitants of Kherson not to have communion with Metropolitan Sergius. On the contrary, I restrained them in this respect."

Seizing on these words of Vladyka, modern apologetes of sergianism use them to their advantage, distorting historical facts. Every attentive investigator of this question understands that here one has to take into account both the place, and the conditions, and the time that these words were uttered, as well as all the accompanying circumstances. After all, to admit, during interrogations by the executioners of the GPU-NKVD, that one was a leader of the anti-sergianist opposition was tantamount both to signing one's own death warrant and to subjecting one's supporters to probable death. It is for that reason that many (but not all) "non-commemorator" bishops, priests and laity tried to hide their belonging to the TOC from the Soviet organs. This was viewed as "anti-Soviet activity and propaganda" according to article 58 of the Russian Federation's Criminal Code, for which the penalty was a death sentence or a maximum prison term of from 10 to 25 years. For that reason the followers of the TOC were forced to act in conditions of the strictest secrecy and underground, which is why the TOC acquired another name in the 1930s – the Catacomb Church. And so the words spoken by Archbishop Procopius at his interrogations within the walls of the NKVD can in no way be taken as proof of his supposedly "pro-sergianist" views. In hiding the truth from the persecutors, Vladyka was protecting many of his followers from death. As regards his true views, they can be deduced from the fact that, even after many arrests, tortures and exiles, Archbishop Procopius retained the closest relations with one of the leaders of the anti-sergianist movement in the Odessa-Kherson diocese, Protopriest John Skadovsky, until the end of his days, and was even shot together with him in 1937 on a charge of belonging to the TOC.

On September 29, 1931 the investigation in relation to the case of Archbishop Procopius came to an end. Since the authorities had not found sufficient proof of his guilt, the representative of the Yamal district department of the Urals OGPU Fomin twisted the case as follows:

"Information has reached the Yamal district department of the OGPU that the administratively exiled Bishops Polyansky and Titov, while in exile in the village of Muzhi in 1929, established broad-based links with the local Zyryan and Ostyak population, first on the basis of conducting conversations with them on religious subjects, giving them an anti-Soviet tendency. At the same time they unlawfully performed services in houses, and also conducted clearly anti-Soviet agitation.

"As a consequence the representatives of the OGPU transferred Polyansky to Shuryshkary, and Titov to Kievat, where they continued the same activity, exerting a harmful influence on the dark masses around them, as a result of which those most closely linked with them began to speak actively against the projects being carried out by Soviet power. Thus they were against the closing of churches, against collectivization, and against the distribution of loans.

"The completed investigation has established the following:

“1. Archbishop Ambrose (Alexander Alexeyevich) Polyansky, 53 years of age, bachelor, a native of the village of Petelino in the former Tambov province, Elatomsky uyezd, the son of a priest, with higher theological education. From 1903 to 1906 he was a teacher in the Kiev theological seminary, and then rector of the latter until October, 1918, from which time until 1923 he was Bishop of Vinnitsa in Podolsk diocese. In 1923 he was exiled from the Ukrainian SSR to Moscow for three years for counter-revolutionary activity. By decree of the Special Conference attached to the OGPU collegium of May 21, 1926, he was imprisoned in the Solovki concentration camp for three years. After serving this term, by decree of the same conference of October 6, 1928, he was exiled to the Urals for three years, which he served until April, 1929 in Tyumen district, and then in Obdorsk region (now Yamalo-Nenetsky).

“2. Titov, Archbishop Procopius (Peter Semyonovich)... While in exile, Polyansky and Titov had close links with the local Zyryano-Ostyatsky population and sharply incited the latter against Soviet power.”

Then he gave a list of the crimes of the hierarchs: “convincing the local population not to give in to atheist agitation”, not to allow the closure of churches or propaganda about the evil of collectivization and “the serfdom of the peasants”. “They separated the Church from the state, but do not cease to interfere in the affairs of the Church,” etc. Archbishop Procopius was also found guilty of keeping up a correspondence with his Odessa-Kherson diocese.

The hierarchs pleaded not guilty. Having read the indictment, Vladyka Procopius wrote: “As an addition to the investigation, on my part I consider it necessary to declare the following. I have been accused of ‘systematic anti-Soviet agitation’, which I supposedly conducted during my exile in Obdorsk region. For two years of exile I lived without leaving in the village of Novy Kievat (five houses in all) in the same flat as a local Soviet activist, a member of the Muzhi village soviet, the former communist D.N. Ilyin, to whose supervision I was entrusted. I did not have a separate room, but was accommodated behind a screen in a room of the owners. I never went into any other houses for even the slightest need. If I had conducted systematic agitation, then my masters would have known about it because of the conditions of accommodation in such a small settlement. Every winter a representative of the GPU and his assistant goes through Kievat up to five times. I was searched during the first winter of my exile, in the second winter only an inspection of my accommodation was carried out. Every time the GPU agents interrogated my masters about my life and behaviour, and if I had been conducting systematic agitation during my exile, I would have been arrested and brought to account much earlier than this year of 1931. Individual phrases from chance, jokey conversations with my masters can hardly be considered agitation. I did not have or read any newspapers. I expressed my views on the questions raised during my interrogation to representative Lopatkin. Of course, I told Ambrose Polyansky, who was arrested and detained with me, about these conversations with him. But this also cannot be considered to be agitation.”

On December 14, 1931 Vladyka Procopius was convicted of “counter-revolutionary activity, close links with the local Zyryan-Ostyatsky population, stirring them up against Soviet power, and correspondence with the Kherson diocese”. He was sentenced to three years’ exile in Kazakhstan together with Bishop Ambrose, with the term being considered to begin from July 23, 1930. This was the group case, “The Case of Archbishop Procopius (Titov) and Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky), Tobolsk province, 1931”.

On his way into exile through Tomsk, Vladyka met his parents and his elder sister. In exile he fell ill with malaria, but the Lord preserved his life. It is known that at the beginning of the spring of 1932 he was in Alma-Ata, where, with Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky), he raised Igumen Theogenes to the rank of archimandrite.

At the end of his exile, in April, 1934, he stayed for a time with his brother in Moscow. He also stayed for a while with his mother in Tomsk, trying to cure himself from malaria, but the climate did not suit him, and in September, 1934 he was invited to go to Kamyshin, where Fr. John Skadovsky, Ekaterina Vladimirovna, Deacon Michael and the exiled Bishop Joasaph (Popov) were in exile. He arrived on September 16. The whole group lived on donations from Kherson diocese in the house of Darya Alexeyevna Funtikova. They were united in their opinions on all church questions. Letters were sent and received through **Monk Athanasius** (Storeus). In Kamyshin the two bishops organized a house church. This cell of the True Orthodox Church exerted a strong moral influence on the inhabitants of Kamyshin.

On October 2, 1934 Archbishop Procopius, Bishop Joasaph, Fr. John Skadovsky and **Priest Eustathius Markovich Norits** (a dekulakized peasant who became a priest in Kharkov, but then moved to Kamyshin, where he met the Catacomb Church and joined it) were arrested on the denunciation of Priest George Chudnovsky (also arrested with them). Previously Fr. George had been banned from serving by Bishop Peter (Sokolov) of Volgograd for fighting in the altar because of money, after which he fled to Kamyshin, set himself up in the local sergianist church and at the same time, on the recommendation of the chekists, tried to worm himself into the confidence of Bishop Joasaph, in which aim he succeeded for a time. At the demand of the chekists, he gave the testimony they needed, on the basis of which a new indictment was constructed.

On October 4 the investigator asked Vladyka Procopius: “Who have you been with here in Kamyshin, besides Skadovsky?”

“From my correspondence with Skadovsky I knew that Bishop Joasaph lived in Kamyshin, and when I arrived in Kamyshin I got to know him, I was in his flat and he in mine. There was nobody else present when I was with Joasaph. I did not know Joasaph before and had not heard about him.”

“Are you and he of the same orientation?”

“At this point I explained that we were of the same orientation as Patriarch Tikhon.”

On Christmas Eve, January 6, 1935, the last interrogation took place.

“Expound your political views,” said the investigator.

“I consider myself to be an apolitical person. However, I am a convinced follower of the Orthodox Church, and, as a representative of the latter, I naturally cannot be indifferent to what authority exists in the country – whether it persecutes the Church or, on the contrary, protects it. It is completely natural that I should be more sympathetic to a political regime that protects the activity of the Church than to a political regime that persecutes the Church or limits the freedom of its activity. In this respect I share Skadovsky’s sympathy for the idea of a monarchical power headed by a monarch – the anointed of God. I must make the qualification that what I have said does not mean that I am a supporter of the violent overthrow of Soviet power and the restoration of the monarchy. I consider it impossible for me as a representative of the Church to try and achieve the overthrow of Soviet power and conduct some kind of political work in this direction. Moreover, I consider that the idea of an absolute monarchy has now outlived its time, and the most desirable for me in the existing conditions is an order guaranteeing the complete separation of the Church from the state and assuring complete freedom for the Church and the non-interference of the state in the internal life of the Church.”

“What can you say about the essence of the charge levelled against you?”

“From the moment of my release from exile in April, 1934 I have done nothing against the authorities and conducted no agitation. I consider myself to be guilty of nothing.”

Here is one of the interrogations of Protopriest John Skadovsky conducted by the assistant director of the secret-political department of the UNKVD, E.A. Ali, on November 28, 1934:

“What is the essence of your disagreement with Patriarch Sergius?”

“After accepting the rank of locum tenens, he introduced changes in Church dogmas that are contrary to the very essence of the Orthodox Church. First of all, Sergius published his well-known declaration concerning his loyal attitude to Soviet power, whereas the Church cannot be loyal to Soviet power insofar as the latter denies it. Then Sergius deprived of their rank all the bishops in the concentration camps or other places of imprisonment, which Sergius could not and should not have done. And there were other small changes.

“These views of mine are the official views of the True Orthodox Church (TOC). The prominent representatives of the TOC – Seraphim of Uglich, Joseph of Petrograd, and Damascene of Nezhin – are all in prison.

“Our task is to spread Christianity. From a practical point of view, in the present conditions, this comes down to unmasking Sergius’ distortions of religion and returning believers to the bosom of the TOC.”

“Did you have to express your political views in conversations with those whom you knew in Kamyshin, and with whom in particular?”

“I don’t remember whether I expressed my political views to anyone in Kamyshin, although I admit that it is possible... I could speak about Church affairs. In addition, I recounted certain episodes in the life of Emperor Alexander III. I described him as a person of strong will and noble character traits who during his reign raised the international prestige and greatness of Russia. In recent times my memory has become weaker, and I don’t remember many circumstances relating even to the recent period.

“Do you consider that every follower of the ‘True Orthodox Church’ should be a supporter of the Russian monarchy?”

“Yes, I consider that a true follower of the Orthodox Church must be a supporter of the Russian monarchy.”

“Do you think that it is impermissible for a consistent supporter of the TOC to be loyal towards Soviet power?”

“Yes. A true follower of the Orthodox Church cannot have a loyal attitude to Soviet power. He cannot enter into any compromise with it, or take part in Soviet construction.”

“And so an increase in the numbers of followers of the TOC is an increase in the numbers of monarchically inclined people who have a negative attitude to Soviet power?”

“Yes. An increase in the numbers of true followers of the Orthodox Church is an increase in the number of supporters of the Russian monarchical order and opponents of any compromises or loyal attitude to Soviet power.”

“And in spite of that, the TOC and you as her representative place as your aim for an increase in the number of followers of the TOC?”

“Yes. The Orthodox Church and I as her follower place as my aim the spreading of our teaching and the increase in the number of true supporters of the Orthodox Church. I must say, however, that an increase in the numbers of monarchists is not my immediate aim, and in general I do not pursue political ends.”

During his interrogation, Fr. John said that he had not gone to work in Kamyshin because he was old and sick, but also because by entering into any responsible post he would thereby be helping the establishment of the socialist order, which was hostile to the Church. "The pre-revolutionary order of Russia is close to my idea of the ideal social order, and I am a supporter of it. However, I must make the qualification: I am not a supporter of monarchy in general. I am a supporter only of the monarchy in which the monarch is the anointed of God... Secondly, while being a supporter of the Russian monarchical order, I am by no means a supporter of those corruptions and distortions of the idea that lay at its base, and which took place in practice... These corruptions were the result of the historical fall of morality in Russia, which led in the end to the appearance in Russia of political tendencies hostile to the monarchy and to the formation of the anti-monarchist parties of the Social Democrats and the Social Revolutionaries, etc., and to the overthrow of the monarchy by the revolution."

A few days later, on January 11, the investigation came to an end. Archbishop Procopius was accused that, "being inclined towards counter-revolution, and having monarchist convictions, he joined the counter-revolutionary grouping organized by [Bishop Joasaph] Popov in the city of Kamyshin, whither he was specially summoned by a member of the grouping, Skadovsky."

On March 17, 1935 the prisoners were condemned by the UNKVD for "counter-revolutionary propaganda, belonging to the True Orthodox Church, illegal services at home and links with the Odessa-Kherson diocese". They were sentenced to five years' exile in the town of Turtkul, Karakalpakkia, Uzbekistan. This was the group case, "The Case of Archbishop Procopius (Titov), Bishop Joasaph (Popov), Priest John Skadovsky and Priest Eustathius Norits, Kamyshin, 1935".

On May 28, 1935 Vladyka Procopius was in Tashkent on his way to Turtkul, accompanied by Fr. John. In Turtkul Vladyka, Fr. John and his wife organized a house church which was accessible for all the local inhabitants. The exiles continued to live on contributions from Kherson diocese.

In the summer of 1937 the NKVD began to gather news about the exiles through informants. They summoned them to interrogations as "witnesses". One of these "witnesses" was the sergianist Nicholas Ivanovich Pridni, who testified:

"Being a religious person, I found out by chance that in the city of Turtkul, in Chimbaiskaya street number 40, a prayer-house had been organized in which services took place. One Sunday at the beginning of August 1937 I set off for this prayer-house in order to listen to the liturgy. Before allowing me into the house, Priest Skadovsky asked me whether I had prepared for communion of late, and when I replied: ten years ago, he did not allow me to attend the liturgy, but suggested that I come for confession one of these days. A few days later I came for confession and Skadovsky, having allowed me into

the prayer-house, began to receive my confession. During confession he conducted counter-revolutionary propaganda... and said: 'You have to be bold and brave..., the communist, Bolshevik authority is not from God, but from the Antichrist.' After finishing confession in the house in which Titov and Skadovsky live, there in the prayer-house, in my presence, they both continued to conduct counter-revolutionary agitation, trying to persuade me that the only lawful power is the monarchical order, and that one should not recognize Soviet power, but must fight in every way against it. In order that their counter-revolutionary activity should not be discovered by the organs of Soviet power, Titov and Skadovsky were wary of conducting counter-revolutionary agitation in the presence of several people and preferred to work on believers in a counter-revolutionary spirit one to one. Titov... warned me that everything that he and Skadovsky told me should be kept in the strictest confidence. In view of the fact that I, though a religious person, adhere to that group of churchmen that recognizes Soviet power, I decided to tell the organs of the NKVD about this, which I have done."

Another witness, T.G. Migulina, testified: "While performing religious rites, Titov and Skadovsky conducted systematic counter-revolutionary agitation. Skadovsky began to tell me that I should under no circumstances join the renovationist church movement, and declared that the renovationists recognize Soviet power, the power of the Antichrist, and that we should in no way recognize Soviet power."

Fr. John was helped by his aunt, Olga Lvovna Skadovskaya-Picard, who lived in the city of Manchester in England and regularly sent him small money transfers. The NKVD used this as one of the reasons for arresting the clergy, although, to avoid unpleasantness, Fr. John did not correspond with Olga Lvovna, limiting himself to acknowledging receipt of the money.

But this was quite enough for Archbishop Procopius and Fr. John to be arrested again on August 24, 1937 and accused of links with the White emigration and the Russian Church Abroad. They were also accused of performing religious rites and services, of putting on vestments and rizas sometimes, and of organizing an illegal prayer-house in Turtkul whether they conducted counter-revolutionary monarchist propaganda among the believers, summoning them to active struggle against Soviet power. They pleaded not guilty.

NKVD Agent Olsufyev began conducting interrogations on August 26. Although interrogations at this time were carried out with the application of torture, both confessors behaved courageously.

"You are accused," said the investigator to Archbishop Procopius, "that together with Priest Skadovsky you organized in the city of Turtkul an illegal prayer-house in which you conducted counter-revolutionary monarchist agitation. Do you plead guilty to this charge?"

"I do not, for I have never conducted counter-revolutionary agitation. While living in the city of Turtkul with Priest Skadovsky, I did indeed take part in services performed by him. In conversations with believers who came to Skadovsky, I did indeed conduct propaganda, but exclusively of a religious content."

"During discussions with believers did you touch on the question of your disagreements with the renovationists and other orientations?"

"During discussions with believers in the city of Turtkul I did indeed raise the question of my disagreements with the clergy of the renovationist tendency... Skadovsky and I did not allow believers who had previously adhered to these religious tendencies to carry out religious rites with us without confession."

"How did you formulate your disagreements with the renovationists in your conversations with believers?"

"I gave as reason for my disagreements with the clergy of the renovationist orientation the fact that the followers of these orientations violated church canons and cooperated in the anti-church politics of Soviet power. My conversations with believers in the city of Turtkul were not in groups, but one to one.

"Your reply is not accurate. Thus in conversation with believers you formulated your differences with the clergy of the renovationist orientation precisely on the basis that these clergy recognized Soviet power in their declarations to the effect that they rejected struggle against. But your position is completely the opposite. Do you support this?"

"No, I do not support it. I declare that in conversations with believers I spoke to nobody about not recognizing Soviet power."

At Fr. John's interrogation the investigator said: "You are accused that, together with the hierarch Titov, you organized in the city of Turtkul an illegal prayer-house in which you conducted counter-revolutionary monarchist agitation among the believing population. Do you admit your guilt?"

"No, I do not, and on the essence of the matter I testify that I performed religious rites and services in my flat. Moreover, during services I did vest myself in rizas. Sometimes, during my performance of the service, besides my wife and the hierarch Titov, some passing believers who wanted to pray were present. At the request of believers who came to me I did perform religious sacraments: confession, baptism, I served prayer services and pannikhidas. It is true, the believers did not always pay me for carrying out these needs. The money that believers gave me I looked on, not as payment for needs, but as assistance. I never carried out counter-revolutionary agitation anywhere."

“The investigation has established that in performing the sacrament of confession you question those being confessed whether they belonged to the renovationist movement. Moreover, you conducted propaganda against the renovationists, and you said that one of the main differences with them was the fact that they recognize Soviet power. Do you admit this?”

“When performing the sacrament of confession I put questions concerning whether they visited prayer institutions that were not of our tendency. I conducted no propaganda against the renovationists and I did not discuss my differences with the renovationists among believers.”

“I am going to read to you the testimonies of a female witness who reproached you for conducting systematic counter-revolutionary monarchist agitation. Do you admit this?”

“No, I do not, and I declare that I never conducted counter-revolutionary agitation anywhere.”

After a month the investigation came to an end. On the basis especially of the testimonies of Pridni and Migulina, Agent Olsufyev found Archbishop Procopius and Fr. John guilty of conducting counter-revolutionary monarchist agitation, of calling people to an active struggle against Soviet power, and of spreading provocative rumours that Soviet power would supposedly soon be overthrown. The case was passed on to a troika attached to the NKVD of Uzbekistan.

On October 28 the session of the troika took place. Archbishop Procopius and Fr. John were condemned for “systematic counter-revolutionary monarchist agitation, and belonging to the True Orthodox Church”. In accordance with article 66, they were condemned to death. This was the group case, “The Case of Archbishop Procopius (Titov) and Priest John Skadovsky, Turtkul, 1937”. On November 23, 1937 Archbishop Procopius and Fr. John were shot. What happened then to Fr. Eustathius and Ekaterina Vladimirovna is not known.

In 1981 Archbishop Procopius and Fr. John Skadovsky were glorified among the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia by the Russian Church Abroad. In November, 2008 Archbishop Procopius was again glorified by the Russian True Orthodox Church at its Council in Odessa.

*

Protopriest Gregory Dmitrievich Sinitsky was born on January 23, 1873 (or 1872) in the village of Rovnoye, Kherson uyezd, Kherson province in the family of a priest. He finished his studies at Odessa theological seminary in 1885, and became a reader in the Dormition cathedral in Alexandria, Kherson province. On August 31, 1896 he married **Lyudmilla Ivanovna** (née Babura, born October 10, 1878 in Ivanovka, Kherson province in the family of a priest), and on

October 1 was ordained to the priesthood. He was sent to the village of Troitskoye-Safonovo, Kherson uyezd, and then to the Staruspensky cathedral. He was raised to the rank of protopriest. In 1916 Fr. Gregory was appointed rector of the cathedral of the Nativity of the Mother of God (or Mother of God "the Joy of All Who Sorrow") in Nikolayev, Kherson province. Fr. Gregory and his matushka had five daughters; the two elder ones went to the Odessa institute for noble maidens. In 1922 his youngest daughter died at the age of twelve.

In 1922 the renovationists obtained the removal of Archbishop Procopius from his see and the appointment in his place of the renovationist Archbishop Anatolius (Samarsky). Only two priests remained faithful to Vladyka Procopius: **Fr. Paul Samgor** (born 1881 or 1882) and Fr. Gregory. Fr. Paul was arrested in April, 1923 and cast into prison in Nikolayev, where he very soon died of typhus. The renovationists demanded of Fr. Gregory that he repent of his "errors" and join the schism. But he continued to refuse to concelebrate with the renovationists, and was forced to leave his service in the cathedral and serve in flats. In June Patriarch Tikhon was released from prison, and with his and Archbishop Procopius' blessing Fr. Gregory was appointed to receive the repentance of the local clergy who came over from the renovationist schism.

In 1927 he was under investigation, but was not condemned.

In July, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius published his notorious "Declaration". Archbishop Procopius of Kherson, who was on Solovki at the time, refused to accept it, as did Fr. Gregory. He refused to read both the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and that of Metropolitan Michael, Exarch of the Ukraine, from the church ambon. He formulated his and his flock's position in letters to Metropolitan Michael, Archbishops Procopius and Anatolius and Bishop Parthenius in 1927-28, writing: "The declarations are unacceptable for our conscience... We cannot condemn members of the Orthodox Church who think differently from us as if they were heretics, we do not break canonical communion with them. But we shall not pray with them so as not to participate in the recognition of the unlawful appointment of a bishop. We do not impose our point of view on anybody, but we declare it to those who turn to us."

In September, 1928 Archbishop Procopius was officially removed from his see by Metropolitan Sergius, and the Kherson-Nikolayev diocese was joined to that of Odessa. Archbishop Anatolius of Odessa forbade the Odessa clergy to serve with Fr. Gregory. As a result Fr. Gregory separated from Anatolius on October 1, the feast of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God and the anniversary of his ordination. He left the Skorbyashchenskaya "Novokupecheskaya" church and began to serve in flats. He was constantly subjected to threats and arrests. His two elder daughters were forced to move to Moscow because the authorities in Nikolayev deprived them of the possibility of studying and working in Nikolayev.

Fr. Gregory was followed into the wilderness by **Deacon John Pavlovsky** and a significant number of laypeople. He was banned from serving, but continued his antisergianist activity. In 1929 he went to Bishop Damascene in Starodub and corresponded with Archbishop Procopius.

At this time there were several Josephite priests and parishes in the region. Thus the Josephite dean in Odessa was **Priest Orlov**, and **Protopriest Alexander Vvedensky** served in the "Botanic" church in Odessa. **Priest Benedict Korolchuk** served in Ananyev (he was at first under the omophorion of Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov), but then, in 1929, moved to Bishop Paul (Kratirov)). And in the church of the village of Mutykhi, Shevchenko region, there served the Josephite **Hieromonk Thaddeus (Tarasenko)**. The community of the True Orthodox in the village of Matyasi was led by **Hieromonks Gudail and Dositheus**. And from the end of 1927 to 1931 a secret church was active in the village of Belvedery, Novoarkhangelsk region.

Linked with Fr. Gregory was the superior of the church in the village of Peresadovka, Nikolayev okrug, **Fr. Elijah Takovila**, who also commemorated only Archbishop Procopius and Metropolitan Peter. Fr. Gregory also had contacts with the Josephites in Yelisavettgrad and Kharkov (in particular, with Fr. Gregory Seletsky). He received from them the appeal, "The Church in the wilderness", a copy of which he sent to Kherson. His parish continued to function until January, 1931. One of its active members, **S.F. Vorobyev**, led an anti-communist strike at factory no. 61 on December 2, 1930. Fr. Gregory himself prayed for the Emperor Nicholas II and at meetings said: "The darker the night, the brighter the stars; the deeper the sorrow, the closer is God; we are on the eve of the last times of the Antichrist."

On January 15, 1931 eleven people were arrested in Nikolayev. Five of them were separated into another case, while the other six, including Fr. Gregory, Deacon John, I.I. Pavlovsky and S.F. Vorobyev were charged as part of the case against the True Orthodox Church in the Ukraine. Fr. Gregory was accused of being "the leader of the Nikolayev group of the Odessa branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church", and was placed in solitary confinement in a prison in Nikolayev. Two weeks later his wife was arrested and put into a cell with criminals and prostitutes for six months.

On April 14 his two daughters, **Faina** (born June, 1899 in Vladimirovka, Kherson uyezd) and **Seraphima** (born July 25, 1903 in Troitskoye-Safonovo), who were working in Moscow, were also arrested and cast into Butryki prison. On June 5 they were condemned for being members of "the counter-revolutionary monarchist organization, 'The True Orthodox Church'", of "anti-Soviet propaganda" and "aid to exiles". This was part of the group case, "The Case of I.A. Babikov and others (R-35593), Moscow, 1931". They were exiled for three years to Aulie-Ata (Dzhambul) in Kazakhstan. In 1932 they were joined by Lyudmilla Ivanovna and her eldest daughter. The youngest daughter went to acquaintances in Leningrad.

On December 14, 1931 Fr. Gregory was sentenced to three years' exile and sent to the north. According to another source, on January 26, 1932, after spending a whole year in solitary confinement, he was exiled to the village of Konevo, Vologda province for three years. In 1935, at the end of his exile, he went to Samarkand to his wife and two elder daughters, who had settled there in 1934. In 1936 Fr. Gregory and his wife went to Nikolayev, to the grave of their daughter, and then returned to Samarkand. This trip was noted by the authorities and became one of the reasons for his later arrest.

On June 27, 1937 Fr. Gregory was arrested in Samarkand and sent first to prison in Tashkent, and then under convoy to Nikolayev. The investigation was conducted in conditions of extreme pressure on Fr. Gregory. The NKVD officer swore at him and did not allow him to write down in his own hand the replies to his questions, but himself wrote the answers, twisting them in the direction he needed. In August Fr. Gregory was condemned for "counter-revolutionary agitation" and sentenced to ten years in the camps in accordance with article 58-10. By this time Fr. Gregory's already poor health was getting worse...

On September 15 he arrived at Kochkoma station on the Kirov railway line in the Medvezhyegorsky camp, Karelia. He was several times moved from one camp to another, which made life still more difficult for him. One hundred people and more lived in the barracks. They slept in their outer clothing, in their boots, with wrist-bands on their hands from the bedbugs. On their heads they had gauze bags, and they put their hands into the pockets of their coats. So as not to die from hunger it was necessary to work - a worker was given two times more food. But Fr. Gregory, being severely ill, was not able to work. However, he was regularly helped by his wife and daughters, who sent parcels, medicines and money to the camp. Much was lost on the way, and there were many criminals among the prisoners, and they especially liked to fleece old men. But some got through and kept the confessor alive.

Fr. Gregory found himself together with the Catacomb Bishop Athanasius (Sakharov) from the end of 1937 to the middle of 1938. Being with "Uncle Athanasius", as Fr. Gregory called him in his letters, gave "rest to his soul". Bishop Athanasius said that he was very elderly, but very strong in spirit, and he was able to support many others in the camp. In 1938 Fr. Gregory asked for a meeting with his family, but was refused. In April, 1940 Fr. Gregory appealed to the Supreme Procurator of the USSR for release, writing: "I do not recognize myself to be guilty at all. Though condemned, I have not committed any crime. I am just as honourable in relation to the State as I am from an ecclesiastical point of view, and I have never permitted myself to violate my civil duties..."

However, there was no reply to his appeal, and in March, 1941 Fr. Gregory was admitted to the prison hospital with pellagra. On April 21, the second day of Pascha, he died. The news was conveyed to his family, who had moved to Kostroma, on the ninth day, the day of Radonitsa. It was not the authorities

who told them, but some good people, who wrote to them about the last months of his life in camp. Many of his letters were preserved.

After the death of Fr. Gregory, Bishop Athanasius continued to correspond with Lyudmilla Ivanovna. She supported him materially for twenty-four years, although they never saw each other, and she herself was seriously ill and in a wheel-chair. Her letters to Vladyka were written by dictation to her daughter. She and her daughters conducted a voluminous correspondence and supported many innocent sufferers.

69. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PARTHENIUS, BISHOP OF
ANANIEV (+1937)
and those with him

Bishop Parthenius, in the world Peter Arsenyevich Bryanskikh, was born on October 1 (30), 1881 in Irkutsk into the family of a hereditary honorary citizen, an attorney for the industrial-trading firm, "Nemchinov and son". He finished his studies at the Irkutsk theological seminary and graduated from the Kiev (or Moscow or St. Petersburg) Theological Academy in 1907 with the degree of candidate of theology. In 1908 he went for one semester to Berlin university, attending courses on Biblical studies. On returning to Russia he was appointed president of the Krasnoyarsk theological seminary in 1908, and in 1910 – teacher of the Old Testament in the Ryazan theological seminary. In September, 1911 he was tonsured into monasticism, ordained to the priesthood, and, in the rank of archimandrite, appointed teacher of the Old Testament and assistant head of the Zhitomir school of pastorship. From December 26, 1916 he was teacher of the Old Testament and head of the Pastoral Missionary seminary attached to the Biziukovsky monastery in Kherson diocese. In 1918 or 1919 he moved to Kherson, serving as secretary of Bishop Procopius (Titov) in the hierarchical house.

On May 16/29, 1921, he was consecrated Bishop of Ananiev in Moldavia, a vicariate of the Odessa diocese, and temporary administrator of the Odessa diocese. In December, 1921 he was arrested and imprisoned. In May, 1922 he was released and went to Kiev.

On arrival in Kiev, he decided not to go to his acquaintances, but sat, exhausted and covered in scabs and insect bites, in a little garden. An old woman, Mariamna Nikitichna, who used to sell sunflower seeds, came up to him. She asked him where he was from, and then took him in to her underground hovel, where she washed him and began to treat him. He lived there for about a month. Then she took him to a novice she knew at the Kiev Caves Lavra, the future Archbishop Leontius of Chile. She could not bring him to the leaders of the Lavra, for they all lived in fear and were not able to receive him, even for temporary residence. For people like him – and Bishop Parthenius was distinguished by unusual directness and always fearlessly rebuked atheism and renovationism - were not allowed to live in the big cities according to the Soviet laws.

Archbishop Leontius recalled a conversation with Vladyka Parthenius, in which Vladyka said that for the sins of the peoples the Lord sometimes allows the complete disappearance of certain Churches from the face of the earth, as happened, for example, with the flourishing Church of Carthage. When it flourished it had tens of bishops, but now it is complete desert, and only the memory of it remains. The same could happen to the Russian Orthodox Church. When Archbishop Leontius told this to Schema-Archbishop Anthony

(Abashidze), the latter said: "You know what I shall tell you? Perhaps Bishop Parthenius was in the Holy Spirit when he said that!"

Vladyka Parthenius lived for about a month in the Lavra, and then entered into contact with Schema-Archbishop Anthony and with the ruling bishop, Macarius (Karmazinov) of Uman. Together with Bishop Macarius he secretly consecrated three bishops: Sergius (Kuminsky), Athanasius (Molchanovsky) and Theodore (Vyshgorodsky) - although according to another source the first two of these bishops were consecrated at an earlier date. Not long before this, the following bishops had been arrested and exiled: Metropolitan Michael (Yermakov), Archbishop Basil (Bogdashevsky), Bishop Nazarius (Blinov) and Bishop Demetrius (Verbitsky).

In October, 1922 Bishop Parthenius was arrested again in Kiev and taken to Kharkov, where he was in prison for ten days. In 1923 he was exiled from Ananiev, and in the summer moved to Fr. Victor Velmin in Svyatoshino. He lived a very secluded life, but had a wide correspondence. No more than twice in the summer he was visited by an unknown woman from Ananiev with letter from his diocese and by M.N. Buraya from Kiev, through whom he maintained contact with Bishop Macarius.

In 1925 he was exiled to Moscow, where he lived illegally in the Danilov monastery. He was close to Metropolitan Peter, was arrested at the same time as him in December, 1925, and was cast into an unheated, windowless cell in Butyrki prison. In the spring of 1926 he was convicted by the OGPU of "being a member of, and participating in the activity of, a church-monarchist organization which set itself the aim of harming the dictatorship of the proletariat." In accordance with article 68, he was sentenced to three years' exile in Komi-Zyryansk region (according to another source, Kazakhstan). His was part of the group case, "The Case of Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky) and others, Moscow, 1926".

Bishop Parthenius, like Bishop Herman (Ryashentsev), was accused of being a member of the so-called "Danilov Synod". Moreover, he and Bishop Ambrose (Polyansky) were accused of being members of a kind of "office of the Danilovite group which in a preliminary manner discussed all the most important questions, passing on the [correct] line of behaviour to the remaining members of the grouping, attracting to their especially important sessions also other Black-Hundredist church activists, like, for example, Metropolitan Peter... and others. In particular, [they were accused] of taking the decision to defend the émigré churchmen, denying their anti-Soviet activity, in order to preserve links with them, and also of deciding to accept Anthony Khrapovitsky as metropolitan of Kiev". They were also accused that "they maintained links with the former over-procurator of the Synod Sabler, receiving from the latter instructions and directives on all important church-political questions, and passing on these instructions not only in the Danilov monastery, but also to Metropolitan Peter, as, for example, the instructions on Anthony and the support of those abroad".

Vladyka Parthenius was sentenced to three years' exile and sent to Kazakhstan (or Komi) from June, 1926 to April, 1928. On being released, he returned to Moscow, where he lived in the Danilov monastery without the right to depart from the city. According to one (dubious) source, in 1928 Vladyka Parthenius signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church through Monk Agathon.

On October 29, 1929 he was arrested again and cast into Butyrki prison. On November 23 he was convicted by the OGPU of "inciting believers to resist the closure of one of the churches of the Danilov monastery and its conversion into a food store". This was part of the group case, "The Case of the Monastic Brotherhood of Danilov Monastery headed by Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh), Moscow, 1929". In accordance with article 58-10, he was sentenced to three years' exile in Kazakhstan. In fact, he was exiled to Uil in Kirgizia, but on the way was beaten up and lay in the Samara prison hospital. (According to one source, he was in the Odessa diocese at the beginning of the 1930s.)

Several people connected with the Danilov monastery were arrested in connection with this case, including:

Archimandrite Cassian, in the world Constantine Valeryanovich Valeryanov, was born in May, 1866 in Moscow into a family of trader-craftsmen. He went to a village school. He worked as a soldier in the village of Shelepikha, which is now part of Moscow. In 1897 he joined the Holy Trinity - St. Sergius Lavra. From 1903 to 1907 he was a monk in Vladimir. From 1907 he struggled in the Danilov monastery, becoming hieromonk and archimandrite. On October 28, 1929 he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison, being accused of "anti-Soviet agitation" and stirring up the believers to resist the conversion of one of the churches of the monastery and its conversion into a bread-store. In accordance with article 58-10 he was deprived of the right to live in Moscow, Leningrad and regions, Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa and district and confined to one domicile. Nothing more is known about him.

Semyon Vasilyevich Lepeshkin. He was born in February, 1877 in Kolomna uyezd, Moscow province into a peasant family. In 1891-92 he studied to be a joiner, and practised this trade until 1907. From 1907 to 1918 he was the chief clerk in a city trust for the poor. From 1917 to 1920 he worked in several children's homes. From 1920 to 1923 he was the accountant for a zemsoviet, and then from 1924 he returned to being the chief clerk in a school. On October 28, 1929, while he was secretary of the church-parish council of the Danilov monastery, he was arrested and cast into the Butyrki prison, where on November 23 he was accused of "anti-Soviet agitation" and of stirring up the believers to resist the closure of one of the churches of the Danilov monastery and its transformation into a bread store. In accordance with article 58-10, he was exiled from Moscow for three years. Nothing more is known about him.

Semyon's wife, **Olga Danilovna Lepeshkina**. She was born in 1878 in the village of Petrovskaya, Tver province, and was a prosphora baker. On April 15, 1932 she was arrested and cast into the Butyrki prison. During her interrogation she declared that she "knew all the clergy of the monastery, but knew nothing about any of them, and did not have political discussions". On May 16 she was condemned as "a member of the church-monarchist organization 'The True Orthodox Church'", and in accordance with article 58-11 she was deprived of the right to live in 12 places and confined to the Urals province. Nothing more is known about her.

Sergius Georgievich Voronkov. He was born on August 17, 1873 in Moscow province into the family of a trader. He went to the Alexandro-Mariinskoye school in Moscow. Before the revolution he traded in iron objects. From 1927 he lived with his son. He was a member of the parish council of the Danilov monastery. On October 28, 1929 he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison. On November 23 he was convicted of "anti-Soviet agitation", and sentenced in accordance with article 58-10 to deprivation of the right to live in Moscow, Leningrad and provinces, Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa and districts, with confinement to one domiciles. He was also accused of inciting believers to resist the closure of one of the churches of the monastery and its transformation into a granary. Nothing more is known about him.

Ivan Vasilyevich Gureyev. He was born in January, 1861 in the village of Litvinovo, Bronitsky uyezd, Moscow province into a peasant family. He was a market gardener. He was a member of the parish council of the Danilov monastery. On October 28, 1919 he was arrested and cast into Butyrki prison. On November 23 he was convicted of "anti-Soviet agitation", and in accordance with article 58-10 was deprived of the right to live in Moscow, Leningrad and regions, Kharkov, Kiev, Odessa and district, and was confined to one domicile. He was accused of stirring up believers to resist the closure of one of the churches of the Danilov monastery and its conversion into a warehouse. Nothing more is known about him.

Barbara Nikolayevna Nevakhovich. She was born in 1887 in St. Petersburg into a noble family. Her father was an admiral. In 1905 she finished her studies at the Tagantseva gymnasium in St. Petersburg. In 1910 she became a sister of mercy in the Moscow Labour Brotherhood. From 1914 she worked at the Presna evacuation point in Moscow, and was then attached to the 74th division. From 1916 to 1918 she worked at the Presna evacuation point and in the Labour Brotherhood (in the hospital). From 1918 to 1922 she was an assistant to the food hygiene doctor of the Khamovitchesky region in Moscow. She was arrested in 1922 and sentenced to Solovki in accordance with article 59. Having served three years and two months of her sentence, she returned to Moscow, where, on October 28, 1929 she was arrested again and cast into Butyrki prison in connection with "the Case of the Monastic Brotherhood of Danilov Monastery Headed by Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh), Moscow, 1929". On November 23 she was convicted by the OGPU of "collecting money to help clergy on Solovki" and "anti-Soviet agitation". In accordance with article 58-10,

she was exiled for three years to Kazakhstan. On April 10, 1933 she was released. Nothing more is known about her.

According to one source, Vladyka was mentioned in the prosecutor's concluding speech in the affair of Metropolitan Cyril on August 19, 1933 as "an active worker of the True Orthodox Church". In September, 1933 Vladyka Parthenius was released and was exiled to the city of Skopin, Moscow province. At first he lived in the house of Archimandrite Stefan (Safonov) of the Danilov monastery, then he settled in his own flat in Marx street. A little later he went to Moldavia to get a passport, but was refused it.

In 1934, on hearing heard that his mother was living in the city of Kimry, Tver province, Vladyka Parthenius went to visit her. In the same year he was for the last time in Kiev, this time with Schema-Archbishop Anthony in a hillside shack. And there for the last time he met Metropolitan Anatolius (Grisyuk) of Odessa. All three hierarchs met for the last time in this life. On November 1, 1934 he was arrested, sent to Moscow and cast into Butyrki prison. In January, 1935 he was sentenced to five (?) years' exile in the north and was sent to Arkhangelsk.

On August 4, 1937 Vladyka Parthenius was again arrested, and cast into prison in Arkhangelsk. This was "The Case of Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh), Arkhangelsk, 1937". On November 22, 1937 he was shot.

70. HOLY HIEROMARTYR PAUL OF BELORUSSIA (+1937)

and those with him

Protopriest Paul Levashov was born on December 9, 1873 in Chernaya Gryada, Cherpovetsk uyezd, Novgorod province. His father, Nicholas, was from the landowning gentry, and his mother's name was Anna. Bishop Misael (Mogilev) was his mother's brother. Fr. Paul studied in a gymnasium, a theological school and a theological seminary. After completing seminary he married Anna Petrovna Sokolov, whose father owned a sewing shop in Moscow.

Towards the end of the 19th century Bishop Misael ordained him a deacon and, soon after, a priest. He became the spiritual son of Elder Joseph of Optina. At the beginning of 1900 Fr. Paul was assigned to serve in Gomel as the second priest at the cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul, which was located in a park on the estate of Princess Paskevich. In the beginning Fr. Paul did not have the means to buy a house, so they took an apartment near the park.

In 1907 he was later elevated to the rank of archpriest and given the position of dean of all the local churches. He was very busy with his duties during this period. He rose early each day and managed all the documents concerning baptisms and marriages. These documents with his signature are still preserved in the archives in Gomel.

Once while he was walking through a park and reading his prayers, he was seized by a mysterious fear. He rushed home and found his wife in flames. She had spilled alcohol on herself, and it ignited. He saved her life by wrapping her in a blanket.

From a young age Fr. Paul had always wanted to visit Palestine, those holy places where the Saviour's feet had trod. This desire burned ever more brightly in his soul. Then once he fell asleep and suddenly saw himself flying high above the earth. He saw meadows, forest, rivers and cities flashing by beneath him, and finally he came down in the Holy Land. He travelled around Jerusalem, visited churches, saw much and then woke up. After this remarkable dream his desire to visit the holy places grew even stronger.

Then, before the outbreak of war in 1914, he was finally able to fulfil his intention. Moreover, the government encouraged his trip by giving him free passage. He took a cab from the port of Tel Aviv with another priest, and when they drew near to Jerusalem, Fr. Paul got out of the carriage and walked to the Holy City. He visited many holy places, now seeing while he was awake that which he had seen in his unusual dream.

Before 1914 he also arranged, with the approval of the government, for a special train to transport the faithful to Optina. Fr. Paul served on the train, and everyone sang as the choir. A special boat was also rented for a trip on the river

Som, then along the Dnieper to Kiev to the Lavra. Everyone sang and prayed. Fr. Paul visited Sarov many times, and once travelled to Valaam with his son Nicholas.

At the beginning of the war Fr. Paul moved to Petrograd, becoming the rector of the church of Army Headquarters. It was around this time that he bought a house. Fr. Paul had seven children. The oldest son, Nicholas, died in the 70s. His daughters, Ludmilla and Maria, are still alive. Another son, George, perished during the war, in 1941. A daughter, Zoya, died young, and two other daughters, Vasya and Tanya, died as infants.

Since he was spiritually connected with Optina hermitage and its last elder, Nektary, Fr. Paul sent many of his parishioners who wanted to enter monasticism to the elder first for a blessing. The women then entered Diveyevo, while the men went wherever the elder blessed, or according to their choice.

Fr. Paul was of medium height, healthy and strong. He lived simply and modestly, was not given to extraordinary struggles or especially strict fasts, but kept to the royal path, moderate and continent in everything. He possessed the gift of compunction and tears. Once in a dream he stood by the Cross and contemplated the sufferings of the Saviour. The body of the Lord below His chest was clothed in light.

He bound no one to asceticism, feeling that not everyone had the strength for it. He was tender with his spiritual children, merciful and condescending to the sins of others. However, in fulfilling the rules of the Church he was strict. He always said:

"God is our Father and the Church our Mother, and therefore we must submit to her."

He always served according to the rubrics, without abbreviations, as was usually the practice in town churches. He himself did nothing without the blessing of the elder.

After the revolution Fr. Paul moved to Moscow and served in the Novo-Devichi monastery. After the Local Council of 1917-18 he was again appointed dean in Gomel. In 1922-23, together with **Fr. Elisha (Nazarenko)**, the Gomel diocesan missionary, he categorically refused to join the renovationists. In 1923-24, with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon, Bishop Tikhon of Gomel gave him the duty of receiving back into the Church those priests who repented of joining the renovationists. Later he was awarded the gold cross for his steadfastness in Orthodoxy in this period.

In this period, Fr. Paul maintained links with **Elder Nectarius** of Optina. After the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius in 1927, Elder Nectarius and Fr. Paul broke communion with him. Fr. Paul was followed by his spiritual son, **Fr. Antipas Zlotnikov**. Another spiritual son of his was **Fr. Theodore**

Rafanovich, who was serving in Sherstin. In 1927 Fathers Paul and Antipas were arrested "for counter-revolutionary activity", and were under investigation for a month, but were soon released. On being released, however, they did not serve openly because they did not recognize Metropolitan Sergius and his Moscow Patriarchate. In July, 1928, with the blessing of Elder Nectarius, Fr. Paul and several priests of the Gomel diocese, including **Hieromonk Gerasimus (Kayeshko)** and **Priest Theodore Semenov**, gave **Fr. Demetrius Ivanov**, who was travelling through Gomel on his way to Petrograd, a written petition to **Archbishop Demetrius (Lyubimov)** that they be united to the True Orthodox Church. From this time Fr. Paul became the leader of the Gomel Josephites, and began to serve the cemetery church, since converted into a workshop, on Rumyantsevskaya Street. Batyushka attracted many true believers from the surrounding villages to himself. People would come from five to twenty kilometres away, and the church was always full.

In 1929 Fr. Paul was arrested for belonging to the True Orthodox church and exiled to the city of Kozlov (Michurinsk) in Tambov province, and then to Ranenburg in Ryazan province (now Chaplygin, Lipetsk province). During this exile many of his spiritual children came to help his family. In 1932 he returned from exile, but in the same year was arrested again in Orel and accused of organizing the True Orthodox Church in Bolkhovsky region in the Central Black Earth province. On May 3, 1933 he was exiled for five years to Mezen on the White Sea in Arkhangelsk province, where he lived under very difficult conditions. However, after a year he was released and returned to Gomel in 1934. Since his own house was occupied by unbelievers who could not be moved, he moved into the house of his spiritual daughter, Elena Laishuk. She was living with her sister and her aunt.. He lived with Elena for two years, serving in secret. However, in order to avoid causing her trouble and possible arrest, he moved in with the Popoviches, people who were devoted to him.

According to the witness of Schema-Abbess Macaria (Chebotareva), Fr. Paul was in canonical communion with the Voronezh **Protopriest John Andrievsky** and **Archimandrite Alexander** of Michurinsk

In 1937 his passport expired; he reported this to the police and they immediately arrested him. On September 3, 1937 he was arrested together with Fr. Elisha Nazarenko and **fifty-seven clergy and laity** for belonging to an "underground counter-revolutionary fascist-rebellious organization of churchmen". On November 1 he was shot in Gomel on the ninth kilometre of the Chernigov chausée.

He devoted his whole life to preserving the Orthodox Faith, and died for it. Even now those living in Gomel and the surrounding area, who keep to the True Orthodox Church, are called "Levashovites". He was canonized by the Council of the Russian True Orthodox Church in Odessa on November 1, 2008.

*

Priest Basil was born in Gomel province. In the 1920s he joined the renovationists, but then repented, and Fr. Paul Levashov took his confession. He rejected Metropolitan Sergius' declaration and served secretly in houses. He always walked around with a bag on his shoulders which contained a folding altar. To the question: "What are you carrying?" he replied: "The Church". He was shot in 1940.

*

Fr. Antipas Zlotnikov was born in 1875 in the pious Orthodox family of Michael Zlotnikov. He served as a deacon with Fr. Paul, and after Fr. Paul's arrest in 1932 he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Tikhon (Sharapov) of Mogilev. He was arrested for belonging to the True Orthodox Church and was shot with Fr. Paul on November 1, 1937. He was canonized by the Council of the Russian True Orthodox Church in Odessa on November 1, 2008.

*

Priest Elisha Petrovich Nazarenko was born in 1883, and became Gomel diocesan missionary. In 1922-23 he categorically refused to join the renovationists. He served in Gomel, and was a co-worker with **Fr. Paul Levashov** and **Fr. Antipas Zlotnikov**. Together with them, he was arrested on November 11, 1937, and was shot on November 26. He was canonized by the Russian True Orthodox Church in 2011.

*

Demetrius Petrovich Sukhotsky was born on September 21, 1884 in the village of Radovka, Priborskaya volost, Gomel uyezd, Mogilev province in the family of a peasant. He had nine children, three of whom died soon after birth. He had an elementary education, and worked in the fields. Before the First World War he worked for a while as a driver for Princess Paskevich. He was called up, was wounded in the right hand and was demobilized as an invalid (second group). For his conscientious service to Tsar and Fatherland he was given a certificate by the commander of the unit. After the army he worked as a clerk at the railway station Rechitsa (now the regional centre of Gomel province). After the revolution he returned to working in the fields. He belonged to the True Orthodox Church, and in 1932 was arrested for refusing to join a collective farm. But his nephew, Casimir Mironovich, wrote to the authorities saying that Demetrius Petrovich had many young children, so they released him. He continued to work on the land. But in February, 1938 they came at 2 in the morning, conducted a search in his house and arrested him. His son recalls: "After the search, when they told my father to get ready, he stood in front of the icons and prayed for a long time (the NKVDists did not stop him). Then he took me into his arms and quietly said into my ear: 'Pray to God for me. I no longer possess you (that is, I cannot help you). Obey Mama.' When they took him out of the house, Klava, my elder sister, went with him. Two more people were arrested with him in Randovka. They were all taken to

Pribor and there put in the prison wagon and taken to Gomel. When Mama brought him a parcel the first time, they accepted the parcel, but a week later they didn't, saying that he had received ten years in the camps without right of correspondence and had already been sent to the camp. His indictment included ten points such as: 'recognized as a kulak, a counter-revolutionary, agitated against joining the collective farm, conducted anti-Soviet propaganda', etc. After each of the ten points there was the word 'no'. On February 15, 1938 there took place the 'judicial' session of the 'troika', which in his absence condemned him to be shot. On March 14, 1938 the sentence was carried out. We still do not know what our father suffered for. Perhaps during the search they found letters of Princess Irina Ivanovna Paskevich expressing her gratitude for his help (perhaps in food: after the revolution Irina Ivanovna was very poor). In 1958 they gave us a certificate of his rehabilitation. There it is written that he was 'rehabilitated because of the absence of evidence of a crime'. That means he suffered innocently. When my father was still alive, we were visited by Fr. Paul Levashov and Fr. Basil. We prayed at night in our house and had communion secretly. After the service I was entrusted with conducting them out of the village to the woods in the morning and showing them the direction in which to go. I remember this road." Demetrius Petrovich was convicted in accordance with articles 72 and 76 of the Belorussian Codex. His children and relatives always remained faithful to their father's instructions, did not accept the Soviet church and belonged to the True Orthodox Church. Demetrius Petrovich was canonized by a Council of the Russian True Orthodox Church in Odessa on November 1, 2008.

*

In the town of Bragil there lived a 65-year-old bachelor of chaste life, **Paramon**. His parents died early and he remained living all alone in their house for many years, leading a life of fasting and prayer. His house was not a large one, on the outskirts of town, and a large orchard surrounded it. There were two churches in this town, and when they signed their loyalty to the Soviet Church (Metropolitan Sergius), he stopped going to them and conducted the church services at home.

Once in the month of June Tikhon T. visited this town. He was with his friend Athanasius. It was Sunday morning and they were going to church. As they came closer to it, they saw that on top of the church, instead of an Orthodox cross, there was a hammer and sickle and a red flag. So they went to the other church, and that one had the same stamp of the Antichrist on it. So they decided not to go to church at all, and instead to pay a visit to Paramon, whom they knew.

He was very happy to see them. He was quite stout, of less than medium height. His head was bald, and he had a medium-sized beard not yet grey. He invited them into his house, all the walls of which were thickly covered with icons. There were many icon lamps, all lit, before the holy icons. He even showed us portraits of the Tsars and the new martyr Tsar Nicholas II. They

were hidden in a large closet that had many of these old and rare portraits adorning the walls. Having examined everything that he showed them, they came out into the garden. It was a luxuriant orchard, with many tall and shady trees that abounded in fruits. He somehow managed to preserve himself almost to the end from the collective farms and all the horrors and deprivations of the hellish Soviet system, under which everything was liquidated by the communist authority.

Here in the garden he told them of a miracle that he had beheld in that very garden just over a week before. On the first of June, he suddenly saw in the air some unusually large birds girded about with sky-blue ribbons. As he was watching them, they began to hover over his garden. Suddenly he saw one of these birds come right down into his garden, and when it was almost down it asked him: "What do you see, Paramon?"

Petrified, he said: "I don't know."

Then it said: "We go to the East to make way for the Eastern kings to go west."

With this it rose up to join the flock and flew to the East.

In a week the war broke out. Very soon the local Soviet guerillas found out about the portraits of the Tsar in Paramon's cell and about his ascetic life. And in that very garden they tortured him for a long while and then killed him. He died a martyr's death in July, 1941.

71. HOLY HIEROMARTYR MARK, BISHOP OF SERGIEV POSAD (+1938)

Bishop Mark, in the world Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, was born in June, 1864 in the village of Babye, Domoslavskaya volost, Vishnevolochok uyezd, Tver province, into a family which had been linked for generations with the Orthodox country clergy. His mother, Capitolina Mikhailovna, was the daughter of the priest Fr. Michael Vasilyevich Zashigransky. His father, Alexander Grigoryevich (1834-1887), of noble descent, was also the son of the priest, and became a well-known teacher, the director of the Tula, and then of the fourth Moscow classical gymnasium.

Michael Alexandrovich lived with his parents in Tula, and received an excellent education, graduating from his father's school with a gold medal. He was well-built, and was renowned in Tula as a boxer. In 1886 he graduated from the historical-philological faculty of Moscow Imperial University. It was at this point that he got to know the famous novelist Lev Tolstoy, who often visited his father when he lived in Tula. Michael Alexandrovich became a close friend and disciple of Lev Tolstoy, and there exists a copious correspondence between them from the period 1886-1901. He was arrested on December 27, 1887, together with some young friends who had been infected with the ideas of the "People's Will" movement, for possessing some literature of this movement as well as Tolstoy's brochure "Nicholas Palkin", and might well have been sent to Siberia if it had not been for the intervention of Tolstoy himself. In February, 1888, Michael Alexandrovich was released but forbidden to live in the capitals.

Abandoning any thought of a career in teaching, Michael Alexandrovich bought some land in the village of Dugino, Tver province, and created one of the first Tolstoyan land communes in Russia. It existed for two years. However, the peasants' refusal to accept the commune, and their patient endurance of their hard life, gradually led Michael Alexandrovich to question his own beliefs and pay more attention to the world-view of the peasants - Orthodoxy. Moreover, on one point he could never agree with Tolstoy - his rejection of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the element of mystery in human life. Finally, after responding to his appeal to help the starving in Ryazan province (at the end of 1891 to 1892), he broke with Tolstoy, and spoke against his teachings for the rest of his life, while acknowledging the very significant influence he had had on him. Tolstoy's last letter, written in Optina desert, was addressed to M.A. Novoselov. Michael Alexandrovich did not succeed in replying to it, but much later said that if he had been able, he probably would not have replied.

After the break with Tolstoy, he became very close to St. John of Kronstadt, and then to the elders of Optina and Zosima deserts. His spiritual father was Igumen Herman of Zosima desert. Under their influence, he gradually acquired a firm, strictly Orthodox world-view, based exclusively on the

teachings of the Holy Fathers. Michael Alexandrovich was a brilliant professor of classical philology at Moscow University. He was widely known in Russia as the publisher and editor of the so-called "Moral-Religious Library", the first volume of which, entitled "The Forgotten Path", was published in 1902 in Vyshny Volochok, where Michael Alexandrovich was living at the time. His publishing activity continued right up to the revolution - first in Vyshny Volochok, and then in Moscow and Sergiev Posad.

The philosopher Nicholas Berdyaev described Michael Alexandrovich as "a very strong believer, completely devoted to his idea, very active, even restless, very sympathetic to people, always ready to help, especially in a spiritual way. He wanted to convert everybody. He produced the impression of a secretly tonsured monk."

Michael Alexandrovich taught Greek in the fourth Moscow gymnasium until 1916, and was professor in the faculty of classical philology in Moscow University. His merits in the field of spiritual education and Christian apologetics were so great that in 1912 he was elected an honorary member of the Moscow Theological Academy. For several years he was a member of the Educational Council attached to the Holy Synod. In 1918, during the Local Council of the Russian Church in Moscow, he was invited to take part in the work of the section on theological educational institutions, which was to seek out new ways of developing theological education in the country.

From 1905 Michael Alexandrovich was at the centre of the movement for Church reform, the convening of a Church Council and the restoration of the parish community. However, he was against convening a Council hastily, without proper preparation and the canvassing of the opinions of both clergy and laity. And he was therefore in favour of a Pre-Conciliar Preparatory Convention, which in fact took place in 1906.

In 1907, he founded a religious society called the "Circle of those seeking Christian Enlightenment", which met in Moscow and numbered about 200 people. They included Fr. Paul Florensky, Fr. Joseph Fudel, Sergius Nikolayevich Bulgakov, Vladimir Alexeyevich Kozhevnikov, Paul Demetrievevich Mansurov, Theodore Dmitrievich Samarin, Sergius Nikolayevich Durylin, Vladimir Frantsevich Ern, Theodore Konstantinovich Andreyev, and others. This was not his first foray into this kind of activity. He had attended the meetings of the Petersburg "Religio-Philosophical Meetings" (1901-1903), at which he always expressed a strictly Orthodox position in opposition to Merezhkovsky and Rozanov. And he had also participated in the work of the Moscow religio-philosophical society dedicated to the memory of his friend Vladimir Soloviev (1905-1918). According to Constantine Sergeyevevich Rodionov, "all the members of his society regularly went to church. They prayed in the church, and then read lectures in the society and discussed them. This was a purely Orthodox society, and M.A. Novoselov was the ideological leader of Orthodoxy in Moscow. The meetings of the members

of the society took place in his flat. He lived with his mother opposite the cathedral of Christ the Saviour."

The society enjoyed the protection of the rector of the Moscow Theological Academy and future hieromartyr of the Catacomb Church, Bishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky), and was spiritually led by the elders of the Zosima Hermitage.

According to Rozanov, "the essence of the bond of this circle is personal and moral. Its highest quality is considered not to put oneself forward, not to quarrel, and to publish as little as possible. But instead of that - to see each other more often, to mix, to live a certain common, or almost common life. Without any conditions or qualifications they call the one who is almost the oldest among them, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, 'Abba Michael'. And although some of them are immeasurably more learned and in general 'intellectual' than the honoured and dear M.A. Novoselov, nevertheless they revere him 'as a father' for his clear, kind character, for the purity of his soul and intentions, and not only listen to him, but almost obey him."

Michael Alexandrovich became one of the firmest and most clear-thinking Orthodox thinkers who were struggling with the poison of modernism. In this respect he undoubtedly betrayed the influence of his spiritual instructor, Vladyka Theodore. He was a conservative and a monarchist, but at the same time was prepared to fight the Church hierarchy when necessary.

Thus when, at the end of 1911, the affair of Bishop Hermogenes and Heliodorus became well known, and rumours spread about the possibility of Rasputin being ordained, Michael Alexandrovich, with the help of Grand Duchess Elizabeth, published a brochure exposing Rasputin, in which he said: "Why do the bishops, 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 [sectarian] to do the works of darkness under the mask of light?" Of course, 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 1912 there arose the movement of the "name-worshippers" among the Russian monks of Mount Athos. These monks were condemned as heretics by the Holy Synods of the Constantinopolitan and Russian Churches. However, Michael Alexandrovich defended them. For this reason he is sometimes considered to have been a "name-worshipper" himself. But a closer examination of his views reveals that he never agreed with some of the cardinal positions of the leading name-worshipper, Fr. Anthony Bulatovich.

Thus Bulatovich considered that all thought about God is the uncreated action of God and God Himself, writing: "Human thought is not the product of the human mind to the extent that that which the human eye sees is not a product of his vision... Forcing the mind to think about God is a human action,

but any true thought about God is already a vision of God in some God-revealed property of His and is God Himself." Michael Alexandrovich, however, rejected this idea, writing: "*The thought and my object are not one and the same...* The thought of a man about God remains a human thought... The power of God, penetrating the mind, elicit in him a thought about God, which is nevertheless a human thought, a condition of my mind."

With the coming of the Bolsheviks, Michael Alexandrovich did not slacken his work for the Church. Thus from January 30, 1918 he was a member of the Temporary Council of the United Parishes of the city of Moscow, and in February, 1918 his name was on the appeal released by this Council which called on believers to defend the churches from the encroachments of the God-fighting power. Again, he offered his flat for the theological courses which began in the spring of 1918 with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon, and himself taught patristics.

According to the oral tradition of the Catacomb Church (recently confirmed in a document), Michael Alexandrovich was tonsured as a monk in 1920, and in 1923 was made a secret bishop with the name of Mark and the title of Sergiev Posad, by Bishops Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) of Volokolamsk, Arsenius (Zhadanovsky) of Serphukov and Seraphim (Zvezdinsky) of Dmitrov. Although there are no documents proving the episcopate of Michael Alexandrovich, the following facts serve to confirm it: (1) on the protocol of his interrogation in connection with the case of the "All-Union Centre 'True Orthodoxy'", the words "Bishop Mark" are written in the hand of the interrogator; (2) in the interrogation of Natalya Andreyevna, the matushka of Hieromartyr Theodore Andreyev, mention is made of the episcopate of M.A. Novoselov.

When the schism of the "Living Church" broke out in 1922, Michael Alexandrovich was very probably a member of the "Brotherhood of Zealots of Orthodoxy" which published a "Brotherly Warning to the Children of the True Church of Christ" in which the following points were made: "...5. Therefore the 'guardian of piety' (speaking in the language of the Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs), the Orthodox people, must decisively reject the usurpers of Church authority, not entering into communion with them and not allowing the prayerful commemoration of their names in the churches. 6. Those Orthodox priests and laymen who will continue to support ecclesiastical communion with the self-made schismatic hierarchy are thereby expelled with it from the body of the Church, that is, they have separated themselves from Christ."

This activity could not fail to attract the attention of the authorities, and on August 12, 1922, Heinrich Yagoda, the deputy president of the GPU, signed an order for the searching of Michael Alexandrovich's flat. He had gone to Optina at that time and so was not present at the search, which discovered nothing significantly incriminating. But it meant that from this time - although the case against him was dropped on March 19, 1923 - he could not return to his flat and was forced to live in an illegal situation, hiding in the houses of his many

friends, mainly in Moscow and Petersburg. Thus he sometimes lives in the flat of Claudia Vladimirovna Nazarova, and in that of Valeria Liorko Prishvina and her mother. He also lived in Vyshny Volochok.

Thus Constantine Sergeyeovich Rodionov writes: "When the Bolshevik persecutions against the faith began, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov hid for a whole year. One night he would spend in my house, another - in the house of some woman whom I didn't ask about. I was unexpectedly sent on an expedition to the Caucasus as a bee-keeper. In my absence M.A. Novoselov and A.F. Losev walked down Nikitsky boulevard in the Arbat. Some people came up to them at the church of Saints Boris and Gleb and arrested them. Losev was soon released, but not Michael Alexandrovich. He was carrying my bread ration cards with my address on them. But my house was not searched. He was sent to Suzdal prison. From there Michael Alexandrovich let me know that we should be calm - he had not betrayed anyone. It seems that as a religious activist he was sentenced under article 58-10."

Once Bishop Mark said: "Now is a time when the righteousness of a person before God is defined not so much by his personal behaviour, his sins or virtue, as by his firmness in the faith, in his faithfulness to Church consciousness, his determination to stand in this faithfulness until death and martyrdom."

From 1922 until the end of 1927, Bishop Mark wrote a series of twenty "letters to friends" which constitute one of the most important contributions to ecclesiology in twentieth-century theology.

Thus in 1925 he wrote: "I shall say a few words to reveal the positive path of Christ, which was, undoubtedly, forgotten by the Church SRs [the predecessors of the renovationists] and has now been openly rejected by the Church Bolsheviks [the renovationists].

"First of all, both relate to the Church as to a human institution, which is why the term 'revival of the Church' occupies the first place in their vocabulary. They suppose - this is clear from their writings and actions - that only human energy is needed, on the one hand, and a series of external changes in Church organization, on the other, in order that the 'paralyzed' body of the Church should revive and begin to function correctly. The source of Church revival is in the church activists themselves. What is required is a skilful choice of energetic activists so as to revive, give wings to and set into motion the dead organization called 'the Church'. I repeat: this point of view is common both to the renovationists and to the majority of what we shall call the Old Churchmen. Neither group suspects what a jungle of religious errors they have wandered into, where they themselves are going, and where they are leading other unreflective people away from the true, genuine preaching of Christ.

"So as to speak with sense about the revival of the parish or of Church society in general (but by no means of the Church, which is herself the source of ever-

flowing life), it is necessary first to give oneself a clear answer to the question: 'What is life in the Christian meaning of the word?'

"Genuine life is eternal life, and it is in the Lord Jesus Christ, or the Lord Himself, the Son of God, Who is called Eternal Life in the holy Gospel. Hence Church revival is revival in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is a more or less deep immersion in eternal life - Christ the Son of God, or the reception of It inside oneself. In this acquisition of eternal life, or, speaking in the words of the holy Apostle Peter, in this 'partaking of the Divine nature', or in the deification of man, lies the main aim of the Christian life." (Letter 1)

One of Vladyka Mark's most important contributions to theological thought was the distinction he worked out between the Church as *organism* and the Church as *organization*: "It is necessary to distinguish between the Church-organism and the Church-organization. As the apostle taught: 'You are the Body of Christ and individually members of it' (I Corinthians 12.27). The Church-organism is a living person, and just as the cells of our body, besides having their own life, have the life that is common to our body and links between themselves, so a man in the Body of Christ begins to live in Church, while Christ begins to live in him. That is why the apostle said: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me' (Galatians 2.20).

"The basis for the affirmation of the Church-organism is love for Christ. The Lord Himself saw the basis of His Church precisely in love for Him. He asked Peter: did he love Him? And He added: 'Feed My sheep'. The Church of Christ is the union of mutual love of the believers ('United by the bond of love and offering themselves to Christ the Lord, the apostles were washed clean', Canon of Holy Thursday). Only in the Church organism can true democratism, equality and brotherhood come into being; we are equal and brothers only if we are parts of one and the same living body. In the organization there is not and cannot be '*organic*' equality and brotherhood" (Letter 5).

"Only to the Church-organism can we apply such titles as we meet in the Word of God, for example: 'glorious, holy, spotless' (Ephesians 1.4); 'the Bride of the Lamb' (Revelation 19.7; 21.9); 'the Body of Christ' (Ephesians 1.23; Colossians 1.24); 'the pillar and ground of the truth' (I Timothy 3.15). These concepts are inapplicable to the Church-organization (or applicable only with great qualifications); they lead people into perplexity and are rejected by them. The Church-organism is the pure 'Bride' of Christ (Revelation 21.2), but the Church-organization has all the faults of human society and always bears the marks of human infirmities... The Church-organization often persecutes the saints of God, but the Church-organism receives them into her bosom... The Church-organization rejects them from its midst, deprives them of episcopal sees, while they remain the most glorious members of the Church-organism. It is possible to belong externally to the visible Church (organization), while one belongs only inwardly to the Body of Christ (organism), and the measure of one's belongingness is determined by the degree of one's sanctity." (Letter 18)

Vladyka Mark also made an important contribution to the concept of the conciliarity [sobornost'] of the Church: "It is not the Council that is important, but *conciliarity* (the infallible teaching magisterium), which reveals itself by all means, whether at a Council or not. From the fact that the Church in definite historical periods convenes Councils, or that she does not convene them, one must by no means conclude that the infallible magisterium existed in such-and-such a period, but not in such-and-such a period. This simply means that in such-and-such a period circumstances demanded that the magisterium reveal itself in such a form, whereas in the other period circumstances did not demand precisely this form of revelation. As a result of this neither conciliarity nor the magisterium is in any way affected in its grace-filled and uninterrupted existence... Conciliarity in the Church of Christ is revealed in the agreement of all her members amongst themselves. This agreement is not assigned to any particular local Church, to any particular geographical point, or to any particular hierarch or meeting of hierarchs, but binds together all those who belong to the Church. Neither does it need any juridical regulations since its self-existent power acts beyond rules that our attainable by our reason. It simply exists, and itself defines all the remaining manifestations of Church life instead of being defined by them. One of these manifestations is the Ecumenical Councils...

"The material element in the magisterium (of such Councils) consists in the people who take part in the Council, in the external conditions of their working together and in the quantity and character of the matters they resolve. But the spiritual element lies in the identity of the conciliar witnesses with the faith of the whole body of the Church. It is this very identity which is nothing other than conciliarity itself, as expressed in the Council. And it alone defines in itself the ecumenicity and conciliar magisterium which are wholly included in it (that is, in the above-mentioned identity). For conciliarity, ecumenicity, magisterium - all these are terms with different meanings that define in themselves only various forms of one and the same whole, whose name is the Holy Spirit Who rules the Church...

"The conciliarity of each Council is established only from the following material historical phenomenon: its de facto acceptance, and the acceptance of the witnesses it gives, by the whole body of the Church as being its own witnesses. Thus this question is resolved on the basis of fact, and not on the basis of right. And so: if the whole body of the Church de facto accepts the Council, that means that the Council was Ecumenical. But if the Church rejects it, that means that for the Church it was nothing.

"The Council in and of itself has no significance. The only thing that is important is conciliarity, which depends, not on any particular meeting of people, nor, a fortiori, on any particular person, but on the whole Church. All this is historically proven. The ecumenical significance of a particular Council was by no means recognized immediately, but only after a certain time had passed, time that was necessary for the elucidation of this question.

"Of course, the Church herself and all her living members, to the degree of their participation in her, have no need whatever of a rational criterion of the ecumenicity of her own Councils. But in addressing errors, and in the sense of a rational support for those who need that, the Church in Council rationally justifies her witnesses, holding to popular criteria. And for that reason she also refers to such facts as are understood by the reason of all, even outsiders.

"The conclusion is as follows: the faith of the Church opposes this or that heresy not because this or that heresy was condemned by this or that Ecumenical Council, but rather the reverse: such-and-such an Ecumenical Council condemned such-and-such a heresy because it opposed the faith of the Church. This position cuts off the way for all further polemics because all further polemics are rendered pointless.

"And so, as regards conciliar infallibility, this lies, as we have seen, in the identity of the witnesses given by the Council with the faith of the whole Church body. The character of this conciliar infallibility, that is, of this infallible conciliar agreement, is by no means affected by the variety of those material means by which it is certified. Of course, the most expedient means of certification for outsiders is a material congress of a known number of physical people, which is called a Council. But conciliar agreement can also inspire any other witness, which is therefore a conciliar witness because of this identity with the opinion of the whole Church body. For conciliarity is one, unchanging spirit, whereas witnesses are subject to the law of material variety of external forms. From this it follows that ecumenicity, infallibility and conciliarity are everywhere, in every true witness that is identical with the faith of the Church, being given according to the participation in the Holy Church of whoever it may be: a Council, great or small, or an individual person, be he a fool-for-Christ or a child.

"And from this there follows the church thesis of the complete, absolute estrangement of the conciliar principle from any formal-juridical rules of its government. The Spirit witnesses of Himself in the Church of Christ when He wants, where He wants and how He wants, because it is not we who are measured for the Spirit, but the Spirit is measured for us.

"This is the Orthodox answer to the question: who in each case is the infallible organ of the Holy Spirit in the Church. The Spirit Himself chooses in each case. For it is not the organ which, by its own right, gives itself the Spirit, but the Spirit, by His mercy, gives Himself to the organ. This precludes, once and for all, all juridical means of defining conciliarity, which is accessible only to faith and love, and not to the reason.

"This is the unshakeable Orthodox teaching of the Ecumenical Apostolic Church." (Letter 11)

Like his mentor, Vladyka Theodore, Bishop Mark criticized Patriarch Tikhon's compromises with the communists and renovationists, but did not

break communion with him. When Metropolitan Sergius issued his notorious "declaration" in 1927, he took an ardent part in the protest against the metropolitan, giving advice to many bishops and priests who venerated him, and is considered by many to have been the leader of the Catacomb Church in Moscow. In his last letter to friends, written at the end of 1927, he said, obviously referring to the situation created by Sergius' declaration: "The whole ship of the Church has listed and is hanging over the edge of the abyss."

From November, 1927, Vladyka Mark was living in Leningrad and took part in the councils of the leading Josephite clergy. It was at this time that he wrote his "Apology for those who have departed from M. Sergius (Stragorodsky)", one of the longest and most comprehensive of all exposés of sergianism. At some point in 1927 Bishop Mark was arrested, but soon released.

At the beginning of 1928 he wrote "A Conversation of Two Friends" with the help of Hieromartyr Theodore Andreyev. Here he compared Sergianism to an illness as follows: "The microbe of the illness of the higher Church authorities in the person of Metropolitan Sergius is the compromising thought that was born in the mind of Metropolitan Sergius during his isolation, after which he was freed [in March, 1927].

"The treatment of this sign of illness was the friendly advice of the most authoritative people not to take a step that would be harmful for the Church, and as a consequence of the ineffectiveness of this treatment, that is, the non-acceptance of the good advice, a red spot appeared. The external redness on the body of the sick person was the Synod composed of hierarchs with tarnished reputations and with the rights of a consultative organ, according to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius dated May 5/18, 1927.

"An increase in the redness was the assumption by the Synod of the rights and authority to rule together with Metropolitan Sergius and the Synod's transfer of bishops.

"A malignant growth was the appearance of the declaration of July 16/29, 1927. Various methods of treating the illness were employed: the condemnation of the declaration by the conscience of believers and the distribution of leaflets by the zealots of Orthodoxy reproaching the actions of Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod and explaining the correct relationship of the Church to the state in contemporary conditions.

"The formation of an abscess was the order of October 8/21, 1927 concerning the commemoration of Metropolitan Sergius and the civil authorities.

"A surgical cutting of the abscess with the aim of warding off further infection was the partial separation from Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod of whole dioceses and individual parishes.

“If there is no healing after this operation, then it will be necessary, with pain of heart, to make an amputation of the sick member, that is, for all zealots of the purity of Orthodoxy to separate finally from Metropolitan Sergius. God grant that this may not happen!...”

But it did happen, and Bishop Mark was among those who separated finally from Metropolitan Sergius. In March, 1928 he wrote “Why we have Departed from Metropolitan Sergius”. And another of his brochures, which is mentioned in many trials of the True Orthodox Christians, was “What must a Orthodox Christian Know?” In this brochure he wrote: “Every Christian must look at the civil authority contemporary with us as allowed by God to punish us and bring us to our senses”; “Christianity and Communism mutually exclude each other, and the struggle between them is inevitable”; “there has been introduced civil marriage, which radically destroys the idea of the family that has been established by God Himself, and an animal life is the result”; “patriotism has been replaced by internationalism and class warfare”; “the civil authorities are demanding that the Orthodox Church justify their actions against Christianity, that is, recognize the revolution, which is violence and can never be justified by the Church”; “the reason for the persecutions against the Church on the part of the unbelieving authorities consists in the striving to submit the Church to their influence and through the Church prepare the people to accept the Antichrist as the political and spiritual head of fallen humanity”.

In “Sergianism is a heresy, not a parasynagogue”, Bishop Mark wrote: “You say in passing that M. Sergius is not a heretic, consequently one should not leave him on the basis of the 15th Canon of the First-and-Second Council. But we affirm, on the contrary, that his sin is worse than heresy.”

In regard to Soviet power, Bishop Mark expressed the following opinion: “I am an enemy of Soviet power - and what is more, by dint of my religious convictions, insofar as Soviet power is an atheist power and even anti-theist. I believe that as a true Christian I cannot strengthen this power by any means... [There is] a petition which the Church has commanded to be used everyday in certain well-known conditions... The purpose of this formula is to request the overthrow of the infidel power by God... But this formula does not amount to a summons to believers to take active measures, but only calls them to pray for the overthrow of the power that has fallen away from God.”

Once Bishop Mark visited Metropolitan Joseph, who said: “Novoselov spoke with me about the situation in the Church that has been created by Sergius’ declaration. He said that the position of the declaration was unacceptable for the believing people and, in particular, for certain ‘church zealots from the intelligentsia’. However, he did not name any representatives of this kind of intelligentsia...” According to Metropolitan Joseph, Bishop Mark had some influence on Metropolitan Agathangelus and Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich.

On May 17, 1929 he was arrested again by the OGPU in Moscow for “anti-Soviet agitation”, and on May 23 was sentenced as an “especially dangerous element” to three years in political isolators according to article 58-10 of the criminal code. First he was sent to the Suzdal political isolator. Then, on October 27, 1930, he was transferred to the Butyrki prison in Moscow. On September 3, 1931, he was condemned in accordance with article 58-10 as “an active participant in the church-political centre of the All-Union counter-revolutionary organization, ‘The True Orthodox Church’”. He was sentenced to eight years in Yaroslavl political isolator. This was part of the group case, “The Case of the All-Union Centre of True Orthodoxy, 1931”.

In the sentence of 1931 it was decreed that “in relation to M.A. Novoselov the resolution of the Special Conference of May 17, 1929 is to be considered replaced by the present resolution”. The indictment read: “In the course of several years he has been a participant in ‘The Church-Political Centre’ of the All-Union counter-revolutionary organization, ‘The True Orthodox Church’, and was in an illegal position. On the instructions of this centre, he, together with reactionary churchmen in Leningrad, created the ‘All-Union Church-Administrative Centre’ of this organization, and ruled the latter on instructions from the centre in a counter-revolutionary direction, demanding active counter-revolutionary activity from the organization. Going round the periphery in a systematic manner, he created a series of branches of this organization – in Tver, in Serpukhov and in a series of other places, and directed their counter-revolutionary activity. He wrote counter-revolutionary documents and was in charge of their distribution.”

On February 7, 1937 he was sentenced to another three years in Vologda prison for counter-revolutionary activity. He arrived there on June 26, 1937. On January 17, 1938 he was sentenced to death “for carrying out... anti-Soviet agitation in prison” and was shot on the same day.

V.D. Prishvina writes: “The old women who used to send M.A. Novoselov parcels in prison lost trace of him during the Fatherland war: parcels began to come back without explanation. Only once did they receive a living witness about him: an unknown Turk came to the old women on being released from prison and sent to his homeland. He carried out a promise he had given to Novoselov – to give them his blessing and thanks. The Turk met Michael Alexandrovich in the prison hospital, where he converted him to Christianity. He spoke about Michael Alexandrovich as about a saint.”

72. HOLY HIEROMARTYR VARUS, BISHOP OF LIPETSK

(+1938)

and those with him

Bishop Varus (Shmarin) was born on November 11, 1880 (according to another source, in about 1860). He was educated in a church seminary. On March 21, 1904 he was ordained to the diaconate, and on October 28, 1910 - to the priesthood. Until 1917 he served as a priest in the city of Vyborg in the diocese of Finland, and then in the city of Lipetsk in the diocese of Tambov.

On August 20 / September 2, 1926 he was consecrated bishop of Lipetsk by Bishop Zenobius (Drozdov) and one other bishop. When Metropolitan Sergius issued his "declaration" in 1927, Bishop Varus came out strongly against it. He told his flock at the cathedral of the Nativity of Christ in Lipetsk that when persecutions against those who rejected the declaration began, they should not go to the sergianist churches, but should pray at home. He said that they were living in the last times, that the Antichrist had come on the earth, that the true believers had to suffer, and that he who endured to the end would be saved.

According to one (dubious) source, Bishop Varus signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church in 1928. He was arrested in 1929 and sentenced to five (?) years in exile. According to one source, Bishop Varus was executed in 1931, according to another he died on September 8, 1938 (new calendar). According to yet another source he was arrested in 1938 and shot on September 23.

His flock continued to gather in secret, calling themselves "True Orthodox Christians". Persecutions began against them in 1937, and during the war they were scattered in various directions.

Among Bishop Varus' parishioners was **John Fyodorovich Chesnokov**. He loved to play as a child, but his father said to him:

"You must behave more seriously. Do you know what trials await you? How will you endure them?"

And so it turned out - for the whole of John Fyodorovich's community, which was centred in the village of Kuiman in Trubetchinsky district, Ryazan (now Lipetsk) region. His cousins, **Basil Petrovich and Demetrius Petrovich**, died in the camps. His aunt, Maria Ivanovna Chesnokova became a nun. When the persecutions began, at the end of the 1920s, they destroyed her monastery, and seized the abbess and some of the older nuns, while the rest ran away in different directions. During the 1930s she lived as a Catacomb Christian in the community led by her brother, which included believers from Lipetsk, Ryazan and Orel regions.

The leader of the Kuiman community, John's father, was arrested. And then his mother was sent to the Sredne-Belaya station on the Amur railway. Then John's elder brother was imprisoned for five years for refusing to serve in the army. This left John Fyodorovich, aged thirteen, and his brother, aged seven, to look after themselves. The communists came looking for his father, and destroyed the stove.

At the beginning of the war, almost all the True Orthodox Christians of the Kuiman community were arrested. John, aged 15, was also arrested, but managed to escape from the village soviet. On September 21, 1941, as the Germans drew near, 36 people were condemned for anti-Soviet activity. On November 25 they were all shot in a forest about 2-3 kilometres from the town of Ryazhsk. **Maria Ivanovna Chesnokova** (born 1878) was among them, together with nine other members of the Kuiman community of the Catacomb Church: **Alexandra Maximovna Aksyonova** (born 1916), **Maria Vasilyevna Golubykh** (born 1900), **Maria Fyodorovna Zhdanova** (born 1908), **Barbara Ivanovna Kopynina** (born 1890), **Darya Fyodorovna Naumova** (born 1886), **Tatyana Mikhailovna Neveikina** (born 1883), **Nina Andreyevna Pyashinina** (born 1915), **Martha Ivanovna Sherstneva** (born 1895) and **Eugenia Sergeyevna Chesnokova** (born 1880).

In 1943, all the elders of the Kuiman community were arrested. Only John Fyodorovich's mother was released, but was soon imprisoned her again. And then his father was betrayed. He was released in 1953 after Stalin's death, but in 1957 was arrested again and sentenced for seven years. In 1944 they exiled not only all the elders of the Kuiman community, but everyone who had refused to join the collective farm, sending them to Tyumen in Siberia. But they kept in touch, and under Krushchev they began to be released.

On July 7, 1944, Beria wrote to Stalin asking permission for the deportation of 1,673 Catacomb Christians from the Ryazan, Voronezh and Orel regions to Siberia. He described the Catacomb Christians as "leading a parasitical way of life, not paying taxes, refusing to fulfil their obligations and service, and forbidding their children to go to school."

In September, 1944, they arrested John Fyodorovich and sentenced him to five years' imprisonment according to article 58-10. He was in Vorkuta, before being exiled to Novosibirsk region, but was then given another five-year sentence in Ozerlag. And then he was exiled again.

Another of Bishop Varus' parishioners was **Sergius Stepanovich Denisov**. Alevtina Vladimirovna Belgorodskaya writes: "Sergius Stepanovich was in prison for belonging to the true Tikhonite Church. They gave him ten years. After some time a 'godfather' summoned him for a conversation.

"Sergius Stepanovich, we know that you are a church person, you know the services and the typicon. Now (this took place after the war) there has been a

decision to open some churches, but there are not enough priests. If you agree to serve, we will release you.'

"Citizen boss, tell me first, is the Church in which I will be serving united with the authorities?'

"What do you mean, "united"?"

"Then are the authorities united with Christ?"

"He laughed and said: 'No.'

"Well then we can't be united with you, you're God-fighters.'

"Everything's clear with you. Go, sit out your term.'

"He sat it out, emerged with his four sons and lived to be 90, without once being united with the authorities or crossing the threshold of the sergianist church. He lived a special, different life, even refusing to have a Soviet passport. Although he said: 'We don't go against the authorities, but against the rulers of this age. We are for God.'

"During another interrogation the investigator said to Sergius Stepanovich:

"Sergius Stepanovich, you are a Soviet person, and you must help us.'

"No, citizen boss, I am not a Soviet person. If I were Soviet, I would not be in your prison here.'

"Well, alright, but still, you're a citizen of our country?"

"No, I'm not a citizen of your country, I am a citizen of heaven.'

"Get out of here!" shouted the boss.

"Dyedushka Sergius (Sergius Stepanovich) told me something else. The incident took place in prison again. He was sitting in a cell. The day before he had received a parcel from believers. The parcels were distributed by an escort who had the fear of God and therefore sympathised with those in prison for their faith and helped them. He quietly whispered to Denisov that a parcel had arrived. For if he had declared it at the morning roll-call, the young children or the slightly older criminals would have caught the lucky man. In short, there was little chance that even half of the parcel would arrive at its destination. Seryozha climbed up to his place and began to look carefully through the contents. Finally he found it: in the middle of a little bag with some buckwheat he carefully pulled out a silk sachet. The Reserved Gifts! In the last letter he had been told that they would be in the parcel. His confession was on its way to batyushka, also by letter. Having received the Gifts, Sergius Stepanovich stood

in the corner with his face to the wall, prayed for a while and... consumed them! Suddenly an orderly who used to clean the barracks came up to him and asked:

"Sergius Stepanovich, is this a dream or did I see it with my own eyes? When you were praying, some kind of fire suddenly rained down on you, just like tongues. I was really astonished - some kind of fire..."

"Sergius Stepanovich then guessed that it was the Gifts that he had received. I was told this incident by Sergius Stepanovich himself.

"Sergius Stepanovich was born in 1894 in Lipetsk district. He fought in the First World War and was wounded. When his youngest, fourth son George was two years old, his wife died. The old woman who sometimes came and helped with the housework said to him:

"You should marry."

"I don't want to hear those words again," said Dyadya Seryozha. And he himself raised his children. He cleaned, prepared the food, taught them piety and the Christian life, accustomed them to service.

"Sergius Stepanovich, like other Catacomb Christians, only went to Orthodox churches, and did not go to churches subject to the renovationists, among whom was Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky). As much as possible, Sergius Stepanovich went to the local church, but then they closed and destroyed the church and took the crosses from the roof. They took one cross on Palm Sunday, and the second - at Pascha, having forcibly gathered the whole of the local population. They broke up the bell; for half a day they beat it, first it rang, then it tinkled, as if it was dying. The communists kept chicken dung in the church for fertilizer, they collected it from all the neighbouring villages.

"Later, when they destroyed the church, in 1937, one party member called Victor went onto the ambon and mockingly said:

"Blessed is the kingdom..."

"Then he drowned.

"Sergius Stepanovich began to go to the Lipetsk monastery, where Vladyka Varus served. Gradually all the non-renovationist priests were rounded up. Sensing that his arrest was imminent, Vladyka Varus blessed Sergius Stepanovich, Andrew and Alexander to take up the word of confession, saying:

"You must take our place, brothers, because simple people are less noticeable, while priests are immediately arrested."

A year later, Vladyka Varus was arrested, and they began their missionary work, explaining to the believers what path they should follow in that evil time. Gradually a community was formed around Sergius Stepanovich in the village of Don-Izbishchi. He was like the warden, he kept the addresses of many Catacomb Christians, and he would say who must help whom. He was not a priest, but on feasts, in spite of the difficulties of the journey, many people came to him to pray and receive advice and be strengthened in spirit. Up to 200 people would gather and pray at night."

Sergius Stepanovich's son **Gregory** describes their life: "There was already no church to go to because the priests were renovationists. We began to gather in our homes and pray. We didn't go to the elections - that was a sin, and they didn't let us go to school because they taught atheism instead of the Law of God. We didn't go into the army because there was no point defending the atheists. We went to prison. We were arrested. Many preachers who had been blessed by Vladyka Varus were shot. And so we were without constant links with Orthodox bishops and priests until 1954, when we met Fr. Michael Rozhdestvensky in camp.

"In 1936 our relative and neighbour came to us and said:

"Sergius Stepanovich, get away, they've come from Ryazan to arrest you.'

"My father went to another village. They came in the evening. They arrested one brother from the fields, while he was pasturing the cattle, and the second in the evening, after work. They condemned them for struggling against Soviet power and said to them:

"Patriarch Tikhon was an antisoviet, and John of Kronstadt was also against communism, and you are with them.'

"They were condemned to be shot.... But my father was in hiding from the authorities from 1936 until his arrest in 1944. There was a hole under the stove and he hid in it if any stranger arrived.

"In 1942 they came again to make a search. They knocked, we were all sleeping. Father hid under the stove. They began the search. The children of the executed brothers were living in our house with their mothers. The NKVD man came up to my little brother as he was sleeping, shook him and said:

"Get up, behold, the Bridegroom cometh at midnight, Christ has arrived.'

"Then he began to throw down the icons. He kept on throwing them down, and broke the lampadas. The brothers' wives, **Tatiana and Evphrosyne**, were arrested and later shot, while their little children remained, crying. In the morning they came to take the icons, but we managed to hide a good icon of St. Nicholas on the roof so that they didn't find it. And so we prayed with this single icon. We would take it out, pray and again hide it. That same night they

took my father's sister, she had two girls. They got up, and their mother was gone. When the NKVD agents left us, father said:

"We must go to my sister.'

"The girls were there, locked up in the house, crying. We took them, too, to our house, which became like a children's home.

"The young people in the village were stirred up against us, they came and broke our windows. We were even forced to fill up the windows with bricks. It was the same in other villages. If you had to find a believer, then you looked for windows blocked up with bricks - that meant they were believers. Once the young people came to our house and began to throw everything out and break it, but then they calmed down and left. They dug trenches round our house. They said:

"This is collective Soviet land, and you don't have the right to go here.'

"Well, we laid down planks and walked on the planks. Then they began to stop giving us anything in the shop. Then, one Saturday night just before the war, my brother shouted. Papa asked:

"What's the matter?'

"He said: 'Just now it was as if I was standing in a church, and Nicholas the Man of God threw a sword among the people and the sword fell and began to thunder.'

"Father wondered: what could this mean? Probably, there would be war. And he was right...

"Well, the war came, and we had some alleviation. They gave us ration cards for flour. When the Germans began to smash the communists, their wives began to ask for crosses. More people came to the faith during the war. They sent us a letter from Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), he wrote that we had to defend our homeland. Well, this was dictated to him.

"Then they came at Christmas and began to make a search. They found the 'burial place' under the stove where father had been hiding. He was not there that time, he was in another place. They said to my brother Peter:

"Get ready.'

"They wanted to torture him to find out where his father was hiding. They took him and went into a village where some boot-leggers were having a drink. They gave my brother to an old man to guard, but he fell asleep, and my brother immediately crossed the River Don to another village where our believers were. Then the colonel gave his men a rocket.

"Well, then came my turn. They took me. If some sorrow is about to happen, my heart always beats, and I cry. And now some kind of melancholy took hold of me, and sure enough, we woke up in the morning, read the prayers and were beginning to read an akathist when there was suddenly a knock at the door. We opened up, and three people came in: the president of the village soviet and two commissioners.

"'Well,' they said, 'How are you? Who's offending you?'

"And they themselves began to make a note of the icons. Then they called me to arrest me, but my brothers pushed me, saying: 'Run'. So I rushed off down the hill, and they fired at me. I ran about five kilometres, sailed across the river in a boat, and ran to the house of my female relative. But they took my brothers off to a children's home. I went to live with my father, who was hiding with some people. In 1944, at the end of the war, they exiled all the believers from Lipetsk and Ryazan regions, and gathered them at Lebedyanka station. They took the people out of their houses at five in the morning, they gathered up to 5000. They were praying and reading akathists on the station. As for us, it was just before my father was rounded up. We were hiding in the 'burial place'. We sat and looked as the next day was dawning. Suddenly a friend of mine from the village of Beredikhino, **Sergius Malkhov**, who later became a Catacomb **priest** and has recently died, climbed down into our 'burial place', which he knew about, and said:

"'Come out, they've already taken them all away.'

"We climbed out. Then we went to live in another place, with the Pryadikhins in Orel region. At first we lived in a garret, but in the winter we moved to a pigsty. There was one piglet there and seven people. The president of the collective farm found us there and arrested us. The people gathered and bawled at us as if we were wild animals. We were taken away to prison in Orel. There were ten people in the cell, including priests. They began to interrogate me, then they released me because I was an adolescent. But the others were put on trial. The investigator said:

"'Well, say goodbye to your father.'

"Papa began to weep, and said:

"'Pray to God, son.'

"They gave all of them ten years, according to article 58-10. They were sent off to cut timber. I went to a relative, there they had also begun to pray in secret. A nun and an elderly priest came, and they prayed with us.

"In 1947 I was arrested. The investigator said:

"Look, you're a pilgrim, a sectarian, you don't go to church, we're going to condemn you.'

"When they condemned me for the first and second time, they showed me a journal of the Moscow Patriarchate. Look, they said, Metropolitan Sergius recognises Soviet power. They condemned me and fifteen other people from our community. We were accused of religious agitation and of being against Soviet power. The defence counsel asked grandfather Basil:

"Look, you, Basil Mikhailovich, have named John of Kronstadt, and you spoke about some kind of beasts which came out of the sea?'

"He said: 'I will not bow down to these beasts, like Karl Marx, Lenin and Stalin.'

"After a consultation the procurator said that **Basil Mikhailovich** should be shot, but they gave him 25 years, and me - 8 years. They also gave many years to the others, but one of them said:

"I'm not with them.'

"They asked him: 'Are you for Christ?'

"But he said: 'No. I ask for forgiveness.'

"Well, they still gave him 8 years, for God is not mocked.

"We were sent off in convoy. But my father had already been taken to Abetz. When Papa was being taken in the convoy he prayed and crossed himself. And **Priest Michael Rozhdestvensky**, on seeing him, said:

"I am a priest.'

"The Lord counted him worthy to be with him in the camp, and then we were looked after by him in freedom. Fr. Michael also said:

"It is wrong to go to the Soviet church because they have signed the declaration.'

"Fr. John from St. Petersburg was also in prison with us, then a True Orthodox priest from Ufa. He was **Hieromonk Mark**, he is already dead.

"Later, in freedom, we also had **Hieromonk Elias** (Kuznetsov), we went to him. In the city of Bogulma. Then the Tatars beat him up badly, and Fr. Michael went to give him Holy Unction. When I was in camp in Vorkuta, **Hieromonk Eugene** (Ushakov) was there. He was given five days in the punishment cell for confessing the Trinity there in the camp, and I was given five days in the punishment cell for not going to work on feast days... **Nicholas Agathonych**

had his beard forcibly shorn off by soldiers; in accordance with Orthodox custom, he had refused to shave it. When Stalin died, the mine boss began to weep, but the prisoners shouted: 'Hurrah! Hurrah!' My father was released in 1954, and I - after that. I found my father in Unta (Komi), he was in exile there. We went to live with relatives. Very quietly, links between the surviving Catacomb batyushkas began to be established. We were looked after by **Fr. Ignatius** in Voronezh; some of his nuns live there now. Fr. Nikita was in Tambov. There was another **Fr. Nicetas** in Kharkov. We sent our confessions to Fr. Michael. A nun went to him, and he sent back the Gifts. Fr. Nicetas of Kharkov sent the Gifts into the camp. He said:

"Commune on such-and-such a feast, and I will read the prayers of absolution here.'

"Fr. Michael Rozhdestvensky said to us:

"'While I am alive, stay with me, but then, if the Lord prolongs the time, He will send you an Orthodox priest.'

Fr. Michael said about our life before we met him:

"'Your podvig was very good, like a monk's. There was love. Only you didn't have enough priests.'

"He also said:

"'There, in the Soviet church, you will perish, but here you will be saved, because he who goes to the Soviet church from ignorance may perhaps receive grace, but he who knowingly receives communion will receive it to his condemnation. But not all those there will perish, and not all those here will be saved. At the judgement our works and our love will be examined.'

"In the 60s a commissioner came and offered me to become a deacon in the Soviet church. But of course I did not go."

73. HOLY MARTYR JOHN OF MOSCOW (+1938)

Ivan (John) Vasilyevich Popov was born on January 17, 1867 in the city of Vyazma, Smolensk province in the family of the priest of the Resurrection church, Fr. Basil Mikhailovich Popov and his wife Vera Ivanovna. On January 19 he was baptized in the Saviour-Transfiguration church by his grandfather, Protopriest Michael Popov. In 1888 Ivan Vasilyevich finished his studies at the Smolensk theological seminary, and in 1892 – at the Moscow Theological Academy. In 1893 he was appointed temporary lecturer in the faculty of patristics. He read his first lecture on Tertullian. In 1897 he defended his master's dissertation on "The Natural Moral Law (the psychological bases of morality)". In 1898 was appointed extraordinary professor in the faculty of patristics.

In 1901-1902 Ivan Vasilyevich was sent abroad to listen to lectures in theology in Berlin and Munich. Returning to Russia in 1903, he was appointed editor of "The Theological Herald". With the outbreak of the 1905 this journal was accused of liberalism, and Ivan Vasilyevich petitioned to be relieved of the duties of editor. From 1907 he became a lecturer of the historico-philological faculty of Moscow University in the department of the history of the Church. In 1910 he was appointed professor of the first faculty of patrology in connection with the introduction of a new constitution.

In 1904 Ivan Vasilyevich published "The Religious Ideal of St. Athanasius of Alexandria", and in 1908 – "St. John Chrysostom and his Enemies". In 1911-1912 there came out his book "Outline of Lectures on Patrology". In 1917 he defended his doctor's dissertation, "The Personality and Teaching of Blessed Augustine".

Ivan Vasilyevich was a member of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1917-1918 representing the Moscow Theological Academy, and was deputy president of the section on the theological academies.

He continued to teach in the Academy until its closure in 1920, after which he taught in Moscow University in the faculty of the philosophy of the Middle Ages, which was transformed into the Philosophical Investigatory Institute. In his holidays he went to the village of Samuilovo, Gzhatsk uyezd, Smolensk province, from where he corresponded with many people.

In about 1924, with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon, and with the help of Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky), Ivan Vasilyevich began to compose lists of the canonical and renovationist hierarchs of the Russian Church. It was supposed that if a Council of the Orthodox Churches would be held in 1925, he would be sent there as a delegate.

On December 10, 1924 Ivan Vasilyevich was arrested and imprisoned in Moscow. In all his years in prison he always displayed strength of spirit, bearing all privations with the courage of a confessor. Immediately after his arrest, he was interrogated about the list of hierarchs he had composed, and also about his attitude to Soviet power. He replied:

“As a Christian, I do not sympathize with the antireligious and amoral tendencies in the present order of things; the latter in part derives from the former. Besides, I do not like the absence, in the Soviet state, of certain institutions that exist in other states, like: freedom of speech, the inviolability of the personality, and so on. In general, I am a principled opponent of all dictatorship. I consider that for the resolution of social problems the evolutionary method is preferable to the revolutionary, and that the tasks of the socialist revolution would be better resolved by the first path. But in general I submit unquestioningly to Soviet power.”

As regards how his work on drawing up the list of hierarchs was carried out, he said: “I have reasons for thinking that if the question of the preparation came before the Patriarch, he would refer to me as to one of the few professors of the academy that are still alive. It seemed to me that for the work of the Council on liquidating the renovationist schism and its information on the relationship between the Church and the state such a list could be useful... In order to acquire information for the completion and correction of the list I turned to some acquaintances of mine, including **Anthony Maximovich Tyevar**, my former pupil, whom I know to be devoted to the cause of the Church, and who is interested in contemporary Church life and theological science... I asked Tyevar to collect, when he could, information for the list, which he did to a very small degree, limiting himself to passing on the necessary information in words. The list was composed, in the main, only by me: from personal information, from the press, and in a personal manner from certain people whose names I have difficulty in remembering, since this information was collected in my head in the course of several years...”

At the end of December, 1924 the investigator again asked the professor, among other things: “What did you say... concerning the means of sending the lists to the Ecumenical Council?”

“I supposed that the Patriarch would appoint me to the Ecumenical Council as a specialist in theology, and these lists would be material for me; it was not clear how I would use them. If the interests of the Church demanded it, I would publish the lists in full at the Ecumenical Council.”

“Give the name of the person to whom you have given the list for safe-keeping.”

“No, I will not say.”

After an interval, and after the death of Patriarch Tikhon, Metropolitan Peter became patriarchal locum tenens in April, 1925. At the end of April the interrogations resumed.

“Can you vouch for the fact that the lists drawn up by you are correct?”

“No, I cannot vouch for that, since I have not finished the lists. My intention was to compose them as accurately as possible. This was necessary so as not to lead the Ecumenical Council astray.”

“Do you accept that, in thinking to publicize the lists of the episcopate abroad, and emphasizing in the list the bishops that were arrested and exiled by Soviet power, without explaining why this took place, you thereby elicited a hostile attitude towards Soviet power on the part of the Capitalist states?”

“I thought to do this in the interests of the Church; how the civil authorities of the Capitalist states could interpret this did not concern me. I personally think that the official acts of the government, judicial and otherwise, cannot compromise the power. I think that the law does not lay upon citizens the obligation to keep quiet about these acts.”

On April 27 Ivan Vasilyevich was accused of being “guilty of relations with representatives of foreign states with a view to eliciting on the part of the latter intervention against Soviet power, with which aim Popov gave the latter false and incorrect information about persecutions... against the church and the episcopate on the part of Soviet power”.

On the back of the indictment Ivan Vasilyevich wrote: “I do not agree with the form of the indictment. I shall expound my objections after I have been given the opportunity to read the formulation of the cited articles in the codex of laws.

On June 19, 1925 the OGPU sentenced Ivan Vasilyevich to three years’ imprisonment, and he was sent to the Solovki camps. His pupil Anthony Tyevar was also sent there.

Protopriest Michael Polsky, who was with Ivan Vasilyevich on Solovki, wrote: “Ivan Vasilyevich was the teacher of a school of literacy in the Solovki camp... It is a separate and special task to speak of the scientific-theological work of Ivan Vasilyevich Popov. In any case, patrology as a science was first created by him... In characterizing his scholarship, Bishop Hilarion (Troitsky) said: ‘If we were to put all of our and your knowledge together, Fathers and Brothers, this would be nothing before the knowledge of Ivan Vasilyevich.’”

Ivan Vasilyevich was the author of a text sent by the Orthodox bishops to the government of the USSR and entitled, “Memorial Note of the Solovki

Bishops”, which acquired its final form after it had been discussed by imprisoned hierarchs on Solovki on June 7, 1926. The Note defined the relationship of the Church to the Communist state as follows: “In spite of the fundamental law of the Soviet constitution guaranteeing believers full freedom of conscience, religious assemblies and preaching, the Orthodox Russian Church has until now experienced very substantial restraints on Her activity and religious life. She has not received permission to open correctly functioning organs of central and diocesan administration; She cannot transfer Her activity to Her historical centre – Moscow; Her bishops are either not allowed to enter their dioceses at all, or, while allowed there, are forced to abstain from the most essential duties of their service – preaching in church, the visitation of communities recognizing their spiritual authority, sometimes even blessing services. The locum tenens of the patriarchal throne and about half the Orthodox bishops languish in prisons, in exile or in forced labour. Without denying the veracity of the facts, the government organs explain them on political grounds, accusing the Orthodox episcopate and clergy of counter-revolutionary activity in their secret thoughts, directed to the overthrow of Soviet power and the re-establishment of the old order. Already many times the Orthodox Church, beginning with the person of the reposed Patriarch Tikhon, and then in the person of his deputies, has tried in official declarations to the government to dispel the atmosphere of distrust that envelops Her.

“Their lack of success and sincere desire to put an end to the grievous misunderstandings between the Church and Soviet power, which is burdensome for the Church and needlessly complicates the State’s execution of its tasks, arouses the governing organ of the Orthodox Church, once more and with complete justification, to lay before the government the principles defining Her relationship to the State.

“The signatories of the present declaration are fully aware of how difficult the establishment of mutually reliable relations between the Church and the State in the conditions of present-day actuality are, and they do not consider it possible to be silent about it. It would not be right, it would not correspond to the dignity of the Church, and would therefore be pointless and unpersuasive, if they began to assert that between the Orthodox Church and the State power of the Soviet republics there were no discrepancies of any kind. But this discrepancy does not consist in what political suspicion wishes to see or the slander of the enemies of the Church points to. The Church is not concerned with the redistribution of wealth or in its collectivization, since She has always recognized that to be the right of the State, for whose actions She is not responsible. The Church is not concerned, either, with the political organization of power, for She is loyal with regard to the government of all the countries within whose frontiers She has members. She gets on with all forms of State structure from the eastern despotism of old Turkey to the republics of the North-American States. This discrepancy lies in the irreconcilability of the religious teaching of the Church with materialism, the official philosophy of the Communist

Party and of the government of the Soviet republics which is led by it.

“The Church recognizes spiritual principles of existence; Communism rejects them. The Church believes in the living God, the Creator of the world, the Leader of Her life and destinies; Communism denies His existence, believing in the spontaneity of the world’s existence and in the absence of rational, ultimate causes of its history. The Church assumes that the purpose of human life is in the heavenly fatherland, even if She lives in conditions of the highest development of material culture and general well-being; Communism refuses to recognize any other purpose of mankind’s existence than terrestrial welfare. The ideological differences between the Church and the State descend from the apex of philosophical observations to the region of immediately practical significance, the sphere of ethics, justice and law, which Communism considers the conditional result of class struggle, assessing phenomena in the moral sphere exclusively in terms of utility. The Church preaches love and mercy; Communism – camaraderie and merciless struggle. The Church instils in believers humility, which elevates the person; Communism debases man by pride. The Church preserves chastity of the body and the sacredness of reproduction; Communism sees nothing else in marital relations than the satisfaction of the instincts. The Church sees in religion a life-bearing force which does not only guarantee for men his eternal, foreordained destiny, but also serves as the source of all the greatness of man’s creativity, as the basis of his earthly happiness, sanity and welfare; Communism sees religion as opium, inebriating the people and relaxing their energies, as the source of their suffering and poverty. The Church wants to see religion flourish; Communism wants its death. Such a deep contradiction in the very basis of their Weltanschauungen precludes any intrinsic approximation or reconciliation between the Church and the State, as there cannot be any between affirmation and negation, between yes and no, because the very soul of the Church, the condition of Her existence and the sense of Her being, is that which is categorically denied by Communism.

“The Church cannot attain such an approximation by any compromises or concessions, by any partial changes in Her teaching or reinterpretation of it in the spirit of Communism. Pitiful attempts of this kind were made by the renovationists: one of them declared it his task to instil into the consciousness of believers the idea that Communism is in its essence indistinguishable from Christianity, and that the Communist State strives for the attainment of the same aims as the Gospel, but by its own means, that is, not by the power of religious conviction, but by the path of compulsion. Others recommended a review of Christian dogmatics in such a way that its teaching about the relationship of God to the world would not remind one of the relationship of a monarch to his subjects and would rather correspond to republican conceptions. Yet others demanded the exclusion from the calendar of saints ‘of bourgeois origin’ and their removal from church veneration. These attempts, which were obviously insincere, produced a profound feeling of indignation among believing people.

“The Orthodox Church will never stand upon this unworthy path and will never, either in whole or in part, renounce her teaching of the Faith that has been winnowed through the holiness of past centuries, for one of the eternally shifting moods of society...”

On November 4, 1927 Ivan Vasilyevich was sentenced to three years in exile, and was sent to the river Ob near Surgut. At first conditions were difficult for him, and he was not able to do scientific work, but gathered and dried mushrooms, sending them to his friends in the centre of Russia, from where he received parcels. Within a few months he was sent to another place where conditions were better and he was able to work on a composition on St. Gregory of Nyssa. With him in exile was Bishop Onuphrius (Gagalyuk), who was very loving towards him.

While in exile, Ivan Vasilyevich corresponded with Metropolitan Peter, whom he already knew well.

On December 11, 1930 Ivan Vasilyevich's term of exile came to an end, but he was not released. At the end of December a new case was drawn up against him, and on February 8 he was sentenced to deprivation of the right of domicile in a series of regions of Russia, being forced to stay in one place for three years. On the same day he was again arrested and imprisoned in Surgut on the charge of conducting anti-Soviet agitation. “While I was sitting in the Surgut house of arrest,” he wrote, “a group of peasant emigrants was arrested in Surgut in accordance with article 58-11 (the forming of an organization with the aim of overthrowing Soviet power in Surgut). I was accounted a member of this group... In March I was despatched with them to Tobolsk prison. The investigation lasted the whole summer, it came to an end at the end of September, and two weeks later I was released from prison and received three years' exile in Samarovo, Tobolsk province...” Later his place of exile became the village of Repolovo, Tyumen province.

In July, 1927 Metropolitan Sergius issued his notorious declaration, which placed the Church in submission to the God-hating atheists. The former secretary of the Holy Synod, Michael Grebinsky, who knew Metropolitan Sergius and Ivan Vasilyevich well, wrote to the latter, saying that he was unconditionally in favour of the declaration, since it gave the Church the possibility of physical survival. But for Ivan Vasilyevich it was unacceptable cunning, whatever “good” aim it pursued, and he replied to Grebinsky quite sharply: “His act is unforgiveable, and no advantages can justify it. His shameful and shameless lie is clear to any street loafer. It delivers a blow to the very essence of the cause that cannot be compensated by any external acquisitions. The weakening [of persecution] which you write about is, first, completely insignificant by comparison with the harm it inflicts, and secondly, did not appear ‘because’ but ‘in spite of it’. I don't know what form my opposition will take, but the question of my

relationship to S. is completely clear. He is Sarzis [a personage of Armenian mythology who took on the functions of a god of wind and storm], a collaborator and accomplice."

Although this letter was personal, Grebinsky made several copies of it and began to send them to people who did not agree with the anti-sergianist stand of Ivan Vasilyevich, including Metropolitan Sergius himself and Bishop Seraphim (Mescheryakov) of Stavropol. One of the copies was found on Grebinsky during a search by the OGPU, and although it was not clear from the signature who had written it, he said that it was written by Ivan Vasilyevich. Later Ivan Vasilyevich was very closely interrogated about this letter.

On returning from exile in 1934, Ivan Vasilyevich settled in Lyubertsy, near Moscow, and re-established contacts with his surviving acquaintances and pupils. Meetings often took place at the flat of Archbishop Bartholomew (Remov), who invited several hierarchs who had arrived for sessions of the Synod. In June and again in September, 1934 Ivan Vasilyevich met there with Metropolitan Arsenius (Stadnitsky) and Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov), and discussed church matters with them. In February, 1935 Metropolitan Anatolius (Grisyuk) was also there.

According to a witness given under interrogation by Archbishop Bartholomew, at these meetings "they said that the Russian Church would perish. Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov) was shocked by the behaviour of Metropolitan Sergius, who, instead of defending the interests of the Church as behoved her head, was conducting a policy of appeasement in relation to Soviet power, and thereby aiding her destruction. The interlocutors agreed with Archbishop Nicholas' thesis. In conversation it became clear that Popov was corresponding with Metropolitan Arsenius and sent letters to him in Tashkent, signing them, for reasons of secrecy, as if he were his nephew."

In February, 1935 twenty-two people were arrested with Archbishop Bartholomew. On February 21, soon after the meeting with the hierarchs, Ivan Vasilyevich was also arrested. He was taken to the isolator at the Lubyanka, and then to Butyrki prison. On February 26 the interrogator asked him:

"Where did the meeting with Metropolitan Arsenius take place in 1934?"

"I was at his dacha in Pushkino."

"I mean the other meeting with Arsenius."

"The other meeting took place in the flat of Archbishop Remov in All Saints in the autumn of 1934."

“Who was there also?”

“Besides Metropolitan Arsenius, Archbishop Bartholomew and myself, there was Archbishop Nicholas.”

“Was the meeting agreed on beforehand?”

“Yes.”

“What questions were discussed then and in 1935?”

“No questions were discussed. The conversations were purely everyday.”

“I insist again on truthful replies. I have evidence that these meetings were in essence conferences at which the position of the Church in the USSR was discussed.”

“I deny that.”

“How can you deny that when at these conferences, in which you took part, all those present agreed on the destructiveness of Metropolitan Sergius’ policy for the Church?”

“I repeat: we did not touch on these questions.”

At this the interrogation came to an end. On April 26 Ivan Vasilyevich was sentenced to five years’ exile in Krasnoyarsk region. He arrived at the village of Volokovskoye, Pirovsky district, Krasnoyarsk region on November 28, 1935. Later he was transferred to the village of Ignatovo in the same district and settled in the house of a shepherd. The house consisted of two halves. Ivan Vasilyevich was given a separate room, and the wife of the master of the house prepared his food. In exile he had many books sent to him by his friends, so to some extent he was able to continue scientific work. But persecutions recommenced, and on October 7, 1937 he was arrested and imprisoned in Yeniseisk.

The owner of the house in which he had lived, and one of the exiles by the name of Violovich, witnessed under interrogation that Ivan Vasilyevich had expressed anti-Soviet opinions. On October 12 Ivan Vasilyevich himself was interrogated:

“Which of your acquaintances lives abroad, give their names, surnames and addresses.”

“Of my acquaintances abroad, for example, my former colleague from the academy, Metropolitan Eulogius Georgievich, lives in Paris; Ivan Alexandrovich Ilyin, former professor of the Moscow Theological

Academy, lives in Switzerland; and Paul Ivanovich Novgorodtsev lives in Prague. I have no links with them."

"How do you know these people, their addresses, and where they live?"

"Someone told me where Novgorodtsev and Ilyin live, or I heard it in Moscow, I don't remember exactly now. As regards Metropolitan Eulogius Georgievich, I knew from the correspondence he conducted with Metropolitan Sergius, the deputy of the patriarchal locum tenens. I know Sergius from the academy, at that time he was a professor of the Theological Academy, and then inspector. Besides, I saw him in 1934 in Moscow."

"Did you have conversations on political subjects?"

"The conversations were about our former work and studies. The whole conversation was devoted to reminiscences of the life of the academy. There was also talk about the expedition to the North Pole. I also had a conversation with Vilovich on this subject: I said that 'they devote too much attention in the newspapers to the flying expedition to the North Pole. They all write one and the same thing, so it becomes boring to read.'"

"The investigation has evidence that you and Vilovich conducted agitation of a counter-revolutionary character on the question of the the Stakhanovite methods of labour. Tell the investigation about this."

"I have never been interested in the Stakhanovite methods of labour, since they are far from my interests, and it is boring for me to read and talk about this. I am occupied in abstract science."

"The investigation demands that you give a truthful statement on this question."

"I tell only the truth and can add nothing more."

"The investigation has established that you expressed counter-revolutionary views on the question of the new constitution, in particular on the repressions. Tell us what happened."

"As regards the new constitution, I said that together with the confirmation of the constitution there should be a change in the criminal code in the direction of a softening of repressions. This is now fulfilled in part by the constitution, but it is not completely put into action in all the articles. On the national question I said that there have been changes in part of the development of national culture. As regards counter-revolutionary agitation, I did not do this."

"According to the statements of Pavlova and others it has been established that you expressed dissatisfaction with the politics of the

Communist Party and Soviet power, and that in the Soviet Union religion is supposedly annihilated by force. Do you confirm this?"

"I do not remember when or where, but I said that religion in the Soviet Union has been placed in a very difficult position, that there are still many religious people who would like to pray in church, but in view of the large taxes they are not able to open a church. I did not conduct any other conversations of a counter-revolutionary character."

"Were there conversations on the question of unemployment, and what have you said on this score up to the present day?"

"Yes, there was a conversation on unemployment, and I said personally from myself that, on my return from exile in 1934, I could not find work for a long time, and that later I found work, but with big breaks. But such a situation can take place both after release from exile and now. I said nothing about unemployment in the Soviet Union."

"The investigation has evidence that you uttered slanderous words against the leaders of the party and the Soviet government. Tell us what elicited this."

"I don't remember any such conversations. Perhaps I said something about the suppression of criticism - much has been written about that in the newspapers in recent times."

"The investigation insists that you give sincere statements with regards to the slanders against the leaders of the party and the Soviet government."

"I said that I do not now remember any such conversations and cannot offer any clarification on this question."

"The investigation has established that in relation to the recent trial of the eight Fascist spies you expressed pity for them, and spoke about the instability of the Communist Party and the divisions in it."

"There was a conversation about the shooting of these eight men, but I did not pity them. But as regards the instability and dividedness of the party, that is true, insofar as three fractions have been formed in the party: the Trotskyites, the Zinovievites and the Bukharinites. It is clear that with such differences of opinion the party cannot be monolithic."

On November 6, as he wound up the case, the investigator summoned Ivan Vasilyevich to an interrogation and asked him: "Did you work in the Theological Academy and prepare candidates for the priesthood?"

"Yes, during the thirty years of my service in the Theological Academy I mainly prepared and educated clergy, since the aim of the Academy was to

produce bishops and priests.”

On December 2 there was a confrontation with a false witness, who confirmed all the statements he had given earlier, after which the investigator asked the professor: “Do you confirm the statements of the witness?”

“No, I do not confirm the witnesses, and do not consider myself guilty.”

When they had taken away the witness, the investigator again asked Ivan Vasilyevich: “Do you admit your guilt with regard to the charges brought against you?”

“I do not admit myself to be guilty with regard to the charge that has been read out to me in the decree.”

On December 3, 1937 the investigation came to an end. Ivan Vasilyevich celebrated his birthday in Yeniseisk prison. On February 5, 1938 a troika of the NKVD sentenced him to be shot. He was shot on February 8 at 9 p.m., on the eve of the feast of St. John Chrysostom, whose name, it seems, he bore.

One of the witnesses of Ivan Vasilyevich’s life on Solovki wrote: “In his secular calling Ivan Vasilyevich was a true monk, celibate and virginal, a humble worker, abstinent in food and drink, who prayed piously to God. All those who knew him are witnesses of this. Having the gift of the grace of God, ‘the word of knowledge’ (I Corinthians 12.8), he multiplied his talent by his labours tenfold, and by them served the Church with great benefit, and glorified her by his martyric death.”

74. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS SERGIUS (1930), NICHOLAS (+1930) AND JOHN (+1938) OF PETROGRAD

Protopriest Sergius Andreyevich Tikhomirov was born on May 30, 1872 in the village of Globitsy, Peterhof uyezd, in a priestly family. He went to the St. Petersburg theological seminary (1893) and from 1895 to 1897 worked as overseer in the Alexander Nevsky theological school. He was ordained to the priesthood at the beginning of 1896 and was sent to the distant Nikolsky church in the village of Kozlov Bereg (according to another source, Klopiny), Gdov uyezd, but a year later was transferred to the Trinity church in the village of Kropitsy, Peterhof uyezd, where he worked until 1905, when he was again transferred to Petersburg, being appointed to the orphans church of St. Tikhon of Zadonsk on Krestovsky island (according to another source, the church of the Alexandrovsky orphanage). In this church there prayed not only the orphans and the servants of the orphanage, but also local inhabitants, because there was no other church on the island. Here the young priest served for almost three years, until 25 (or 24) September, 1908, when the diocesan administration appointed him superior of another orphanage church - that of St. Alexander Nevsky of the Petrovsky society for aid to the poor. The society's church was the church of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple in Vvedenskaya street, Petrograd side. Fr. Sergius not only served here, but also taught the Law of God in the neighbouring schools. In 1915 he was raised to the rank of protopriest.

In September, 1916 the refuge with its church was temporarily closed, but batyushka continued to serve in other churches, also conducting talks in hospitals. During this period he began to acquire a reputation as a spiritual father. Among his spiritual children was the noted Russian philosopher and religious thinker, the professor of Petrograd University and polytechnic institute, S.A. Askoldov. Fr. Sergius was an ascetic, a remarkable preacher, and a great venerator of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky). He often visited Optina desert and was in spiritual communion with the Optina elders Joseph, Anatolius, Nectarius and Dositheus (Elder Nectarius' spiritual father). One of those who knew him said that he was "strict to his spiritual children when he noticed in them even faint signs of self-justification. He was exceptionally tender, sensitive, attentive and loving if he noticed even a hint of despondency or despair." He was called an "ascetic" and "elder", like Fr. Michael Prudnikov, with whom he was friendly. He was of medium height, very thin, with an iconographer's "Byzantine" face, with eyes that were at the same time strict and kind.

On July 19, 1919 Fr. Sergius began serving again in the church of the Entrance to the Mother of God on Vvedenskaya. From September, 1922 to January, 1924 Fr. Sergius lived on money given him by parishioners. Life was difficult - his wife, Matushka Eudocia Pavlovna did not work, while his son Ivan (born 1898), who had fought as a corporal in the White armies, went into hiding under a false name, working in a sugar factory. Only his daughter Julia

(born 1897) earned money, working as a typist in a Soviet institution. In 1923 the Bolsheviks gave him a conditional year's sentence "for distributing appeals" in defence of the Church and the Faith. At the end of the year he was made dean and confessor for repentant renovationists. In 1926 he became superior of the church of St. John the Almsgiver attached to a refuge for the blind on the corner of Bolshaya Zelenina street and Geslerovsky prospect, on the Petrograd side. After the seizure of this church by the renovationist Krasnitsky, he became second priest in the church of St. Alexis the Man of God on Geslerovsky prospect. The first priest of that church was Fr. Paul Vinogradov.

Fr. Sergius did not fear to participate in the illegal brotherhood of St. Seraphim of Sarov, which was led by his spiritual son, I.M. Andreyevsky, and which united the church-oriented intelligentsia and youth of Petrograd. On January 15, 1927 he served a moleben at the founding of the brotherhood, and attended its meetings; his daughter Julia delivered reports at them and paid for this with exile.

After Metropolitan Sergius' declaration in 1927, Fr. Sergius immediately united himself to the group of protestors who rebuked the treachery of Metropolitan Sergius and those with him. "Having received this declaration as a dean from Bishop Yarushevich," he wrote, "I read it through at home and found that through this declaration Metropolitan Sergius was merging in soul with the antichristian authorities. I, as a True Orthodox, cannot accept the joys of Soviet power as my joys and the successes of Soviet power as my successes... for the salvation of True Orthodoxy it is necessary to choose a path that counters the intentions of Metropolitan Sergius to submit the Church to the antichristian atheist authorities."

Right up to his arrest, Fr. Sergius served in the cathedral church of the "Josephites", the church of the Saviour on the blood. Here, said Hieromonk Gabriel, "were concentrated all the best forces of the clergy, who were ready to give all their strength and their life for the purity of Orthodoxy, which was being trampled upon... They were tried people, always able to take up the reins of administration and lead the oppressed Russian people to a peaceful life and prosperity..."

In the words of Protopriest B.M. Veryuzhsky, the superior of the cathedral, "Sergius played a prominent and central role..., using the great trust displayed in him by Archbishop Demetrius... He received for confession clergy coming from various places in the USSR,... so as to be assured of the genuineness of their desire to be in communion with us." Fr. Sergius took part in all the most important decisions and unwaveringly supported the actions of Metropolitan Joseph and Archbishop Demetrius. His spiritual father was Bishop Sergius (Druzhinin), who led the Petrograd Josephites after the arrest of Vladyka Demetrius. The latter said that Fr. Sergius and Fr. Nicholas Prozorov were among his "closest assistants".

Fr. Sergius was arrested for the first time in 1928, then after some months released for some reason, and then arrested again in November 23 (or 28), 1929 in connection with the Leningrad branch of the True Orthodox Church. In prison (which was located in the Petrograd House of Preliminary Imprisonment in Shpalernaya street), Fr. Sergius behaved with exemplary courage. He fearlessly denounced atheism in spite of threats and beatings.

In the course of a search of the flat of the cathedral warden, Fr. Sergius was found with the "Acts of the Council in Sremsky Karlovtsy", with which he fiercely confessed his full agreement in front of the chekists. "To every true believer," he said to the investigator, "I told my ideas and called on them to follow my example..., so that they might by all means multiply, copy and reprint the appeals that were appearing against the declaration and the orders of Metropolitan Sergius." Not only were these leaflets multiplied, but also materials of the Russian Church Abroad, to demonstrate that "the Josephites are not alone, that behind them stand such authoritative church figures as [Archbishop] Theophan [of Poltava], [Metropolitan] Anthony Khrapovitsky [of Kiev] and others."

On August 3, 1930 Fr. Sergius was convicted in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 and sentenced to be shot. Not long before his execution he asked his wife to bring him fresh underwear and a new ryasa, and at his last meeting with his wife he was so full of light and joy that he infected her, too, with his spiritual exaltation, calm and joy. For nine months he was in solitary confinement. He was shot together with Fr. Nicholas Prozorov on the night before the feast of the Transfiguration, August 6/19 - according to another source, on August 20, and according to yet a third, on August 8/21, 1930, at eleven o'clock in the evening - in the basement of the prison on Shpalernaya.

Protopriest Nicholas Fyodorovich Prozorov was born on May 6/19, 1897 in the village of Pokrovskoye-Borisenkovskoye, Nizhnelomsky uyezd, Penza province. He came from a clerical family and entered the Penza seminary, but left it in 1914 after four classes to become a cadet in the Alexandrovsky military school (according to another source, the Mikhailovsky artillery school) in Moscow and defend the fatherland. After passing a shortened course, within a year the seminarist was already at the front in the rank of second lieutenant, and was wounded four times.

The revolution found Prozorov as commander of a battalion in the rank of staff-captain. When the army collapsed, the young officer returned to his native Penza and married a local girl, Nadezhda Vladimirovna, thinking to lead a quiet family life. He was completely loyal to Soviet power, and was even appointed head of a unit of the city police and military instructor.

But then, in 1918, came the "Red Terror". In Prozorov's own words, "I was arrested as a former officer and imprisoned. There were 450 officers in the prison, of whom **150** were shot during the escape of the criminals. They were

led out 10 at a time and were shot there in the courtyard of the prison... I vowed that if I escaped shooting I would devote my life to God."

The vow of the future priest produced a miracle. Once he suggested to the prisoners that they read aloud the akathist to St. Nicholas the Wonderworker. Those officers who read it were delivered from execution the next morning, while all those who refused were shot. Prozorov remained another six weeks in the Penza cheka, and was then released.

In 1919 Fr. Nicholas was ordained to the priesthood by the future hieromartyr, Archbishop John (Pommer) of Latvia, who was at that time Bishop of Penza, and served in the villages near Penza.

In 1924 he was again arrested and was in prison for three weeks.

In 1927 he went to Petrograd to complete his theological studies. Settling with his wife and three children on the edge of the city, on the right bank of the Neva, in the village of Klochki, he entered a school for pastors, and then undertook higher theological studies. He was appointed to serve in the church of the coenobium of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, which was not far from his place of residence. His spiritual father was Fr. Theodore Andreyev from the St. Sergius cathedral, a man of great mind and firmly Orthodox convictions. Very probably it was under the influence of Fr. Theodore that the young priest entered into opposition to Metropolitan Sergius.

Since the coenobium church remained in the possession of the Josephites, Vladyka Demetrius transferred Fr. Nicholas to the St. Panteleimon church of the Alexander Oshevensky monastery podvorye near the 'Piskarevka' platform of the Irinovskaya railway.

At this time, as Fr. Michael Polsky relates, "something remarkable happened to him. One of the most powerful communists in Leningrad came to him.

"Listen, pope, I've fallen in love with this beauty!"

"He pointed to the girl who had come with him and who did indeed deserve that title.

"She doesn't want to go with me unless a pope ties the knot. Your church is in the woods, no one will find out.' (Communists were excluded from the party if they had a church marriage.)

"Fr. Nicholas agreed and suggested that they first go to confession with him, if only on the day before the wedding.

"You must be joking, pope,' said the all-powerful communist, disturbed. 'I'll indulge the whim of the girl I love, but I don't recognize any confession. Marry us immediately. I'll pay you as much as you want, more than you get in a whole

year. After all, I've got my own wife and children (he had three children). As long as I live, no one will arrest you. If by chance they arrest you, let your wife run to my wife, and they'll release you in a moment. You know, I'm a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.'

"But Fr. Nicholas refused to marry them without confession, in spite of the pleas and threats of his terrible guest and the tears of his beautiful companion. And he and his family remained in poverty, deprived of the possibility of gaining an all-powerful intercessor with weight in the Kremlin. He did not reveal his name to me, but said that it was known throughout Russia."

Protopriest Basil Veryuzhsky praised Fr. Nicholas, calling him "a prominent activist in the organization..., a close advisor of Archbishop Demetrius..., an energetic worker." In the words of Hieromonk Gabriel (Vladimirov): "The right hand of our leader, Bishop Demetrius, was Nicholas Prozorov. He was not only his secretary..., but also his advisor. Without Prozorov and the nun Anastasia Kulikova nothing was undertaken." They ran Archbishop Demetrius' affairs and enjoyed his confidence. In the words of Fr. Nicholas himself, "on the instructions of Bishop Demetrius I wrote resolutions on uniting clergy of the USSR to our group, carrying out all kinds of commissions."

On November 28, 1929 Fr. Nicholas was arrested in connection with "the case of the Leningrad branch of the True Orthodox Church". During interrogations by the investigator A. Makarov, the chekists' "specialist on religious affairs", Fr. Nicholas behaved with dignity and honour, declaring that he did not commemorate the authorities because "the laws of the Church forbid this,... and this is not necessary to Soviet power - on the contrary, it discredits it in the eyes of the people". However, he would agree to commemorate it "if Vladyka really wishes this and gives a declaration to this effect by a special order." But he expressed the hope that nothing of the sort would happen.

The 33-year-old Fr. Nicholas Prozorov was of medium height, dark skinned, with rather crude features, dark eyes and hair, and a small beard. He was a simple man, not a learned intellectual, but with a deep faith and firm in his confession; and thus he believed that in joyfully accepting martyrdom he opened for himself entry into the Kingdom of heaven.

Professor S. Nesterov, who was arrested at the same time as Archbishop Demetrius and Fr. Sergius Tikhomirov, writes: "In February, 1930, in cell number 9 of the House of Preliminary Imprisonment on Voinova (formerly Shpalernaya) street No. 25, I met a ship-building engineer from the Baltic factory. Depressed because of my arrest, I received from him both spiritual support and prayer together during the first days of my imprisonment.

"At the end of February they brought a wanderer into our cell. This uneducated invalid, who had suffered wounds 25 years before as a private during the siege of Port Arthur, displayed a rare firmness and fiercely condemned Metropolitan Sergius' actions. Then they brought Fr. Peter B. to us

from solitary confinement. Uniting myself with both of these with all my soul, I broke forever with the hierarchy of Metropolitan Sergius and joined the small church whose pastor was Fr. Peter.

"On April 10, 1930, our cell was handed over to the 'workers' (arrested men who worked on sawing wood in the prison courtyard), and all four of us were transferred into cell no. 21, where 80-100 people were lying on 20 cots (in the last cell there had been 35 people for 14 cots). There I met Fathers John and Nicholas, one other aged, 75-year-old protopriest, Fr. Nicholas Zagorovsky, who had been brought from Kharkov in connection with the affair of Metropolitan Sergius, and the former Synodal functionary Shenets. With them I attended Paschal Mattins on April 4/17 and spent the summer.

"With us was Fr. Alexander Tikhomirov, the brother of Fr. Sergius, who was in cell no. 22 and was suffering terribly from heart attacks, and two commanders from the regular armed forces, who joined the same group.

"At that time Vicar-Bishop Demetrius of Gdov, who headed the faithful flock in Petrograd was suffering in solitary isolation. I met him once when I, together with other prisoners and accompanied by a guard, was carrying out a heavy bin with rubbish. Vladyka was returning from a 10-minute walk. Protopriests Beryuzhsky and Sergius Tikhomirov were in solitary confinement...

"The Fathers who grew old during their time in this cell occupied a little corner where they slept together and in the morning served obyednitsa, in the evening - Vespers, and on the eve of a feast - the all-night Vigil. They sat in a row on stools and were joined by two or three laymen. We listened to the whole service which was pronounced softly from memory. The other prisoners pretended not to notice this...

"Here I spent my first Pascha in prison. Although I was warned by a good friend of mine not to go to the 'holy corner', for which I could easily get some years added to my sentence, I still could not resist, and I went there when Fr. Nicholas began to sing the opening Paschal hymn: *Thy Resurrection, O Christ Saviour, angels hymn in heaven; vouchsafe to us on earth with pure heart to glorify Thee*. Other priests seconded him, and thus we had the whole joyous service. As I returned to my mattress I saw how many of the prisoners were still crossing themselves, tears streaming down their unshaven cheeks. Everyone in the cell had carefully followed our service in silence.

"In the morning of August 4/17 we were all, as always, summoned into the corridor, ... where we were told to sign that we had read our sentences: Fr. John Nikitin, the engineer K. and the wanderer of God - ten years in the camps; Fr. Peter B. - 5 years; Fr. Nicholas Zagorovsky - 3 years; the official Shenets - 3 years' exile in Kazakhstan.

"The next morning during our walk we learned by a complicated system of signalling that Bishop Demetrius at the age of 75 had received 10 years in

isolation.; Fr. Basil Veryuzhsky and Mother Kira - 10 years in the camps; Fr. Alexander Tikhomirov - 5 years; the others I do not remember.

"I will note that an uneducated, 70-year-old metal worker... who had declared himself to be a monarchist received 10 years.

"Only Fr. Sergius Tikhomirov, who was in solitary isolation, and our fellow-prisoner Fr. Nicholas Prozorov, were not called out for the announcement of the sentence on the morning of August 4/17 [They had been condemned to be shot on August 3, but had to wait until August 21 for the carrying out of their sentences.]

"On the next day all those who had been sentenced were led out in convoy and said goodbye to us. Fr. Nicholas did not know whether to rejoice or be sad. If they had declared him innocent, then they would probably have released him. But everything became clearer - there was another reason why they had as it were forgotten about him before the departure of his comrades.

"The whole of August 5/18, the eve of the Transfiguration, I tried not to depart from Fr. Nicholas, who immediately felt lonely after the departure of all his comrades.

"Of the hundreds of prisoners, the majority did not understand what it was all about, while others thought that it was a sign of his release. Alone, he read the all-vigil service for the Transfiguration from memory, while I listened. The other laymen who usually listened had already been scattered to other camps (the composition of the cell was constantly changing). He took out of the pocket of his cassock a photo of his three daughters and, tenderly looking at them, said to me:

"I believe that the Lord will not abandon these orphans in the terrible world of the Bolsheviks.'

"At nine o'clock the usual preparations for the night began. Those who had been in the cell longest lay down on the cots, the others on the tables and benches formed from stools, while the newcomers lay under the tables and cots. My cot was by the window, Fr. Nicholas' - by the grating which separated us from the corridor. When everyone had lain down, the officer on duty appeared and stood in the corridor by the door of the grating:

"Is there a Prozorov here?'

"There is - I am he,' said Fr. Nicholas, bounding from his cot.

"Name and patronymic?' asked the officer, checking with his list.

"Nicholas Kiriakovich,' replied batyushka, dressing.

"Get ready with your things.'

"Fr. Nicholas understood everything. We had often observed that the duty officer called people out for execution in this way.

"Fr. Nicholas quickly dressed and packed a straw box with his prison 'property'. I lay at the other end of the cell and could not get to him across the cell, which was blocked with tables, benches, cots and bodies lying everywhere. But from the lighted corner where he was packing I could clearly see his courageous face surrounded by a black beard and lit up by some unearthly joy (he was 33 years old, like the Saviour when He ascended Golgotha). The whole cell became quiet and watched Fr. Nicholas. With a happy smile Fr. Nicholas looked at all of us and quickly went to the grating, which the officer opened for him. On the threshold he turned to us and said loudly:

"The Lord is calling me to Him, and now I will be with Him.'

"In silence, shaken by the greatness of soul of this modest pastor, we all saw how the grating closed after him and with a quick pace he went in front of the officer. In a whisper we all began to speak about Fr. Nicholas with deep feeling. Not only the believers, but also the atheists: the Trotskyites and Mensheviks and bandits and just plain Soviet rogues were inspired with reverence and deep feeling by his firm faith.

"On the next visiting day, the prisoners who returned from meeting their relatives told us that the priests' wives had been informed of the sentences against their husbands."

Fr. Nicholas was shot on August 21, 1930. Two letters from Metropolitan Joseph to Fr. Nicholas have been preserved.

Protopriest John Grigoryevich Nikitin was born in March, 1880 in the village of Luzhno, Demyansky uyezd, Novgorod province. He went to theological school in Staraya Russa. In 1901 he was ordained to the priesthood. He was married to Maria Petrovna, and had two daughters, Barbara and Helena. In 1907 he graduated from the St. Petersburg Theological Academy with the degree of candidate of theology, and on October 1, 1907 was ordained to the priesthood and served at the Resurrection church at the Warsaw station. On August 11, 1908 he was appointed rector of the SS. Constantine and Helen house church of the gymnasium of the Imperial Philanthropic society until its closure in August, 1918. In 1917 he was a member of the diocesan administration and diocesan missionary council. In October, 1918 he was transferred to the Ascension church in Petrograd, and in 1926 - to the Trinity Izmailovsky cathedral, which he left in the second half of 1927 because of his disagreement with Metropolitan Sergius. Before 1928 he was twice arrested for anti-soviet agitation. He described the 1927 declaration as "of doubtful morality" and as having "a Jesuitical character". From January, 1928 he served in the cathedral of the Saviour on the Blood, at the invitation of the rector, Fr.

Basil Veryuzhsky, and was a close assistant of Archbishop Demetrius. Fr. Basil said: "Nikitin was our tribune. He brought the people with him. His sermons often acquired an agitational character. He loved to speak about Metropolitan Joseph, crowning him and the whole of our organization with the aura of confession." He used to take the confessions of those who came from the Ukraine and other provinces before they were joined to the True Orthodox Church. Thanks to him, the small Kikerinsky skete joined the True Orthodox Church, and he probably influenced **Hieromonk Paphnutius** (Akinshin) and the **nuns** of the Dormition monastery in Vyritsa (where he lived in the summer in a dacha with his family) to break with Metropolitan Sergius, for which they were all arrested and sent to the camps at the beginning of the 1930s. On November 28 (or 29), 1929 he was arrested in his flat in connection with the affair of the Petrograd branch of the True Orthodox Church. During his interrogation he said that Metropolitan Sergius' declaration was "completely incompatible", in its falseness and flattery, "with the truth and holiness of the Holy Orthodox Church, as the Pillar and Ground of the Truth". On August 3 he was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 11 to ten years in the labour camps. In his last letters he gave his family to know that he was preparing for death. He was sent to Solovki, arriving on September 24, and then to the White Sea - Baltic Canal camp (Kem), where he died (shot?) on November 4, 1938. He was buried in a fraternal grave at Kuzemsa station in Karelia. According to another source, he was buried in Priozersk next to the podvorye of the Valaam monastery.

75. HOLY HIEROMARTYR NICHOLAS, BISHOP OF AKTAR
(+1939)

and those with him

Bishop Nicholas, in the world Vladimir Vasilyevich Parfenov, was born on June 20, 1879 in Saratov in a family of a tradesman, Basil and his wife Catherine (according to another source, they belonged to the nobility). He was educated at home. As a result of a fall from a chair caused by the inattention of his wet-nurse, he injured his spine. The nurse did not tell anyone about it, and when a hump appeared it was too late to do anything about it, and he became a hunchback; his hunch was in front and behind. Because of this deformity, when he was already a bishop, he humbly asked people to call him "little batyushka".

Vladimir's mother was a deeply religious woman, and played a large role in the education of the five children in the Orthodox faith. Often in the evenings Vladimir would gather together all the children, ask for a stool from the nurse, lock the room so that none of the adults could enter, and ask them to pray. He himself, having made a censer out of the lampada, would walk with them around the stool, representing a Divine service.

After the death of his father in 1885, Vladimir at first studied with teachers at home, but then went to primary school.

Vladimir graduated from Kazan University and Theological Academy. He had a sister whose son, an officer in the Civil War, died in captivity near Zhitomir.

Inspired by the preaching of Bishop Hermogen (Dolganey), who had been appointed to the Saratov diocese in 1903, and later received the crown of martyrdom, Vladimir entered the Saviour-Transfiguration monastery in Saratov on January 26, 1906, at the age of 27, and was given the obedience of a tailor in the St. Alexis skete, which was also the hierarchical dacha (from 1911 the skete was renamed as the Nicholas-Trinity skete). People's first impression of him was of someone who was weak. But this impression turned out to be false, and soon the guilelessness and meekness of the young novice won the hearts of many inhabitants of the skete.

After some time Bishop Hermogen, being the superior of the Saratov Saviour-Transfiguration monastery, tonsured his spiritual son into the mantia and called him Nicholas in honour of St. Nicholas of Myra, the wonderworker. Under the spiritual direction of Bishop Hermogen and Elder Adrian, the humble skete-dweller perfected himself in the study of the Church services and the Holy Scriptures, and also immersed himself in the reading of the patristic literature and the practice of writing verses.

In 1911 Bishop Hermogen was exiled to the Zhirovitsky monastery for resisting G.E. Rasputin. An unheard-of wave of slander against those clergy

who shared the views of their exiled archpastor poured through the diocese. By this time Monk Nicholas had become clairvoyant to such a degree that other monks tried to avoid the hunchback. He was accused of being a false elder, of collecting large donations from wealthy and eminent Christians of the city, and of being close to Bishop Hermogen. After an illness he became visibly older – his face became puffy, and his hunch grew larger, it was as if it was growing into the ground. To the end of his life he never let his walking-stick out of his hands. He was forbidden to communicate with parishioners, and his friends and venerators became the elks who lived in the wood on Bare Mountain, and whom he fed with salt.

Soon, so as not to sit around doing nothing, he took upon himself an obedience – every Sunday morning he would serve at pannikhidas in the church of the Resurrection of the Lord in the city's Resurrection cemetery, and collected alms for the skete. Besides this, Brother Nicholas took upon himself (on his own initiative) a duty that was unheard of in the Saratov area and not practised by the Church at the beginning of the 20th century – to pray for suicides according to the order of prayer established by St. Leonid of Optina.

Sorrowing over his beloved city and the people who lived in it, he no longer had the right to be silent as before, hiding in the depths of his heart the gift of wonderworking that he had received, and he took upon himself the exploit of eldership, so that the people of the Saratov land, of all ranks and conditions, should live together as one big loving family...

In the autumn of 1914 he foretold to his spiritual son, N.P. Rufimsky, that the roof of the panorama "The torments of the Christians in the circus of Nero", which was situated in the centre of Saratov, would collapse, which it did on January 15, 1915. He also said: "Soon the whole of Russia will be like this circus."

On November 10, 1915 Bishop Palladius (Dobronravov) of Saratov and Tsaritsyn, who knew Fr. Nicholas well from the time of Bishop Hermogen's rule, ordained him to the rank of hieromonk and appointed him spiritual father of the coenobitical monastery attached to the church of the Passion of the Lord in Saratov. It was as if the city came to life, for it had found within itself a Spirit-bearer who constantly united himself and others with Christ. Among the parishioners could be seen venerable protopriests and swindlers, professional prostitutes and worldly ladies, thieves of all kinds, as well as despairing people who had lost all hope of salvation and came to the elder for spiritual support...

Fr. Nicholas not only knew the past and the future of every person whom he saw for the first time, but also saw what he was thinking about and what he was dreaming about in the innermost depths of his heart. But if someone came to him with evil thoughts, thinking to mock the grace of the Holy Spirit that rested on him, he would play the fool and make up proverbs of his own creation wrapped up in strange words. Moreover, he asked all his parishioners without exception to call him "little batyushka".

On every day of Bright Week he would go round the work-houses and hospitals bringing Paschal offerings that he had received from wealthy citizens. He would also visit the crippled soldiers (this was during the war) and the drunkards. Many who suffered from alcoholism and turned to the prayers of the elder were healed of their drunkenness.

From the Volga region, Kiev, Moscow and other cities people would come to him for advice. There are many witnesses of his clairvoyance, the power of his prayer and profound discernment. When people would come to him from various places, and among them were some newcomers, he would usually put the visitors on one side of a table, while on the other side he put toys – cocks, chicken, parrots, cats, dogs and other birds and animals. And he would talk with the birds and animals. And in all these conversations the visitors received answers to their unexpressed and hidden questions and thoughts.

According to the witness of his novice, Alexander Mikheev (the future priest of the Holy Trinity cathedral in Saratov), “they would bring people suffering from all kinds of mental or other kinds of mysterious illnesses, and put them near the block. Fr. Nicholas would go out to them, he would not refuse. He would talk with the sick people and their relatives, pray fervently, invoke healing of the illness, reassure, instil faith and hope. He healed three or four people in my presence, and he eased the condition of many others, as I have been told.”

In 1917 Fr. Nicholas and Alexander Makheev made a pilgrimage round the holy places of Russia. They visited the Kremlin cathedrals of Moscow, the Donskoj, Novodevichi, Strastnoj, Simonov and Danilov monasteries, the Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, New Jerusalem, Optina Desert, the Alexander Nevsky Lavra and Valaam.

In 1918, following the anathema against the Bolsheviks contained in the Epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, and not wishing to enter into relations with those “outcasts of the human race”, Fr. Nicholas went into seclusion in his native SS. Nicholas and Tikhon skete. The young priest Fr. Constantine Mikhailovich Soloviev (+1953), who had just graduated from the Kazan Theological Academy, returned to Saratov and became the priest at the skete and the spiritual son of Fr. Nicholas, his humble servant, who carried out the sacraments in accordance with the needs of the spiritual children of the clairvoyant elder.

In 1920 Fr. Nicholas met the future Bishop of Saratov Benjamin (Milov) and amazed him by his clairvoyance. He foretold the name he would be received into monasticism and told him to go to the Danilov monastery, the future stronghold of the Catacomb Church, giving him the following prayer rule: “As a monk, apply yourself to the Jesus prayer: 300 Jesus prayers and 300 Mother of Gods. My elder was Fr. Adrian, a man of lofty spiritual life. He so loved the Jesus prayer that he heard nothing worldly and did not enter into vain

conversations. If someone would start talking about something vain in his presence, he would incline his head and go to sleep. But immediately someone started talking about something important, he would wake up from his supposed sleep and display the most profound wisdom. The Lord consoles monks in many ways. I will tell a story about myself. When I was being tonsured, a dove separated from the hand of the person who was handing me the cross and flew into my mouth. For a whole year after this I felt great sweetness in my heart."

When the first closures, defilements and destructions of the churches of Saratov were taking place, Fr. Nicholas comforted his flock with the following prophetic words: "The time is not far distant when the Christians everywhere will spend their last money on restoring and rebuilding the churches of God..."

In 1920 Fr. Nicholas was raised to the rank of archimandrite. In 1922, as many priests were being arrested and there was no bishop in Saratov, Archimandrite Nicholas was elected to the rank of bishop by an assembly of laymen at the Cross church in the Hierarchical house, and on March 17, 1923 he was secretly consecrated to the episcopate in the St. Nicholas church of the skete by Bishops Job (Rogozhin), the former superior of the Saviour-Transfiguration women's monastery, and Barlaam (Pikalov). According to one source, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa participated in this consecration. The news of his consecration was brought with great difficulty to Patriarch Tikhon when he was under house arrest. He appointed Vladyka Nicholas bishop of Atkar, a vicariate of the Saratov diocese, specially creating this new vicar-see in the centre of the city of Atkar.

As a faithful son of the Mother Church, Vladyka Nicholas did not accept renovationism. In all probability he was the only bishop in Saratov in this period (September, 1922), and fulfilled the duties of temporary administrator of the Saratov diocese.

Vladyka Nicholas served in this see until 1925, when he retired because of ill health. Bishop Nicholas lived in a monastic skete in Saratov, and was for two years in reclusion. During this time he not only prayed but also worked, making stockings. When blessing someone he sometimes gave them stockings.

He was so well-known that in his novel "The Affair of the Artamonovs", Maxim Gorky used the image of the fool-for-Christ elder-bishop in his character of the hunchbacked monk Nicetas Artamonov.

On coming out of reclusion he continued to live for some time in Saratov. His cell-attendant was **Hieromonk Pitirim**, who had been James Ivanovich Ivanov in the world. In his youth he had intended to marry, but his bride died on the eve of their wedding, which so shook the young man that he remained a bachelor.

James Ivanovich wanted to see Bishop Nicholas, about whom he had heard many good things. Once he hired a cabby and went to look at him. He was sitting under an umbrella and getting ready to look at him, when Bishop Nicholas came out onto the porch of his little house, turned towards him and said unexpectedly:

"James Ivanovich, I've been waiting for you for a long time."

This event was a fresh shock for James Ivanovich. After all, he had never seen the bishop before, and the bishop could not have known anything about him. After thinking about it for a long time, he was tonsured into monasticism with the name Pitirim and then became a hieromonk and Bishop Nicholas' cell-attendant.

Between March and June 15, 1928 Bishop Nicholas carried out secret monastic tonsures together with Bishop Thaddeus (Uspensky) of Saratov.

After a time the authorities forced Vladyka to go and live in Moscow. At first he lived with his spiritual children. Then as he began to acquire more and more admirers among the inhabitants of the Zamoskvorechiye, he went from one to the other. Everyone was glad to give refuge to Vladyka.

Finally, the authorities decided to expel certain bishops from Moscow. They summoned Bishop Nicholas and gave him a choice of three cities, one of which was Kiev. Vladyka chose Kiev.

In Kiev he lived with his cell-attendant in the private house of **Popov** on the corner of Reznitskaya and Klovsy spusk. **Nun Mariamna** (in the world Princess Alexandra Lvovna Shakhovskaya) lived in one small room of this house, and the three others were let by Bishop Nicholas and Hieromonk Pitirim. Vladyka Nicholas lived very quietly in Pechersk, receiving almost nobody and not serving Divine services. He went only to the church of the women's monastery of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple.

Bishop Nicholas lived in this house for six years. During this time his admirers in Saratov did not forget him, and some of them came to see him in Kiev. The above-mentioned Protopriest Constantine was one of them. On meeting Bishop Nicholas he fell to his knees and asked for his hierarchical blessing. He told several Kievans of the holy life and spiritual exploits of Bishop Nicholas in Saratov.

Eugenia Grigorievna Rymarenko, the wife of Fr. Adrian, the future **Archbishop Andrew of Rockland**, relates: "Our whole family, including the children, spent the summer of 1928 in Kitayevsky Hermitage near Kiev, and there we met Bishop Nicholas. This was the vicar-bishop from Saratov; he had been exiled and lived in Kiev, receiving no one and not performing church services. We had heard much about him, about his high spiritual life, about his eldership in the skete near Saratov. We wanted very much to visit him, but this

was extremely difficult. Finally we succeeded. And so gradually we became so disposed toward Vladyka that he began deciding all our questions. I remembered Batiushka Fr. Nectary's words to me when he said:

"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."

Once Bishop Nicholas visited Eugenia Grigorievna's household. "I remember that Vladyka's cell-attendant came to us and said that Vladyka had come to pray and look at Kitayevsky desert, and that he wanted to visit Fr. Adrian. We were happy, of course, and came out to meet him. The cabby drove up and Vladyka, accompanied by his cell-attendant, came into our house. Vladyka was short and hunch-backed, but there was something unusual in his whole face: a certain goodness, spirituality. His eyes were big, thoughtful and kind, but his manner was authoritative: one felt that he was used to ruling and giving instructions. Having prayed and blessed us, he went with Fr. Adrian into his room to change his clothes, since, like Elder Ambrose [of Optina], he suffered from perspiration.

"I began to fuss about the housework, wishing to give better hospitality to our guest. And then, I remember, there was the following incident. I had a good bun, but a little pig's fat had been put in it. Should I put it on the table or not - after all, Vladyka was a monk. I thought and thought, and in the end I put it in with all the rest. And what then? Vladyka tasted everything, but didn't touch the bun!

"Then, I remember, Vladyka started to say that there are certain matushkas who hinder their batyushkas from advancing in the spiritual life. Looking at me, he asked:

"Are you one of those?"

"I replied that I did not know what I was.

"In general, I didn't like Vladyka. I thought: 'Why did he suddenly begin to attack me?' Vladyka stayed with us and then returned to Kiev.

"Then it turned out that Vladyka's cell-attendant had forgotten some things at our house. I had to bring them out and go to Vladyka in Pechersk. I remember that I went up to the house, which was surrounded by a high fence. The gate was shut on a latch; they taught me to look for a little hole and put a hairpin into it. In this way I lifted the latch and opened the gate without ringing, so as not to draw anyone's attention to the fact that somebody was visiting Vladyka.

"I quickly went across the yard and into Vladyka's quarters. My first impression was of cleanliness, cosiness and a certain peace and quiet. One felt

that everyone was living under obedience, that it was a kind of small monastery.

"Vladyka himself played the fool a little; he spoke quite sharply and sometimes joked. For example, he threw me into complete confusion by saying:

"Do you want to stay and have lunch with us? If you want to - stay, if not - leave."

"I didn't know what to do and in great confusion stayed.

"Some months passed. During this time Fr. Adrian went to Vladyka, but I did not. Christmas came. The whole of our family went to congratulate Vladyka on the feasts. I remember that I had no special desire to go; I was still somewhat critically disposed towards Vladyka.

"Then, without my noticing it, I went to him more and more often, and came to like him so much that I couldn't decide or begin anything for myself without asking his blessing and prayers.

"What attracted me to Vladyka? His special way of addressing one. He could joke and laugh, but he could also listen and as it were live through all the difficulties of life at that time. He could encourage one and strengthen one's faith in the help of God and obtain this help by his prayers.

"For, you know, 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 Fr. Adrian was arrested. How Vladyka supported me, encouraged me, prayed for me at that time! By some kind of miracle Fr. Adrian was released.

"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 Polya (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.

“And then, I remember, I went to Vladyka straight from work with the feeling that I should forget everything and calm down. But Vladyka suddenly said: “You know, we’ve salted the guerkins and packed the cabbage.” And I thought: “Well, that’s very interesting to me, I’ve had enough of everyday household cares”. But Vladyka suddenly said to me: “Yes, there you are

wanting to talk about spiritual things, while Batyushka Nicholas is talking to you about everyday matters. So here you are: read," and he gave me one of the works of the holy Hierarch Tikhon of Zadonsk, where he writes that first of all it is necessary to be kind to everyone, give him food and drink. And I involuntarily remembered all our visitors and arrivals, who bothered me so much. Yes, Vladyka was often able somehow to catch my thoughts. With great difficulty I succeeded in getting Vladyka to confess me, and I remember this with great tender feeling and gratitude.

"Vladyka was able to say to each person that which was useful for him. I remember several people once gathered in our house who wanted to get to know Vladyka. They sat and drank tea. By chance, a young married woman arrived. Vladyka went on talking and talking as if he were conducting a general conversation; but when he left it turned out that everything that he had been saying was for this person: she received replies to all the questions that were disturbing her at that time in connection with her difficulties with her husband and mother-in-law.

"I remember one incident with a deacon. This deacon, besides having a difficult general church situation, had difficulties in his family, too: his wife was against his service as a deacon. She was well-off, but she gave nothing to her husband. He was in great need and was going to pieces. At that time there was a fool-for-Christ in Kiev by the name of Seraphima. Some recognized her as such, some did not, but Vladyka Nicholas nevertheless received her when she came to him. And one day this Seraphima sent the deacon Nikola to Vladyka. He arrived in a dirty old cassock and in a very depressed mood. Vladyka comforted him, but really went for him for coming to him dressed in such a way:

"'What kind of deacon are you? You're so dirty and you're going to church and to the altar dressed like that! You have to buy a new cassock.'

"Fr. Nikola replied that he had no money. And, you know, it was very difficult to buy material at that time. But Vladyka insisted:

"'Buy a new cassock - here's 20 kopecks.'

"The deacon trusted him, said 'Give the blessing', took the 20 kopecks and left. He got on a tram and went in the direction of his church, where he had to be for the all-night vigil. But just at that moment work was coming to an end in the factories, the workers filled up the trams and the poor deacon was knocked about: he couldn't squeeze his way to the exit when he had to leave and went several stops past. Finally, he managed to get out. The poor man began to run because he was already late for the service. Suddenly two women met him:

"'Batyushka, batyushka, wait, we have something to say to you.'

"And they asked him to take them to the Florovsky monastery. The deacon took pity on them and said:

"Alright, let's go, but quickly, otherwise I'll have no time.'

"And then they literally ran, and on the way the women told him their woes. Their brother had died and they wanted to go to the Florovsky monastery to order a pannikhida for the fortieth day. They ran up to the church in which the deacon was serving, went into it and suddenly said:

"You know, we won't go to the Florovsky monastery, we'll order a forty-day pannikhida here, with you.'

"They went up to the priest, gave him money and asked him to commemorate the deceased man. And then it turned out that they gave so much money that immediately after the all-night vigil the deacon, on receiving his share, saw that he could sew himself a new cassock. And two weeks later he went to Vladyka Nicholas in his new cassock.

"And how much I heard about Vladyka when I visited him once in Moscow, where he sometimes went for a certain time! The son of some relatives recovered through the prayers of Vladyka, in another family the husband stopped drinking and became a good family man. One woman said that she came to Vladyka and suddenly noticed that she had lost her wedding ring. She was terribly upset, and Vladyka sent her to look for the ring on the street. She set off with complete faith that she would find it, and she found it.

"Vladyka himself suffered all kinds of everyday life unpleasantnesses. There came a time when he had to be ejected from the flat he was occupying. With great difficulty his hieromonk and cell-attendant succeeded in finding a basement and making it habitable. And again this basement was done up in such a way that on entering one felt cosiness and order; and with the blessing and through the prayers of its master, people left it having received new strength and spiritual support."

Once the representatives of the authorities arrived in the house so as to arrest Mother Mariamna, but they did not find her at home. They ordered the landlord Popov to go to the police immediately she appeared. But immediately she arrived, Popov warned her of the danger. The nun managed to hide while Popov suffered: since he had warned her, he was arrested and sent into exile.

In the spring of 1933, Bishop Nicholas was arrested by the Kiev OGPU in accordance with article 58-10 of the Ukrainian code, and was in prison for four months together with Schema-Archbishop Anthony (Abashidze). He was accused of "taking into his house peasant pilgrims, and was closely linked with an exiled member of a counter-revolutionary organization, Igumen Hilarion (Kopyla)". Vladyka's cell attendants, Hieromonk Leontius (Filippovich) and Monk Michael (Lyubimov) were drawn into the case with him, as well as the

Priest Tikhon Prokhorovich, from the village of Pologi-Yanenki, Pereyaslav region, who was living illegally in Kiev. Also arrested, for taking part in the working sections of the Kiev-Caves Lavra Council, were the monks Fr. Tertius (Tkach) and the secretary of the Council, Fr. Seraphim (Sekach). Bishop Nicholas' fellow prisoners remembered his exceptional kindness and unacquisitiveness. He would literally share his last piece of bread with them.

He was released, and told to go to Moscow. Before leaving, he told Fr. Pitirim (according to another source, it was another cell-attendant of his, Boris Vetsivsky, a native of Saratov, who usually accompanied him to church):

"Leave immediately, we are going to Golgotha."

Before he left Kiev, relates Eugenia Grigorievna, "our universally revered [Catacomb Church] batyushkas, Fr. Michael [Yedlinsky] and Fr. Alexander [Glagolev, who was also martyred] visited Vladyka. Both derived very much from this parting conversation with Vladyka and they said:

"What spiritual strength, which we had with us in Kiev, we are losing now. The Lord is taking it from us."

"Vladyka himself also highly valued these batyushkas of ours. He was sometimes in the church of Fr. Alexander and liked to pray with him.

"[In October] Vladyka left Kiev [via the Butyrki prison in Moscow] for Kirzhach, a little town beyond the Holy Trinity - St. Sergius monastery, more than one hundred versts from Moscow. This was the distance away he as an exile had to live."

Eugenia Grigorievna was able to visit Vladyka several times in Kirzhach. "Every such trip gave me the opportunity temporarily to forget all my sorrows, to rest and receive a new access of spiritual strength.

"Vladyka was interested in, and always asked in detail about our life, and went through everything with us. After the closure of the church on Askold's grave Fr. Adrian was struck off the register of the department of cults "for going away", in the future this meant the removal of his passport by the police and his exile from Kiev for a three-week period. With the blessing of Vladyka Fr. Adrian went to Nezhen, where, thanks to the fact that he had a passport in his hands, he was able to get registered and live. Of course, he could no longer return to Kiev since he was exiled and deregistered from there.

On December 29, 1936 Vladyka Nicholas was arrested for the second time, together with Fr. Pitirim and about twenty other people, and brought to Ivanovo prison. They were accused of being "active participants in a counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen in the city of Kirzhach, the so-called 'desert church', created on the basis of the anti-Soviet platform of 'the True Orthodox Church', which was active in planting counter-revolutionary groups

of churchmen, uniting them in so-called 'secret churches'." It was said that Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) and Archmandrite Simeon (Kholmogorov) were the leaders of this Church, and that "on the direct instructions of the leader of the organization Pozdeyevsky, in 1935 three counter-revolutionary groups, cells of the organization, were created. They were united into so-called 'illegal house churches' ('sketes', 'communities', etc.) under the leadership of Archbishop Kholmogorov, Bishop [Nicholas] Parfenov and Archimandrite Klimkov..."

During the interrogation the names of church-servers were mentioned. Vladyka Nicholas denied that he knew them. At the same time he indicated that "in Kirzhach I knew several people with whom I maintained close links, as having the same opinions according to 'the True Orthodox faith', but this was not an anti-Soviet group." He rejected the accusation made against him.

According to Eugenia Grigorievna, he was in prison in Suzdal from 1936 on, and she was able "to receive from him his last directions and blessing. But later he was exiled to an unknown location..."

On June 15, 1937 Bishop Nicholas was convicted of being "an active participant in a counter-revolutionary group of churchmen, 'The All-Russian Monastic Brotherhood', and in illegal meetings of members of the organization at which anti-Soviet agitation was conducted". Bishop Nicholas refused to plead guilty, and in accordance with articles 58-10 part 1 and 58-11, he was given a five-year prison sentence. **Hieromonk Pitirim** was exiled to Kazakhstan for five years. Protopriest Igor Maltsev, who was also from Saratov, and whose family were spiritual children of Vladyka witnessed: "In 1937 they (Bishop Nicholas and Fr. Pitirim)... were sent to Vladimir prison. Bishop Nicholas died in prison in Vladimir on January 7/20, 1939, according to the information centre of the UVD of Vladimir province, from heart disease.

76. HOLY MARTYR AGATHA OF BELORUSSIA (+1939)

Mother Agatha was born in the twenties of the 19th century in Sharylovka village, which is situated on the river Sorozh, a tributary of the River Dnieper, in Gomel district, Minsk province. Her parents were simple, pious peasants, who taught their only daughter to pray with fervency even from early childhood. When she was born she was paralyzed and could not get up nor walk. Her parents, when going early in the morning to work in the fields, would leave her at home. They would place her in a crib-like bed under a spreading pear tree in the garden, and themselves would go away for the whole day into the fields to till them. And she would remain there all the time alone in the garden. And the only thing she could do was pray. When the evening would come, they would return and bring her to the house.

One day, when she was twelve years old, the parents went far into the fields to work, and she was lying quietly there in the garden. Suddenly a beautiful Lady appeared, just as in the icons of the Mother of God, and said:

"Slave of God Agatha, get up!"

Agatha began to weep bitterly, and said:

"I cannot get up, because from my early childhood I have been in a lying position. It is already twelve years that I cannot get up."

But the Lady said: "Get up and go. Go into your house!"

"But how can I get up?" she said.

Then the Lady took her by the hand and lifted her up, and at that moment her legs became strong, as if they had never been ailing. Then the Lady said to her:

"Take your bedding and bring it into your house. Go to the house, clean it up, put everything in order, until your parents come. Light the oven and fix supper for your parents. Go to the barn and feed the cattle. Having done everything, go, sit up on the stove, and quietly wait for them. But when your parents come and ask you to join them for supper, do not come down. Let them eat supper by themselves."

Having said this, she became invisible. Agatha understood that this was the Mother of God herself. Later, Mother Agatha said that the Mother of God had told her other things also, but she never revealed them.

Then she thanked God from the bottom of her heart, and went for the first time on her strengthened legs to the house. She cleaned up the house and swept the floor. And when the cattle returned from the field - the sheep, the pigs and

the cows, then for the first time in her life she gently stroked them. She led them in, milked the cows, strained the milk, and, having prepared supper, took out the ashes and put them in the pit. Then she put the supper in the oven to keep it warm, and sat quietly on the stove to wait. When her parents arrived, they saw that the cattle were not outside. Fearing that something was wrong, they quickly ran to the garden and looked under the pear tree - but there was no one there. Then they rushed into the house and saw their daughter sitting quietly on the stove. They asked her:

"Our dear daughter, who helped you up onto the stove?"

Then she told her parents what had happened, and how she had fixed everything for the first time in her life.

"Go and eat the supper," she concluded.

Her mother went to the oven, opened it, put the food on the table, and began to call the daughter to have supper with them. But the girl did not want to come down, and said that the Lady had told her not to come down and eat supper with them. But the parents began to weep and lament, begging her to come down, so that they could see that she, after twelve years, could really walk. Then, moved by their plea, out of love for her parents, she came down from the stove and quietly sat at the table. As soon as supper was finished, however, and they began to get up from the table, she suddenly discovered that her knees had become "glued together" (her legs were paralyzed). And she began to weep, remembering that she had not fulfilled the command of the Mother of God.

Thus she remained for the rest of her life. For nine years she prayed and cried continually. She would spend the whole night on her knees on the bed, crying from pain and sadness. Her mother learned how to calm her down by giving her a little piece of sugar, and then the girl stopped sobbing for a while. By the time she was 21 years old, she could move slowly on her own strength, thanks to God, but she had no control of her legs above her knees.

Moving slowly, she even walked twelve times on pilgrimage to the Kiev Caves Monastery, which was 125 miles from their village. She already showed signs of being a great ascetic and woman of prayer. She lived in the garden of her parents, in a little hut which was built for her, which consisted of one room. It looked like a log cabin.

Mother Agatha was deemed worthy to see the Mother of God more than once. She had the gift of clairvoyance, and many people came to her as to an eldress. They would gather at her place usually in order to pray to God. They would read the Psalter and chant akathists. And after prayer, Mother Agatha would always give a teaching on the Law of God.

When her parents died she remained alone and spent her life in ascetic labours and prayers. She took in a little orphan boy who helped her in her garden and did other errands. She brought him up, and he became a church reader in the village church. When she was younger, she herself used to walk to church to all the services without fail. But when she became older, people made her a little cart, and would pull this "wheelchair" and bring her to church, and she would sit in it during the service. They would come to her from long distances, in great numbers, and with love would bring her to church. But when the church joined the renovationist "Living Church" after the revolution, she stopped attending it.

The orphan boy was called Andrew. Later on he got married, built a house and lived with his own four little boys. And Matushka remained living in the house of her parents, which eventually burned to the ground. Then they built for her another cabin with the help of Andrew and a rich man by the name of Kirey, who lived on a Stolypin ranch. Her house was built right next to where the pear tree grew. This Kirey also made for her a coffin, which was placed in her house. But this house also burned together with the coffin. Then they built for her another one, also with a coffin, and that one burned again. And then Andrew took her into his own house and the boys looked after her.

At the beginning of the thirties there remained very few true priests, for many of them had been sent to concentration camps and placed in prisons. The ones who had not been exiled were in no position to satisfy the religious needs of all the faithful. There were cases when priests who submitted to the Soviet government during the Divine services demonstratively took off their church vestments, threw them down, and in the hearing of the people renounced the priesthood and belief in God. These actions caused terror in the people, a part of which became atheists. But a part of them strove to find the Catacomb Church, which gave instructions and indications in the true Orthodox spirit. The propaganda of atheism likewise corrupted many people. If some of them later returned to God, it was thanks to the prayers of such people as Matushka Agatha.

The believers who were thirsting for the word of God visited Matushka Agatha, begging her advice and prayers. She gave advice to all who came to her with a pure heart, but there were cases when she did not wish to receive people, and after some time it became clear that they had fallen into some sin. People who visited her received indications on how to act towards the Soviet authority. She would say:

"My little children (as she would call her true Orthodox visitors), do not submit to the Soviet authority, because it is an authority not from God. Do not go into the collective farms under any pretence. Let them take away your property and rights; but do not go to them, do not sign up for them."

When the "Living Church" of the renovationists appeared in the 1920s, Matushka advised everyone not to go there, not to baptize children there, and not to have weddings there.

One of the very young girls who used to visit Matushka, Galka, came in one day as usual. Matushka in front of everyone said that she had seen a dream in which Galka fell into a deep pit. Soon we found out that she had gone to the "Living Church" and joined the renovationists and turned away from Matushka altogether.

Another time three elderly women came to Matushka. Matushka told them that she had seen a dream: she was distributing bread to them, and there was enough for one, but not enough for the other two. And it turned out that these two also went to the renovationists.

When the infamous "collectivization" began, she said that we should not go to the collective farms, and there were many of us who listened to her and did not go. At that time even more people began to visit her, and even people from the collective farms. She asked us not to let in such people.

The registration as collective farmers, who supposedly signed up "voluntarily" for 99 years in the collective farm, she viewed as one of the forms of the seal of the Antichrist (99 upside down forms two digits of "the number of the beast" in Rev. 13.8). She said that they should avoid the census:

"Hide from the census of the Antichrist. You will get nothing from this."

She especially recommended not voting, and almost everyone who visited her avoided voting and the census.

Among her numerous visitors were many family people who had children of school age. She advised parents that their children who attended school should not enter the groups of the "Octoberites", "Pioneers", "Young Communists" and so forth. She likewise advised that their children should not take vaccinations, which were periodically given to school children. This was justified by the fact that at one time children died by being infected by the vaccinations.

Concerning the Soviet church she said: "This is not a true church. It has signed a contract to serve the Antichrist. Do not go to it. Do not receive any Mysteries from its servants. Do not participate in prayer with them. There will come a time when churches will be opened in Russia, and the true Orthodox faith will triumph. Then people will become baptized, as at one time they were baptized under St. Vladimir. When the churches are opened for the first time, do not go to them because these will not be true churches. But when they are opened the second time, then go - these will be the true churches. I will not live to see this time, but many of you will live to this time. The atheist Soviet authority will vanish, and all its servants will perish."

All those people to whom she spoke believe her words. Some of them are now living abroad and are awaiting the fulfilment of her prophecies, for much of what she said has already been fulfilled. As for what she prophesied to each one separately, all has been fulfilled.

Thecla T. writes that she knew Eldress Agatha from her youth, when she lived with her parents in the village of Diatlovka, only four miles away from Matushka. But in 1914 her family moved to Minsk province, which was 25 or 30 miles from her. Nevertheless, the village girls would join the elderly woman in making pilgrimages to her on foot. Many people visited her, and she received them all with love, which evoked in them a very strong feeling of reverence, contrition of heart, and often, tears of repentance. The whole atmosphere around her instilled a feeling of awe and the fear of God.

Her little log cabin was not a large one, but it had room for many people. There was an icon corner with many icons, and large candlestands with burning candles. There were three oil lamps burning perpetually. In front of the icon corner was an analogion with the Psalter, which was read and chanted often.

In appearance, Matushka was of very short stature, all white, as if made of wax. Her eyes were light grey, full of light, and bright. She talked very slowly, softly and in a sing-song manner, at the same time slowly walking in tiny steps around her humble dwelling. Most of the time she spent in spinning flax, making yarn with her hands, while her mouth was ceaselessly repeating the Jesus prayer. People would bring her their home-spun linen as gifts, but she would give them away to poor people and to priests to make cassocks. She would always make her visitors eat dinner or supper with her, while she herself ate little. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays were strict fast days for her. She wore simple peasant clothes.

She would almost never smile, but had a gift of teaching, during which she would often make unhurried signs of the cross over herself very solemnly. Her talks were very interesting - almost all in parables, some of which were prophecies. Her gift of clairvoyance was astonishing, of which we are living witnesses. There were also cases of real miracles.

Once on the way to Matushka from Diatlovka, Thecla was walking with a group of young women, and one of them, Melania, said that Matushka was probably illiterate and could not read, since she had not gone to school, although she knew so much from the Gospels and the Bible. When we arrived and had rested for a while, Matushka, who was sitting on her couch, said to a girl who helped her:

"Motia, get me a book from the chest."

She got it and gave it to Matushka. The book was a large one and in Slavonic. I sat next to Matushka on her bed, which was made of hard boards. She placed the book on my lap and began pointing to various passages, saying:

"They say that I am illiterate, and now let us read this part, and this,"

and she began to read aloud.

Not long before her death a certain illiterate village woman, Eugenia, paid her a visit and was standing at the back. Matushka called her and asked her to read the Psalter. The confused woman was sorry to say that she could not read because she did not know how to. Then Matushka said to her:

"Take, take the book! You will open the book and read it."

Eugenia took the book and, to the amazement of all, began to read for the first time in her life, and as well as if she had been reading for years. Truly that was a miracle.

Many priests and homeless wandering catacomb clergymen used to come to Matushka, and also many monks from closed monasteries and schema-monks who lived deep in the forests. Matushka herself would tell those who visited her about them. Evidently the whole cycle of daily services was conducted in her cell, which was a solace to those deprived of churches. They flocked to her as to a true mother in Christ. Pilgrims from holy places would bring her holy bread, which she distributed among her spiritual children in little pieces as a blessing. They would also bring her water from the Holy Land, Jerusalem and Mount Athos, and she would share it with us. She would tell us to scoop ordinary water into little buckets at midnight and bring it to her, and she would pour into it drops of the holy water. Thus the faithful, even those who for thirty years had not gone to church, always had holy water. When the Soviet agents would come and make investigations and searches, as they often did, they would always see bottles with holy water, and would be curious to know whether it was vodka; and, as a rule, not believing what they were told, just to make sure, they would always drink some.

Collectivization involved absolutely inhuman treatment of the innocent peasantry, which was virtually liquidated. But in 1937 there was a good crop of wheat. The peasants cut it down and stacked it, but it had to be dried a bit before being threshed. So they left it in the barn to dry, and some of the women decided to visit Matushka in the meantime and bring her some flour. So they borrowed some flour from their neighbour Anastasia and set out. When they arrived at Matushka's and began to get the supper ready, she said:

"No, my dear little children, we shall not eat pancakes."

But they said: "We have brought some flour for you and will fry pancakes, for a good crop of wheat is stored up for us at home."

But she repeated several times: "No, no, we shall not eat pancakes, no pancakes."

When they came home they found out to their great grief that the Soviet chief of the village soviet Blumkin had taken all their wheat. And in order to pay back what they had borrowed from Anastasia, they had to work in her vegetable garden. So they truly did not eat any pancakes.

When there remained absolutely no priests for hundreds of miles, and Pascha came, people turned to Matushka with the question:

"How and where can we have our kuliches (sweet paschal bread) and other paschal food blessed?"

"Go into the forest," she replied, "and when it's midnight, begin to chant 'Thy Resurrection, Christ our Saviour...', 'Christ is risen!' and other paschal hymns, which are usually sung by the choir, and put the kuliches on the ground and let them stay there until dawn, and when the morning dew descends on them, you will know that they have already been blessed. The Lord Himself will have blessed them!"

And that is what the faithful people did. They would gather, several families together, and spend the paschal night in the forest, because it was already dangerous to gather in houses. Later even that was dangerous, so they would put their pots with paschal food on top of the fence for the night to be blessed by God. And God blessed them through the prayers of Matushka Agatha.

After the death of her five-year-old son Eusebius, Thecla T. went to Matushka with her grief, taking a handful of earth from his little grave, because he had been buried without a priest. When she came to Matushka she greeted her with joy as always, although she already knew of her loss. They sang the funeral service and pannikhida by themselves and went to rest for the night. In the morning, when they got up, Matushka asked me:

"Have you seen your little son?"

"No," said Thecla.

"I saw him, my dear one," she said. "If you only knew how happy he is there, then you would beg God that the Lord would take your other sons also."

The other world was indeed close to her!

Years earlier, in 1922, when Thecla had come to her, she told her that St. Theodosius of Chernigov had visited her and said that the communists wanted to investigate his relics, but he had risen up and come to her. Soon it became known that his relics, after being opened by the Soviet authorities (and found

to be incorrupt), had been stolen by someone and their whereabouts since then were unknown.

Although Thecla often saw Matushka, her husband Tikhon had very few opportunities to do so, although he wanted it very much. One day Matushka sent word that she wanted to see them both. Tikhon was afraid to go because he did not have the right documents. (The Soviet police required a special permit for any departure from one's place of residence.) And then suddenly he saw in a dream two women in white garments, glittering white hair and halos around their fair heads. He recognized one of them as Eldress Agatha, but not the other Lady. He could only surmise that it was her mother or the Most Holy Mother of God herself. When he awoke he decided to go and see Eldress Agatha again in spite of the danger. So they left and on the way everything went well. When they had arrived and entered her little house, he immediately recognized Eldress Agatha from the dream. He never learned who the other holy one was.

Her dwelling consisted of a rather small one-room peasant log cabin. Its walls were covered with icons and there were three icon-lamps burning. Her bed was made out of a few boards put together, covered with a simple peasant mat. There were several analogions, and candlesticks with burning candles. This is where she greeted them, sitting on her bed.

Tikhon approached her and bowed down, as if to take her blessing, but she did not allow him to kiss her hand, and instead put it on his head, and began to kiss his head. I did not want her to do this, saying that I was a sinful man. She lifted his head and said:

"Why, my dear, don't you want me to kiss your head?"

Evidently she foresaw all the sufferings he would have to go through in the near future, beginning from 1938, when he was arrested.

Tikhon and Thecla rested for a while, listening to her sweet discourse. Then they had supper and prayed to God together. It was good with her there, rather cosy. The heart was touched and one wanted to weep, not from sorrow, but from that indescribable tender feeling that God's grace bestows. Putting them to bed on the floor, she asked them to lie down together under the analogion and the icons, and she herself, sitting up on her bed, prayed the Jesus Prayer throughout the night, calmly and regularly making the sign of the cross.

In the morning, when they got up and had prayed and had breakfast, Tikhon told her that he had a sister in Chernigov province in the village of M. Then she blessed them to go and said:

"Go safely, my little children, wherever you need. I shall pray to God for you."

And so they travelled forty miles "illegally", saw his sister, and with God's help returned home safely.

Once Thecla T. went with several women to see Matushka Agatha in order to hear her spiritual instructions and pray to God together with her. Their village was 30 miles away. When they came, after the usual greetings, Matushka turned to Thecla and said with concern:

"My little child, hurry up and go back. It is necessary for you to be home."

Thecla knew that she was clairvoyant, and therefore she hurried home at once. Hardly had she entered the house when the NKVD agents arrived and arrested Tikhon. Thanks to Matushka Agatha, they had time to say goodbye.

Eldress Agatha had contacts with many righteous men and women in her neighbourhood; they themselves were real clairvoyants like herself. They were either her spiritual children or spiritual friends of like mind, to whom she could send the catacomb people for spiritual instruction or consolation.

Thus in the town of Loev on the River Dnieper there lived a holy woman who had been sick for thirty years. She became paralyzed immediately after her marriage. For five years her husband stayed with her, but then he left her. After some time, however, he saw that people were coming to her because she had become renowned for clairvoyance, and he returned to her. Girls and pious women looked after her, for she had command only of her arms. Matushka Agatha knew her and sent people to her for guidance, for she also knew how to console a grieving heart.

In 1940 Tikhon T. and his friend Athanasius S. decided to go to Kiev to buy some clothes. Since the steamer to Kiev stopped at this town, they decided to go on this steamer to Kiev. But when they arrived in Loev, the Dnieper in one day began to freeze, and they were afraid to Kiev in case they got stranded on the way. So they decided to abandon their trip to Kiev and instead pay a visit to the clairvoyant sick woman X. But they did not know where she lived, and it had already become dark.

At this very time the holy woman ordered a meal to be made for two guests, saying that two wanderers, Tikhon and Athanasius by name, were coming to her. Then she told her husband to go to a certain corner on the street, where he would meet two young people who were looking for her. This man met them there and asked whether they were looking for a sick woman. When they, in great amazement, said "yes", he brought them to her. No sooner had they opened the door than she began to sing the religious song that they knew well and loved, and they, with spirits uplifted by the wonderful things God had done, joined her in singing:

*Tomorrow, tomorrow, in the house of Zacchaeus,
A mystical Guest will abide,*

*And speechless and pale does Zacchaeus
Now stand before Him inside.
My body - a house dark and dim,
And all in disarray and unclean -
What do I have to refresh Him?
What place for my Guest unseen?*

Then, after praying to God, they had supper, during which some spiritual books were read aloud. Then they were given a place to sleep. When they left in the morning, she told them not to go to Kiev, but to buy everything in that town and quietly return to their families.

In 1935-37 a schema-monk, apparently from the closed Gomel Monastery, Fr. Eugene, of holy life, used to appear at Matushka's for spiritual counsel, and then would again disappear. He was being sought by the authorities. He was tall, quite energetic, all grey-haired, and must have been 80 years old or more. He walked dressed as a priest; only sometimes would he partly conceal his priestly calling by putting on some ragged village garb. When this holy elder would appear, people would immediately know and come to him for spiritual help. He was serving secretly in several villages. People said that he was learned, and that God revealed much to him. He gave people much useful advice.

A poor village girl by the name of Kulinka had some kind of dangerous ailment and, trusting in God more than in men, wanted to do a good deed by donating beeswax for church candles. So she made a vow to give something she had, but she could find nothing but a few yards of linen towelling to bring to Elder Eugene, who of course knew nothing about her vow. When she came to him, she saw many people patiently sitting and waiting in the village house where he was staying. The moment she crossed the threshold the clairvoyant elder turned to her and said:

"Kulinka, did you bring what you promised?"

In sorrow she said that she had only the towelling, she had been unable to get the wax. Smiling, he accepted her gift, saying:

"You'll get the wax some other time."

Once he stayed for two or three weeks in a village on the bank of the Dnieper, at the house of the farmer Euthymius. God revealed to him that the local Soviet authorities were going to deprive this poor man of all his hay, his peasant hide overcoat, his horse with bridle, and other things. So Fr. Eugene put on this coat, saying that it fitted him very nicely, and that it would be good to go and visit Matushka Agatha in it. After walking around the house in it for a while, he took it off and hung it on the back of the wall. The farmer's wife, Laksuta, began to fear that he would not give it back to her husband.

Euthymius meanwhile bridled the horse in order to go to Matushka Agatha. Fr. Eugene came out and said:

"Some ride we're going to have!"

and, sitting down in the cart, pointed to a hay stack and added:

"Let's sell all that hay stack and drink it! We won't need it!"

But Euthymius said:

"What are you saying, batiushka?! What are we going to live on? We will have nothing!"

"That's exactly how we're going to live," said the elder, giving a stern, sad look, "having nothing!"

But Euthymius drove on without understanding. They visited Matushka and returned. The moment they came into the yard, the head of the village soviet arrived and took that very hide overcoat, and the hay, and the horse with the bridle. And so all the predictions of the elder came true. Then the poor wife bitterly regretted that they had not given the coat to Fr. Eugene.

All this time the Soviet authorities wanted to arrest Matushka Agatha, but they were afraid, knowing she was clairvoyant. When she lived at Andrew's place, they arrested his wife Motia (Matrona). Then one widow from the village of Mokovo, who lived with her fourteen-year-old daughter, took her in; and so the Soviets arrested this widow also. Then Andrew took her back, and his boys looked after her. Then they arrested Andrew with his whole family, and exiled them. After this they came twice to arrest her, but could not.

Matushka Agatha foresaw her own death more than a year ahead. She told Tikhon and Thecla about it and was prepared for it. She prepared her burial dress; it was all of a bright green colour. She told them that they would starve her to death. They said that under no conditions would they allow it, but she said:

"My little children, you will not be allowed to come to me. They will place armed guards - and I'll die."

And it happened just as she said.

What she would say to the believers concerning the Soviet authorities she would say to the communists also. She was not afraid of them and called them "godless ones - servants of Satan". When it was reported to the NKVD that one old lady, by the name of Agatha, was teaching the people not to obey the Soviets, calling the Soviet authority godless and of the Antichrist, they sent four young NKVD agents to arrest her and bring her to the city of Gomel. However,

when they came to her house, a terrible fear seized them, so that they hesitated to touch her. One said to the other:

"You take her."

And the other answered:

"No, you take her... I'm afraid to touch her, because she might get glued to my hands."

That was because it was known that her legs were "glued together", and so she was regarded by them as a kind of witch.

She was then 119 years old. And so they could do nothing to her.

Then, in February, 1939, an order was issued to starve her to death. They brought armed guards and surrounded her poor dwelling and no one was allowed to come close. The guards were there all the time, day and night, and were changed regularly. It took between two and three weeks.

Believers would come and see the dear little hut on the hilltop and knew that there a saint of God was dying helplessly, one who had helped so many people - and there was nothing they could do for her. The guards were free to shoot whenever they wanted.

Then came the sad cry like the funeral knell: "Go bury Agapka!" The villagers buried her in the village cemetery. Tikhon and Thecla were not there when they buried her, and it was dangerous to be near. There was no priest, so her people got together in the village of Buritskoye 40 miles away, and spent the whole night chanting the burial service and pannikhida. The girls and women divided the Psalter among themselves, one kathisma apiece, so that the reading would continue for forty days. And so they prayed to God for her in this way, not only for forty days, but for a whole year. They did not forget their dear Matushka, who had saved and fed them with spiritual food during the time of the terrible famine...

77. HOLY MARTYR MELANIA OF STAVROPOL (+1940)

and those with her

Blessed **Melania Litvinova** lived in Zelenchuk stanitsa, Stavropol region. Her parents were distinguished for their almsgiving and gave generously to the needs of the local women's monastery. Once it was revealed to her parents from the Lord that for their charity their daughter would be vouchsafed a golden martyr's crown.

After the arrest of her husband Blessed Melania was homeless and spent the nights with various good people. These people said that at night she would talk with someone in the Greek language. The righteous woman rebuked people for their sins and often played the fool for Christ. She especially rebuked, and even beat with a stick, those nuns who married after the closure of the monastery. Because of these harsh rebukes most people did not love the blessed one and called her mad.

At Pascha, 1940, some Catacomb Christians from the neighbouring settlements gathered together for prayer and chanted the paschal hymns. And suddenly Blessed Melania said: "You can chant, but who is going to suffer?"

Soon after this, in June of the same year, the believers gathered as usual for prayer in the house of one Catacomb Christian in Kardonikskaya stanitsa. When they had read the holy Bible, a policeman came and took everyone in the house to the police stanitsa. One of those arrested, Natalia, fainted, and they threw her out beyond the fence. The remaining five people - **Stefan, Melania, Helen and her two children** (one of whom was called **Nicholas**) - were tortured for a long time and then taken away. Not far from the city of Cherkassk, they were tied with wire to a metal post and a fire was lit under them. Several parishioners from the local sergianist church were brought there as witnesses. When the chekists asked them: "What can you say about the accused?" one of them (probably the church warden) replied: "What can we say? They are holy people." After this the "witnesses" were immediately shot. But the martyrs who were tied to the post burned for three days without feeling any pain and without being burned up. Only after three days did they surrender their souls to the Lord. All this time they rebuked the Soviet antichristian authorities, while around them spread a wonderful fragrance.

78. HOLY CONFESSOR ABBESS SOPHIA OF KIEV (+1941)

and those with her

Abbess Sophia, in the world Sophia Yevgenievna Grineva, was born in Moscow in 1873 in a wealthy landowner's family. Her father, Eugene Ivanovich Grinev, married early, while still a first-year student in the juridical faculty of Moscow university, to Lydia Dmitrievna Glazunova, who was only sixteen. They married in Moscow, in Khamovniki, and their first child, the future abbess-confessor, was born while her father was still a third-year student. The couple had two more children, Maria and Boris. After graduating, Eugene Ivanovich became secretary to the Tula District Court, and served in Belev, Tula district. When Sophia was only seven years old, her father fell down with pneumonia while on a trip round the district, and died three days later, being buried in Belev. His widow was only twenty-six years old; she moved immediately with her three children to her native land of Tarussa district, Kaluga province. The children stayed in various families while their mother recovered from the shock of her husband's premature death.

For a while they stayed in a convent in Belev, which was under the spiritual direction of the Optina elders. The superior was their family's former governess, Abbess Eugenia. The nuns were very kind to the orphaned children, who often recalled what they had seen in the monastery in their childish games. Thus Sophia would put on a long cape, and, imitating the abbess, stood on an elevated spot. The younger sister and brother then "censed" her, while the "abbess" fervently "blessed" them...

At the age of nine, Sophia was sent to the Alexandro-Mariinsky institute in Moscow, but did not remain long there because of the penury of her mother. Eventually Boris received by inheritance from his uncle a small plot of land in Voronezh province. The family let this plot for 500-700 rubles a year, and lived on this income.

At the age of sixteen, Sonya was living with her aunt and maternal grandmother in Kaluga province, not far from Optina desert. Having known the monastery from her early years, Sonya fell in love with the monastic life and later became a spiritual daughter of the holy elders.

Once the Grinev family were praying in the church in Optina. After the liturgy, the celebrant - according to one source, it was Elder Anatolius (Zertsalov) - came out with the cross, and, turning towards the Grinevs, asked them to let the abbess come up. They looked around in confusion, and then understood that batyushka was calling Sonya. The twelve-year-old girl kissed the cross, while the clairvoyant elder stroked the "abbess", and stroked her head, saying:

"What an abbess she will be!"

And another elder who lived in silence in the woods on meeting her bowed at her feet.

Again, she once went with her mother to the barn for threshing. Suddenly an invalid peasant woman who had been paralyzed for many years, came up to the mother and said:

"Don't give your daughter in marriage. Today I had a dream: in the iconostasis instead of the Mother of God was your daughter."

It is well-known that abbesses are considered the deputies of the Mother of God.

Sophia went to study in the Moscow Alexander-Mariinsky institute, but finished her secondary education in the Kiev Fundukleyevsky gymnasium. When she became an abbess, Sophia did not forget the gymnasium, and helped its pupils. After leaving the institute she was sent to study singing in the Kiev conservatory. Her life in this period was very happy; pleasure followed after pleasure. She had a wonderful voice, and the professors promised her a glittering future as an opera singer. But Sophia became concentrated and thoughtful; she began to pray and to go to church and fast. God was evidently calling her...

Not far from the Grinev estate lived a wealthy landowner, Znamensky, whose daughter Anna Zakharyevna, having just completed her higher education, abandoned all thought of an upper-class career and, out of religious zeal, preferred to become a village school teacher. Being aflame with monastic striving, she would give spiritual lectures to peasant girls with the singing of akathists, ending late at night. These were attended by more than 400 people. Anna and Sophia became close friends. Late one winter evening, going through the deserted woods to Anna's lecture, Sophia encountered a wolf, and her death seemed certain, since these beasts, who plagued this territory, were not only cattle-killers, but had recently even killed an armed officer. Here she made a vow to become a nun if she remained alive. She made the sign of the Cross over the wolf, and at once he ran away into the woods.

Just before graduating from the conservatory, when she was twenty-two years old, Sophia incautiously went out in frosty weather, fell severely ill with anginal diphtheria and lost her voice. She was in despair. The doctors suggested that she had tuberculosis and advised her to go to Davos in Switzerland.

By that time Anna had asked for and received her share of land from her father's inheritance, and together with fifteen other young women she settled in a remote and deserted wooded area, founded a community dedicated to the Holy Trinity and began to lead a severe monastic life with the blessing of several holy men: St. John of Kronstadt, Elder Ambrose of Optina, Elder Barnabas of Gethsemane skete and others. While waiting for a warm house to

be built, the sisters lived in tents in huts made out of branches and boards, slept on the earthen floor with a rock for a pillow, ate dry bread, and only on feast days had some warm weak barley soup. They felled trees, chopped firewood, dug a well and built a beautiful church, where they conducted the whole daily cycle of Divine services.

Matushka Anna suggested to Sophia that she rest in her monastery before setting out for Davos. But Sophia's health deteriorated so sharply that they invited the spiritual father of the community to give her the last rites. She could no longer speak and in her dumb confession she wept on the breast of the kind elder, who comforted and encouraged her. After receiving Communion, she fell asleep. On awaking, to the astonishment of all, she began to speak. A service of thanksgiving was served, and she quickly began to recover. After this miracle there could be no question of her returning to the world. She was probably made a rasophor-nun in the community of the Holy Trinity. But she did not remain there long...

The community flourished, with over 600 sisters, an orphanage, an old-age home, a large vegetable garden and orchard, a brick factory and metochia in Moscow and St. Petersburg. However, Matushka Anna, overwhelmed by her success, suffered a grave spiritual catastrophe: she was lured into spiritism and left the convent. Dissension struck the convent, and some sisters left.

Sophia went to a holy elder, Gerasimus of Kaluga, who had just opened the St. Nicholas convent for his spiritual daughters. There, in 1897, she was joined by her friend, Catherine Metzendorff, who had also left the Holy Trinity community. However, Sophia incurred the dislike of the treasurer of the convent because she read spiritual literature to the sisters and they loved her. Soon she and Catherine left the St. Nicholas convent and went to found an independent community. On the bank of the beautiful Oka river there was an abandoned church of St. John the Almsgiver with an icon of the Mother of God called "Joy and Consolation". There, in a place called Dugny from the river which flowed into the Oka at that point, the young sisters settled in order to continue their narrow path of poverty, daily church services and labour.

But there was also a factory there, where former convicts worked. At first they did not like the nuns and caused them many vexations. But the community quickly grew to number 170 sisters, monastery buildings were constructed and the church was repaired. And a refuge for 30 children was built.

The superior was Mother Catherine, who was older than Mother Sophia by some years. However, the sisters loved Mother Sophia more than Mother Catherine because of her kindness and mercifulness and the inexpressible spiritual fragrance that surrounded her. This aroused the annoyance of Mother Catherine, and for the sake of peace Sophia decided to go to the Belev monastery where her father was buried.

But the sisters were very upset. Among them was the fool-for-Christ Maryushka, who nicknamed Mother Sophia "Seraphima". She climbed into a tree and called to her:

"Seraphima, Seraphima!"

Finally, Mother Catherine wrote that life in the community was in disarray and that Mother Sophia should return, while she herself would go away. That is what they did. Mother Catherine founded a community near the town of Bologoye in Novgorod province, dying there at the age of 95. In December, 1905 Ryasophor novice Sophia was confirmed by the Kaluga spiritual consistory as superior of the new community "Joy and Consolation".

Life was difficult in the new community. Nuns often came to matushka to report that there was nothing with which to feed the sisters and children that day. But every time Mother Sophia convinced them that the Lord would not fail to come to their help, reminding them of previous examples of miraculous help from on high. Candles were lit at the foot of the Crucifixion in her cell, matushka and her nuns began to pray, and their faith was never put to shame.

The following great miracle took place. Mother Sophia constantly lobbied for the legal confirmation of her community. And then an order was received from the Holy Synod commanding the community to contribute 4000 rubles in a very short time for the 47 desyatins of land belonging to the church of St. John the Almsgiver. Without this the community could not be confirmed in law. Matushka gathered the sisters into the church, explained the situation to them and placed the order paper before the icon of St. Seraphim. A prayer service with an akathist to the saint was served. How many tears were shed then! Two days later, an unknown wanderer appeared and brought an envelope with 4000 rubles and a request that they pray for the virgins Elizabeth and Anastasia. It turned out that this wanderer had been present at the reading of the akathist and had turned to some benefactors whom he knew and who trusted him. In this way the community was saved.

The spiritual life of the community was centred on the church, which was poor, but always clean and decorated with great taste. The iconostasis was modest, but artistically worked. On the glass of the altar window was painted an icon of the Resurrection of Christ, which was illumined during the triumphant services. During the polyeleos candles were handed out to everyone in accordance with the custom of the Kaluga monasteries. Then matushka was given a dish of pieces of bread cut during the litiya, and she went round the parishioners with them. They loved her and went to her with all their troubles. When, at the end of the service, the children were led away to sleep, matushka blessed each of them, and in turn bowed to each of them to be signed with the sign of the cross. Matushka also took loving care of the church cemetery, and on appointed days lampadas were lit on the graves. By her faith and love for God matushka strengthened the desire of the nuns to serve Him with all their heart and fulfil His holy commandments. The spirit of

the community also had a powerful influence on the laypeople who visited it. Unbelievers often became believers, and there were cases when they entered the number of the monastics. Many of the simple people left a secure life in the world and entered the community as workers. All the traditions that matushka introduced into the community were kept sacred even when she had left it against her will.

The writer V.P. Bykov, who was converted from spiritism by matushka, wrote about the community: "Very often there were and are moments when the day comes and 170 nuns and 30 more from the children's home have to be given food, and the kind treasurer, Matushka Martha, burdened with constant cares for the present day, has only 25-30 rubles in all together with several letters demanding the payment of debts: sometimes for firewood – the monastery is in terrible need of heating, sometimes for various

Meanwhile, matushka had to suffer a severe trial. For a long time no priest was appointed for the community. Finally, he arrived. To the horror of all he turned out to be an alcoholic. Moreover, he had a terrible character. His own family had left him. He beat the old novice who had been attached to him, and during the services he loudly and indignantly swore at the sacristans and chanters. But matushka firmly told the sisters that since this had happened with the permission of God, and that this priest had been sent to them, their duty was to respect him for the sake of his rank and not be led astray by his weaknesses; she besought them to be patient. The sisters, as ever, received these words of hers with complete trust. Once she saw in a dream that she was rising higher and higher in the air and bringing this priest with her. From this she drew the conclusion that he had not been sent to her for nothing. Meanwhile, the situation became more and more difficult. The priest hated her, he searched out two or three dissatisfied sisters, set them as a faction against the superior and began to write complaints against her, which was unheard of in that peaceful community before then. Mother Sophia only prayed for him and demanded from the disturbed sisters that they endured everything. However she did not find it in herself to have confession with him. But this priest did have one great quality: he prayed sincerely and loved to serve the Liturgy.

Once Mother Sophia suddenly fell seriously ill, and in the night they had to call the community's priest to give her the last rites in case she died. Then something unexpected happened. While going to her, the priest stumbled and dropped the Holy Gifts. This accident elicited such sympathy and compassion from matushka that the priest's eyes were opened and he saw her in a true light. According to the rule he had to report the incident to the bishop. The bishop sent him to a spiritual father. He returned a completely changed man, and declared that he would go to Fr. Gerasimus for correction.

Fr. Gerasimus was an exceptionally spiritual man. In his youth, when he had been a novice of the clairvoyant fool-for-Christ, Elder Gerasimus, his elder used to say of him:

"My Misha will be higher than I."

He commanded him to found a community and refuse nobody entrance into it. In fulfilment of his elder's command, Fr. Gerasimus founded the St. Sergius skete. There he received both helpless sick people and cripples, and the spiritually sick, fallen people who required spiritual regeneration and correction. The healthy looked after the sick and crippled. The monastery was exemplary. The outpouring of Fr. Gerasimus' love had no bounds and was capable of regenerating the hearts of men. He was spiritually close to Mother Sophia, and they sent each other their spiritual children. In accordance with the grace given him, Fr. Gerasimus was a clairvoyant elder.

It was in this "hospital" that the priest wanted to go for repentance. There he became gentler, was completely cured of his alcoholism and asked to go back to matushka. But she was already in the Kiev Protection monastery. It happened like this.

The Kiev Protection monastery was founded at the end of the 19th century by Nun Anastasia, in the world the Great Princess Alexandra Petrovna. The monastery was very large and its administration very complicated. It contained cells for 1200 sisters, a large hospital in which female student medics practised, a refuge and a work-house. The abbess had to deal with various people: with the Great Princely family, who considered this monastery their heritage; with the builders of the huge, as yet unfinished cathedral (besides which there were several churches); with the doctors of the hospital; with the members of the city administration; and with many others. The book-keeping section was huge. Besides, the elderly inhabitants, who were used to the wise direction of the holy eldress Anastasia, did not get on with the superiors, and they often changed.

Metropolitan Flavian of Kiev was at that time in Petersburg, in the Synod, and Matushka Sophia visited him in connection with her own affairs. He was carefully looking for an abbess for the Protection monastery. Now there stood in front of him a young, sensible, clever superior of a community she herself had founded. His choice fell on her. They did not at that time suspect what a find they had made, what a pearl they had caught.

Mother Sophia wept the whole night. She had grown in soul with her community, with the monastic sisters, with the children whom they supported, with the laypeople who settled near it, with the simple people who entrusted her with their troubles. They were digging her out as one digs out a tree with its roots. She was then a rasophor-nun. She was tonsured into the mantia and raised to the rank of abbess in the Novodevichi monastery. She kept the name of Sophia since that is what she was called on all business papers. This took place at the end of 1912 or the beginning of 1913.

The nuns of the Protection monastery were worried as they awaited the coming of the new abbess. And when she arrived a kind of omen took place:

the door of her carriage for some reason would not open, and she had to come out on the other side. She crossed herself and said:

"This is a kind of foretelling of prison."

And so it turned out: when Bolshevik power was established in Kiev, they dragged her out of the monastery into prison.

By her exceptional kindness, humility and simplicity, Abbess Sophia won the hearts of the sisters of the Protection monastery, as she had those of the "Joy and Consolation" community. Everybody loved her. She was generous to the poor, none of the needy left her without help, she never refused to support anybody. It was a great consolation for her that she could now help her beloved "Joy and Consolation" community. Another consolation was that the sisters who were closest to her moved to Kiev with her. Closest of all to her was her faithful assistant in "Joy and Consolation", Mother Martha, who became her senior cell-attendant. She shared with matushka all her sorrows in the Bolshevik period, and died as **Schema-Nun Margaret**. Everybody in the Protection monastery loved her: both the capricious old women, and the children of the refuge, who met her with joyful cries.

This is where the revolution found her. And Mother Sophia was soon called to suffer for the faith. The Protection monastery was closed earlier than the others, and Mother Sophia was taken away to prison, being transferred from one to another.

Being a true offspring of the Optina elders, with whom she was in constant contact, she soberly discerned the true nature of the Soviet revolution and knew what to expect from it. Thus when the assault of the "Living Church" struck, her convent was one of the first to give a blow back, although she herself had already been arrested. A new calendarist bishop was forced into the convent by GPU agents to serve the Liturgy. When the women who attended it came up to kiss the Cross at the end, one after the other they spat on the bishop's hand that held the Cross, and thus put an end to "renovation" in the Protection convent. The bishop learned his lesson and repented.

Hearing about this, Bishop Damascene of Glukhov exclaimed: "If it were not for the women, who else would defend the Church? Let them at least defend it however they can!"

In 1926 Abbess Sophia was released and lived 25 versts beyond Kiev. Then she returned to Kiev and settled with a relative of hers near the Protection convent. In 1927 there was published Metropolitan Sergius' notorious declaration, which betrayed the Church into the hands of the atheists. Mother Sophia and her clergy, led by the young protopriest, **Fr. Demetrius Ivanov**, were the first ones in Kiev who openly rejected it. Unfortunately, they were supported by few of the other clergy, while most of the local bishops were silent, in effect accepting the declaration. The convent was confused and

divided because of this, and Abbess Sophia thought it wiser to leave the convent with Fr. Demetrius and twenty sisters of like mind. The other nuns did not divulge her whereabouts.

Protopriest Demetrius Nikolayevich Ivanov was born on February 20, 1883 in Tbilisi (according to another source, Yelisavetgrad). He finished his studies at Kiev theological seminary, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1905. From 1905 to 1910 he studied in the Kiev Theological Academy, and then became a priest in, successively, Baku, the church of St. George in Kiev and the Pokrov women's monastery in Kiev. An outstanding pastor, he was a spiritual son of **Elder Nectarius** of Optina. Between 1923 and 1930 he was arrested several times, but soon released.

In 1927, after the closure of the Pokrov monastery, Fr. Demetrius served in the Trinity church in the dacha in Irpen, near Kiev, settling there together with his family and Abbess Sophia, in a summer house donated by a wealthy lady, Mrs. Helen Alexandrovna Babenko. The other nuns lived in private houses nearby and at night gathered at her side for services. At this time a miraculous spring was discovered nearby. Living there, of course, was not easy, for an intensified persecution was being directed against all Josephites. In the house there was a hall adorned with paintings. At night they were taken down and replaced by icons, and all night long fervent prayer was offered in special vigils. In the morning the paintings were replaced, and no outsiders could know that this was a catacomb church, which served as a spiritual centre for the True Orthodox Christians of the whole Kiev area.

With the blessing of Elder Nectarius Fr. Demetrius broke communion with Metropolitan Sergius and began to serve in secret. He signed the antisergianist "Kievan Appeal" in the autumn of 1927. In July, 1928 he went to Petrograd and met **Bishop Demetrius** (Lyubimov) and **Fr. Theodore Andreyev**. As representative of the Irpen community and part of the clergy of the city of Gomel, Fr. Demetrius obtained their formal union with the Josephite True Orthodox Christians, and was himself appointed Archbishop Demetrius' proxy in Kiev in 1929. He brought with him into the Irpen community the priest of the local church, **Fr. Victor Davidovich**, **Abbess Rafaila** from Gomel, **Abbess Valeria** from Rzhishchev, **nuns** from Diveyevo, Shamordino and Orenburg, and inhabitants of the Kiev Pokrovsky and Mezhygorsky monasteries. In January, 1929 Fr. Demetrius drew to participation in his movement **Nun Anastasia** from Slavyansk, and then **Nun Irina** (Gladysheva) from Orenburg; they both settled in Irpen. In the summer of 1929 there came to him a large group of pilgrims led by **Archimandrite Hilarion** and **some nuns** from some closed Caucasian monasteries. Fr. Demetrius wrote several antisergianist leaflets. He made copies of them on a typewriter in Irpen, as also of the works of **Fr. Anatolius Zhurakovsky** and **Fr. Andrew Bojchuk**, and recordings of a conversation between members of the Kievan Josephites and Metropolitan Michael. It is reported that he declared the sergianist church to be graceless, and her sacraments invalid, and even forbade people to pray when they pass by sergianist churches. This strict opinion of his he based on the

opinions with regard to this question of Elder Nectarius of Optina. Fr. Demetrius was arrested on January (April) 15, 1931 for being "the leader of the Kiev branch and curator of the Gomel branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church", and on January 2, 1932 was sentenced to five years in the camps. He was sent to Vishlag, near Arkhangelsk, but on October (September) 23, 1932 was released and after being severely beaten and almost tortured to death was exiled to the north, to the city of Archangelsk. On arriving there with his wife, he was suffering so much that he could hardly walk. Nobody knew him in the city. He fell on the street and just lay there, unable to move. A Jewish doctor who was passing took him to his flat and looked after him. However, on March 17, 1933 Fr. Demetrius died in his arms.

There exists an anti-sergianist letter written by a person close to Abbess Sophia to a friend abroad in 1933. To get round the Soviet censor, the church situation is thinly disguised behind a discussion of "doctors". The person who received it immediately understood that "Dr. Sergiev" was Metropolitan Sergius, and "the old men Petrov and Kirillov" - Metropolitans Peter and Cyril, who refused to recognize Sergius' "Declaration". The "clinics and drugstores" were the churches, and "treatment" was Holy Communion and the other Holy Mysteries:

"None of our people have any contact with the doctors of Sergiev, and we do not go to his clinics for treatment. He has acted completely illegally, since the old man, Dr. Petrov, only assigned him as his replacement for current business when he had to go away, but Sergiev, without a consultation of all the doctors, took over the administration, which he directs in all matters. The old men Petrov and Kirillov do not recognize this administration, and both of them are in persecutions and sorrows. My husband was very upset with the activities of Dr. Sergiev, because all the zealots of homeopathy [True Orthodoxy] are deprived of the possibility of treatment, since all the drug stores are in the hands of those who have taken over everything. It is difficult to explain to you, but if you know everything, it is *unacceptable*. I will tell you one thing: I was in Chernigov the whole time without a doctor and travelled to Kiev [Mother Sophia] when necessary, that is, once or twice a year. The children have also not gone for treatment here."

The leading anti-sergianist in the Kiev area was **Bishop Damascene** (Tsedrik) of Glukhov, who was spiritually very close to Abbess Sophia. He wrote flaming appeals showing the ruinousness of Metropolitan Sergius' policy in every aspect. His stirring appeals were secretly copied and re-copied by Orthodox zealots, and some of them reached the free world, where they were distributed. His deep concern was for the future of true, unadulterated Orthodoxy in Russia, a concern shared by his friend, Abbess Sophia. He was often arrested, released for a while, and then exiled again. Once, in 1934, he visited Abbess Sophia when she was also free from prison for a time, and tonsured her into the Great Schema.

In 1937 all the members of the Irpen community except Abbess Sophia, who had already been arrested, were arrested and exiled to an island in the Kamchatka area in the Far East, where they were placed in a collective farm that raised reindeer. Mrs. Barbenko, who became a nun, sent word from there, but when they sent a letter and money there, they did not receive a reply. In her telegram Helen Alexandrovna had said that they had been conveyed on a steamer for several days. Thus did the Irpen community of True Orthodoxy come to an end.

Abbess Sophia was arrested before the rest of the community, and so she was not sent with the other sisters to the Far East, but was thrown from one prison to another, mostly in European Russia. Her sisters here and there managed to keep watch over her, until finally, as a result of the inhuman prison conditions, she contracted bronchial asthma and other serious ailments, and was released to die. But while in prison she was not harmless for the God-hating Soviets. Judging from an earlier encounter she had with one convinced atheist, she must have challenged the beliefs and prejudices of materialists in the prisons, shattering to pieces their philosophical inconsistencies and thus bringing their souls to God. Once, before the revolution, a lady who knew Abbess Sophia's deeply-rooted understanding of the Orthodox world-view, implored her to influence her son, who was a convinced atheist. This man, exceedingly brilliant and talented, was making an enviable career for himself in engineering, and would not yield to anyone's persuasion. Mother Sophia talked to him about religion, but he resisted her words, although she did manage to talk him into going to Sarov monastery; she herself also went there at this time. The duel between the holy nun and the atheist was not an easy one, but by her holy prayers some miracle took place, which shook the engineer to the depths. He not only became a believer, but was truly reborn spiritually. His former life disgusted him completely, and he could not endure to continue it. He left his job, abandoned everything he had, put on simple peasants' clothing, and set out on foot for Solovki monastery. The former atheist became a pilgrim with the Prayer of Jesus on his lips.

On June 15, 1941, Abbess Sophia's sister, Maria Evgenievna Popova, who was living in Paris, received a letter from N.A. Grigorievna, one of matushka's spiritual daughters, informing her of her sister's death on March 22 / April 4 of that year. The last morning in the much-suffering life of Abbess Sophia arrived when she was amidst her spiritual daughters on a collective farm near Serphukhov which was a catacomb convent. She was in a state of absolute exhaustion, not having partaken of any food for several days. After morning prayers, when her room had been put in order, Mother Sophia asked to be left alone, and then began to read her favourite book, the Gospel. Then the sisters heard her coughing and gasping for air. The agony lasted for three hours, but she was fully conscious and her eyes were clear. Then she turned her gaze to an icon, closed her eyes for the last time, and departed to the Lord.

79. HOLY HIEROMARTYR SERGIUS OF MOSCOW (+1941) AND BLESSED XENIA OF RYBINSK (+1940)

and those with them

Protopriest Sergius Mechev was born on September 17, 1892 to the famous Moscow elder, Fr. Alexis Mechev, and his matushka, Anna Petrovna. He was the fourth child and arrived in a household that was already cramped for space and in trouble financially. The frequent shortage of food was the cause of the boy's weak constitution, but he had a strong-willed character inherited from his mother. Her death in 1902 was hard on him, but he had a close bond with his father. In 1902 he entered the third Moscow gymnasium, finishing his studies there in 1910 with a gold (according to another source, silver) medal. He used to serve in the altar, helping his father, and also sang on the kliros. His father greatly loved his son, and wanted him to take his place as the parish priest. However, he did not put pressure on him, and gave him the opportunity to receive a good education. In 1910 Sergius Alexeyevich entered the historico-philological faculty of Moscow University after a short period in the medical faculty. He was one of five pupils of Professor G.I. Chelpanov who later became priests. Among the subjects Sergius Alexeyevich studied at university, he was especially interested in ancient Russian literature. He also studied the history of the Russian Church and listened to the lectures of Professor S.I. Smirnov, for whom he had a great respect. In 1913, Sergius Alexeyevich visited the cities of Switzerland and Italy during his summer holidays. After studying the works of the famous painters of the Renaissance, he came to the conclusion that the ancient Russian icon greatly exceeded western art in its spirituality.

In 1914 he joined the army as a volunteer medical orderly, serving in a hospital at the Western front. In June, 1916 he returned from the front and resumed his studies at the university. In 1917, after graduation, he was recruited into the army and served in Moscow. At the same time he took part in the work of a student theological circle in the name of St. John Chrysostom, organized by **Bishop Arsenius** (Zhadanovsky), where the works of the Holy Fathers were studied and lectures on theological subjects were read and discussed. In 1918 he was demobilized because of his health. In a field hospital he got to know **Euphrosyne Nikolayevna Shiforostova** (born 1890), a student in the Higher Women's courses, who came from a pious merchant's family. Soon after the wedding, Fr. Alexis told the bride that he had very much wanted this marriage and hoped that Sergius would become a priest.

In 1917 the Local Council of the Russian Church meeting in Moscow formed a commission to negotiate relations with the new government. Sergius Alexeyevich became a member of this commission, as a result of which he came into frequent contact with Patriarch Tikhon, who became very fond of him and urged him to become a priest. This decision was finally taken in the autumn of 1918 in Optina Desert during a conversation with **Elder Anatolius** (Potapov). His father had been in close touch with these elders, who would send

Muscovites who came to them to him. And now he received the blessing of Elders Anatolius and Nectarius to become a priest.

In 1918 he was serving in Moscow as the director of a kindergarten. Then he became a pedagogue-instructor for pre-school education. Besides this, until 1922 he was the secretary of a medical journal.

On April 12, 1919 Sergius Alexeyevich was ordained to the diaconate in Moscow, and on April 17, Holy Thursday – to the priesthood, by **Bishop Theodore** (Pozdeyevsky) in the Danilov monastery. Fr. Sergius began to serve with his father in the church of St. Nicholas on Maroseika street in Klenniki. In 1921 he became director of a district kindergarten and instructor in pre-school education. In 1922 he became the secretary of a medical journal.

Fr. Alexis died on June 9, 1923, and his funeral was celebrated by **Bishop Theodore**, now Archbishop of Volokolamsk, thirty priests and six deacons. The body was met at the graveside by Patriarch Tikhon, who had just been released from prison. And while he was blessing the people, which took several hours, Fr. Sergius served the first full pannikhida to his father.

Elder Nectarius once said: "You knew Fr. Alexis? The whole of Moscow knew him, while Fr. Sergius is known so far only by half of Moscow. But he will be greater than his father."

Shortly after the death of his father, Fr. Sergius was arrested for his opposition to the renovationists (together with Archbishop Theodore he was one of the few clergy who did not submit to them), and cast into Butyrki prison. This concentrated his mind on prayer and expectation of the manifestation of the will of God. On the night of the fortieth day after his father's death, Fr. Sergius distinctly felt his presence and was filled with a radiant joy the whole day. He was released on September 15, and immediately went to the Lazarevskoye cemetery where his father was buried. Fr. Sergius' soul was strengthened with the resolve to take on his father's heritage and devote the rest of his life to this.

And so he succeeded his father in the church on Maroseika street. And the parish began to grow, receiving people from all over Moscow. His parish loved him. He filled all with a special joy at his meetings. In hard times he would be able to gather food and provisions. In times of disharmony he would make the warring parties be reconciled and forgive one another. He would give everyone courage by his prayers. During the winter of 1924-25, Fr. Sergius gathered discussion groups before the morning Liturgy. He would lecture on Christian ethics: relations with one another and with the pastor, and the life of an Orthodox Christian in the world in general.

Fr. Sergius' family had two houses in the country: one in Vereya and one in Dubky. For the summer Fr. Sergius would send families with children there for spiritual retreats, which were very profitable.

When Patriarch Tikhon was deceived into accepting the new calendar, Fr. Sergius was upset and came to him:

"Your Holiness Vladyka!" he said. "Don't consider me a rebel, but my church conscience does not allow me to accept the new style!"

"What kind of a rebel are you, Seryozha," replied his Holiness in a fatherly way. "I know you. But they are demanding that I introduce the new style."

The people of the Church did not accept the new style and soon the Julian calendar was restored. Some, however, considered that if the new style was adopted, believers would have greater opportunities to go to festal services, since at that time the Nativity and Baptism of Christ according to the new style were still holidays.

"I assure you," said Fr. Sergius, "soon they will not keep the feast by any calendar."

And soon the five-day-week became the six-day-week, then the seven-day-week or six days with a variable day of rest.

After the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925, Fr. Sergius commemorated only Metropolitan Peter, the patriarchal locum tenens. When Metropolitan Peter was imprisoned, and his deputy, Metropolitan Sergius, demanded that his name be commemorated alongside Metropolitan Peter's, Fr. Sergius considered this demand uncanonical and broke communion with him. And he said that if he were banned from serving by Sergius' Synod, he would not accept it. Fr. Sergius also refused to pray for unbelievers, and especially militant atheists, at the Divine Liturgy. He said that the conversion of the soul to God is a free choice, and it is wrong to pray for those who do not want it, and especially at the Liturgy, which is a service for believers only.

Protopresbyter Michael Polsky wrote: "In essence, a huge majority of the Moscow churches belonged to the secret adherents of Fr. Sergius Mechiev. Among them,... the proclamations of the Soviet government were not followed."

In April, 1928 Fr. Sergius travelled to the village of Kholmischi to see Elder Nectarius of Optina, who expressed the desire that Fr. Sergius be next to him at the hour of his death and bury him. "I am not worried about you," he said to him. Many priests and laymen came to the burial, which was led by Fr. Sergius.

On October 29, 1929, Fr. Sergius was arrested and cast into the Butyrki prison. Together with him, two priests, **Fr. Constantine Rovinsky and Hieromonk Sabbas** (a monk of St. Sabbas' Storozhevsky monastery near Zvenigorod, who had been on the staff of the church on Maroseika while Elder

Alexis was still alive), and nine people from the Maroseika church were arrested.

On November 20 Fr. Sergius was sentenced to three years' exile in the north. On November 24 the train with the arrested people set off for Arkhangelsk. There Fr. Sergius managed to stay in the flat of his spiritual daughter, K.T.

After a time, in 1930, he was sent to the town of Kadnikov in Vologda province, where he obtained refuge in the flat of a church warden, A.K. Shomina. Every day, at the time when services were being celebrated in the church on Maroseika, Fr. Sergius would serve Vespers, and then in the morning Mattins and the Liturgy. When it was possible, his relatives would visit him: his elder children and someone with them. Matushka came only when she was not working. Sometimes his spiritual children would come (during the evening, so as not to attract attention).

Fr. Sergius would write letters to his spiritual children in which he poured out his love for them and his desire to strengthen and console them. "You are my way to Christ," he wrote to them in 1930. "How can I be without you?" And from his place of exile in Ust-Sisolsk in 1930, he wrote to Tatiana Kuprianov: "A hermit is first unto God, and then to the people; a pastor - first to the people and then to God. The eyes of the hermit behold God; the eyes of the pastor - the people. In them He reveals His beauty. To the pastor, the flock does not close off the Lord; on the contrary, it shows the way to Him. My dear Tanya, I am unworthy and more sinful than all, but I am a shepherd, not only a priest. My spirit yearns for every soul of my flock. If it were said, 'Choose between two possibilities - either serve the Divine services or feed the flock' - without hesitation I would feed and console the flock."

In another letter he wrote: "The judgement of God is being accomplished on the Church of Russia. It is not by chance that the visible side of Christianity is being taken away from us. The Lord is punishing us for our sins and in this way he is leading us to purification. Special sorrows and unprecedented attacks are the lot of our days. The purpose of our life is to overcome them through repentance."

On the eve of the Annunciation, 1932, Fr. Sergius' church on Maroseika street was closed and turned into a warehouse. The only priest of the church, **Hieromonk Alexander** (Ilyin) was arrested on his way to the church, was convicted and exiled to Narym. The church began to be broken down from within. However, the wonder-working icon of the Fyodorovskaya Mother of God was taken out and preserved by **Maria Nikolayevna Sokolova**.

Matushka Euphrosyne was accused of being "a member of the church-monarchicst counter-revolutionary organization, 'The True Orthodox Church', and convicted on May 16, 1932 in accordance with article 58-11 to three years' deprivation of the right to live in twelve place, and had to live in the Urals province. Hers was part of the group case "The Case of Ananin and others,

Moscow, 1932". She went to her husband in Kadnikov. Fr. Sergius' four children, who were aged from six-and-a-half to twelve, were sent for re-education to children's homes. However, Matushka Euphrosyne's unmarried younger brother **Gleb Nikolayevich** immediately went to the children at Fr. Alexis' flat, which had now become a crowded "kommunalka", and took their care upon himself.

On March 8, 1933, Fr. Sergius was arrested again in Kadnikov, cast into prison in Vologda, and then, on August 28, given five years in the camps for "anti-collective farm agitation" in "the Case of P.A. Cheltsov, S.A. Mechev and others, Kadnikov, 1933".

Priest Peter Cheltsov was born in 1888 in the village of Shekhmino, Rybnovsk uyezd, Ryazan province. In 1910 he finished his studies at a theological seminary, and in 1915 - at Kiev Theological Academy. He was ordained and appointed inspector of the women's theological school in Smolensk and teacher at the theological seminary. From 1918 he was rector of the church of St. Elijah in Smolensk. In 1922 he was under investigation in connection with "the requisitioning of church valuables". In 1924 he was arrested on suspicion of "counter-revolutionary activity". On June 19, 1927 he was arrested for "counter-revolutionary activity" and sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to Solovki. In September, 1929 he was released and exiled for three years to Kadnikov, Vologda province, where he worked as a cobbler in a house. In February, 1933, in "the Case of P.A. Cheltsov, S.A. Mechev and others, Kadnikov, 1933", he was again arrested and sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to a camp, from where he was released in April, 1936. At the end of 1936 he was rector of the church in the village of Narma, Kurlovsky region, Vladimir province. In May, 1941 he was arrested and condemned to one year's imprisonment for non-payment of taxes. On May, 15, 1942 he was released and returned to Narma. In April, 1943 he was appointed rector of the church in the village of Zakolpe, Gus-Khrystal region by Archbishop John Sokolov. On June 18, 1949 he was arrested in the group case of "the anti-Soviet underground of churchmen", and sent for further investigation to the inner prison. He was accused that: "being a convinced monarchist, and often condemned for anti-Soviet activity, he established links with Molostov, and joined the ranks of the most active participants of the anti-Soviet underground, taking an active part in anti-Soviet meetings of churchmen." On February 13, 1950 he was sentenced to ten years in the camps and sent to Osoblag no. 1 (Mineralny camp). Nothing more is known about him.

Many other exiled clergy in the town who refused to work for the Soviets were arrested at this time.

Soon, through the intercessions of his spiritual children and the help of the Red Cross Fr. Sergius was transferred as a medical orderly to Arkhangelsk, and then to the medical point in a state farm in Ust-Pinega, Arkhangelsk province. However, he was then transferred to heavy, general work and became terribly tired and debilitated. In 1934 or 1935 he was transferred to the Svir camps,

where there were many criminals. Fr. Sergius was working as a medical orderly, but conditions were still very difficult. The criminals stole everything he had, and so he went round in a light coat and barefoot. Matushka and the children came for a time, but Fr. Sergius became very fearful for them and soon sent them back.

From Ust-Pinega Fr. Sergius was sent to Perebory station, near Rybinsk, on dam-building work. Here conditions were better, and he was helped by the fact that only a few kilometres from him there lived a family of his spiritual children, who had been exiled from Moscow. In the summer of 1936 Matushka and the children settled nearby, and Fr. Sergius was able to visit them almost every day.

In 1937, his term came to an end, and he was released. Matushka and the children were already living in Moscow, but Fr. Sergius was not allowed to return home. Instead, he lived near Kalinin (Tver), serving as a medic in a polyclinic for ears, throats and eyes, and celebrating the Liturgy in secret. In 1938 Matushka took a dacha near Kalinin.

Once, being without a bishop, Fr. Sergius followed the advice of one of his spiritual sons and opened his heart to a certain hierarch, Bishop Manuel Lemeshevsky, and in confidence explained to him his church position, thinking that he shared his views. Bishop Manuel was soon arrested, renounced his confessing position and betrayed Fr. Sergius. During questioning at his trial, the arrested hierarch said that Fr. Sergius was the main instigator of the opposition to Metropolitan Sergius. He also said that he wished to be a loyal Soviet citizen and wanted no trouble. The prosecutor tapped him on the shoulder and said:

"Don't worry and be upset, Vladyka: you will be of some use to us later."

After this, he was released and was given the diocese of Orenburg by Metropolitan Sergius...

Fr. Sergius was advised to go into hiding in Central Asia, but he could not leave his spiritual children and lived secretly in various places, serving in secret. At the beginning of 1940 he moved to Rybinsk, and in the summer of 1941 – to the village of Kipyachevo in Rybinsk region. Then he got work as a medical orderly in Rybinsk, while he himself lived on the other side of the Volga.

*

In this period, Fr. Sergius went for advice to **Blessed Xenia of Rybinsk**, who was born in 1848 into a peasant family in the village of Larionovskaya, Myshkin uyezd, Yaroslavl province. From a young age she displayed great piety and the gift of prophecy. Fleeing marriage, at the age of nineteen she fled into the woods, where she lived as a hermitess, living on plants and berries. St.

John of Kronstadt and his assistant Fr. Michael Zelinsky communed her twice and blessed her exploit. After thirty years, she returned to her native village of Rudinsky Slobodka, Myshkin uyezd. She was almost blind. She prophesied the coming of Soviet power and called it the Antichrist. So she was hated by the Bolsheviks in Yaroslavl province. But evidently her fame and the love of the people prevented them from killing her. Many hierarchs and confessors of the Catacomb Church venerated her and sought her advice, including Joseph of Petrograd, Agathangel of Yaroslavl, Cyril of Kazan, Mark of Sergievo and Seraphim of Uglich.

She firmly rejected the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and belonged to the Catacomb Church. Once Metropolitan Agathangel was tempted to accept the declaration, and asked Blessed Xenia for advice. She replied: "If you agree, you will lose everything you acquired earlier."

One of the most zealous leaders of the Catacomb Church was Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich. Blessed Xenia called him "the best archpastor after the reposed Patriarch Tikhon".

After Sergius' declaration, many priests went to the Eldress for advice. There were even some who tried to justify Metropolitan Sergius, saying he was not a heretic. Michael Novoselov, the future hieromartyr, recounts the Eldress' reply: "What do you mean, not a heretic? He is worse than a heretic, he has bowed down to the Antichrist, and if he does not repent, his lot will be in gehenna with the Satanists."

"The Eldress had earlier foretold her own arrest (and release) and calmly waited for it. They arrested her in 1930. She was well beyond 70 years of age, but this did not embarrass the chekists: at the interrogations they mocked and despised her, and used tortures. But she bore it all with patience, and always spoke openly and without fear. She was exiled to Arkhangelsk, but after two years returned, as she had foretold.

After her exile, the Eldress lived without registration, in secret. At first she went around the neighbouring villages. Then she spent some time in Bezhetsk in Tver province. Then she stayed in Rybinsk, in the house of an academic and a deeply believing man, Alexis Alexeyevich Ukhtomsky.

In April 1934 the Eldress with her cell-attendant were again arrested, evidently in connection with the affair of Archbishop Seraphim (Samoilovich). At this time, in March and April, the remaining co-strugglers with Archbishop Seraphim were being arrested. They were all spiritual children of the Eldress Xenia. The reason for the arrests was the "Act of the Exiled Bishops" composed by Archbishop Seraphim in his Arkhangelsk exile and signed by many authoritative bishop-confessors.

At the interrogations the 80-year-old Eldress was again tortured and threatened; they promised to starve her in prison. She attracted general

attention in the camp, the more so in that they had all heard that she was clairvoyant. Seeing the general interest in this "anti-Soviet element", the camp commandant, a Bolshevik and an atheist, decided to mock the saint in front of everyone, and to prove that her clairvoyance was a lie. He ordered a crow to be shot and made into soup for the Eldress out of its flesh, so as to mock and unmask her supposedly false knowledge of today and tomorrow. When they brought this food to the Eldress in her cell, she smiled sadly: "O mother crow, you have flown all over the place, but have landed up in Aksinia's soup!" And she said to the guards: "Eat it yourselves, I will live on the Holy Spirit..."

The amazed commandant, seeing such convincing confirmation of clairvoyance, took no pity at all on the innocent Eldress and pronounced his sympathy over her great misfortune - to suffer in prison at such an advanced age. But the Eldress calmly replied: "But the misfortune is yours, not mine. Go home quickly!" The commandant hurried home, trembling in anticipation, and there he found waiting for him a sad telegram announcing that his wife had just died. Shaken by what had happened, and receiving the most infallible proofs of the Eldress' clairvoyance, he set about interceding that she be released. He referred to the fact that it was senseless to detain such an old and sick person, who was also a burden for the guards. And by the will of God the Eldress returned to her homeland. She prayed almost without ceasing, sitting on a chair, serious and severe, all in black, reading prayers with a prayer-rope.

Nina Alexeyevna remembered with feeling how the Mother of God appeared to the Eldress. "It was in the evening, practically night. Only we, the children, were at home. The old woman was praying quietly, and we began to nod off under her whispering. But I woke up from a clear, all-illuminating light in the old woman's house. Being only half awake, we could not understand anything. Then we ran to her and asked her: what had happened? But she was so moved, so happy, and she talked to us very quietly: "The Mother of God came! She had only to appear, I was enveloped in happiness! Glory to Thee, O Lord, for counting me worthy of such ineffable joy!"

The Eldress was under the constant surveillance of chekists and policemen. The police spied on her constantly and drove away the visitors who were dear to her. So as to avoid this, a pit was dug under the stove of the Eldress' cell. There she could hide if the police unexpectedly arrived.

Once the nun Paranya (Paraskeva Ivanovna), the Eldress' helper, ran up. "O dear! The police are coming! Perhaps it's not the village police this time, and they're not very merciful!" An elderly policeman came up to the Eldress and asked her crudely: "Do you figure out everything?" The Eldress said sharply: "I see you completely, and I know all about you." "What, for example?" "Well, you've abandoned your wife and gone off with a bad woman!" The policeman hemmed: "You're right... But you could have heard that. So... what's going to happen to me in the future?" "Don't worry about that, you have no future." "What do you mean, 'no future'? I'm going to die, is that it?" "In the first days of the war with Germany you will be killed." "You're not talking sense, old

woman! We've just signed a peace agreement with the Germans, An important state treaty." The Eldress replied sadly: "The Germans will spit on that treaty. They'll really lay in to the people... And you will be among the first..." The policeman was silent. He sat on a bench. He began to talk a lot with the old woman. But she added nothing new (well, nothing about the future - what was the point of talking with such a person?) And the policeman said goodbye and went off to the remainder of his short life.

Not only did the Eldress foretell the coming war with the Germans beforehand, but also the war with Japan at Hasan and Khalkin-Gola, and the blockade of Leningrad, which is why she forbade her spiritual children to go and live there.

The Eldress' divine gift revealed itself in other ways. "Thus she once said to the little boy of the family of Nicholas Artamanovich: 'Go off, dear one, and get me some water from the spring. Bring me the water, and I will wash myself in it, it will help my eyes a little!'" The child was very surprised - there was no water nearby! But he obeyed, and went to the ravine that the Eldress had indicated, and - wonder of wonders - saw that a small crystal-clear spring had appeared!

And from then on every day the child went to it for water for the Eldress.

By 1940 almost all the Eldress' spiritual children had received martyric crowns. One of the last of her venerators who were hiding from arrest at that time, was Fr. Sergius Mechev, who had made contact with the sergianst bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky), a secret GPU agent. Manuel betrayed Fr. Sergius and his catacomb children to the authorities. Then Fr. Sergius made contact with the cell-attendant of Blessed Xenia, and asked her:

"What must a priest do who has been betrayed by a bishop?"

The woman was embarrassed and did not want to pass on the question to Matushka Xenia. But when she came to matushka, matushka met her with the words:

"Whom did you refuse?! He is a hieromartyr!"

And she added: "The schema and reclusion await him."

This was a prophecy of prison and death... Two years later Fr. Sergius was arrested and received a martyric death through shooting.

At first everything went well for Fr. Sergius in Rybinsk, but then he received a rebuke at work, broke a leg and became an invalid. When his leg began to heal, he left Rybinsk and found a suitable refuge in an abandoned village on the Volga near Tutayevo. This was a very difficult period for him. He felt himself condemned with no hope of redemption. He prayed inwardly and

prepared for death. Even more than for himself, he suffered for his spiritual children. His whole prayer was concentrated on one thing: that he alone should suffer, and that nobody should suffer for his mistakes.

Fr. Sergius celebrated the Divine services whenever he could. He told the spiritual daughter who accompanied him that he would like to celebrate the Liturgy as much as possible. He wanted to serve forty Liturgies, as if to commemorate the forty-day period of his soul's journey through the aerial "toll houses" after his death. He knew that he would soon be caught and again sent to prison or killed. Visitors sometimes came to him. He talked with them, prayed and accompanied them to the quayside. But he no longer hoped to see his family or his spiritual children.

The war began, increasing the atmosphere of general suspiciousness. On July 7, 1941, Fr. Sergius and his spiritual daughter, **Elizabeth Alexandrovna Bulgakova**, were arrested for the last time as the result of a passport check (the locals suspected he was a German spy) and were cast into Yaroslavl NKVD prison. She was charged with being "an active member of the counter-revolutionary church organization led by S.A. Mechev, which had as its aim a struggle against Metropolitan Sergius and which sought to bring the Church into an illegal existence." A long prison term threatened, but on November 12 she was released - a miracle worked, she said, through the prayers and heroic actions of Fr. Sergius.

During interrogation, Fr. Sergius categorically refused to name those known to him. For his non-cooperation he was cast into a punishment cell for five days. On November 22, Fr. Sergius was convicted, in accordance with articles 58-2 and 58-11, of being "the leader of an anti-Soviet organization", and was sentenced to death. On January 5, 1942 (December 9/22, 1941 or November 6, 1941, according to other sources), he was shot in prison together with other prisoners with sentences longer than ten years.

*

In the last days of the Eldress' earthly life she foresaw no improvement in the spiritual conditions of life. Atheism was gathering strength, faithful pastors were being killed in droves. The Eldress saw in this the fulfilment of the prophecies of the last times and warned of an even worse future: "After us there will be no more elders." But the Eldress foresaw a small regeneration of Orthodoxy before the very end. She even affirmed that Russia "will be ruled by a tsar of a princely race".

The Eldress Xenia knew about her death beforehand. She prayed for a long time, then asked that she be washed and dressed in clean clothes. She wanted to depart into the other world alone, and at the last moment asked her cell-attendant to go out to the well to bring some fresh water. She hurried to carry out her request, but when she returned the soul of the Eldress had been released from this world. The Eldress died on August 1/14, 1940, the feast of the

Maccabean martyrs. At her burial there was a large number of people, which was unusual at that terrible time.

And they remembered the last conversation of the blessed one, how she had told her close ones that she would soon depart to the Lord. And when they sadly asked: who then would teach them and comfort them in difficult times, she calmly and firmly replied that they should go to her grave and ask her in prayer: "I will help you as far as I am able. Only come with prayer! With true faith in the Lord God! Remember that!"

The people did not forget the Eldress Xenia. A beautiful iron cross was placed on her grave. And on the monument were engraved the words: "Thy will be done, O Lord!"

**80. HOLY HIEROCONFESSORS SERAPHIM (+1931) AND
SERAPHIM (+1942) OF MOSCOW**

and those with them

Protopriest Vladimir Anatolyevich Bogdanov (in secret monasticism, **Seraphim**) was born on April 19, 1865 in Moscow, the son of the famous Russian anthropologist and zoologist A. P. Bogdanov, the director of the Moscow zoological museum. In 1888 he graduated from the physical-mathematical faculty of Moscow Imperial University. From 1888 to 1900 he was a teacher in the first real school in Moscow. From 1902 he was in charge of the departments of readings in physics and natural science in the commission for the organization of general educational readings for the Moscow workers. He had the degree of candidate of mathematical sciences. From 1900 to 1917 he was a member of many scientific societies and institutions founded by his father.

He was a disciple of Elder Barsanuphius of Optina, and then spiritual son of Fr. Valentine Amphiteatrov. He also often went for spiritual advice to Elder Barnabas of Gethsemane skete. On May 17, 1914 he was ordained to the priesthood as a celibate in the Dormition cathedral. From 1915 to 1927 he served in the churches of the Saviour of the Transfiguration on the Sands, in the Jerusalem podvorye (the church of St. Philip), and was superior of the church of St. Seraphim of Sarov attached to the St. Seraphim committee for help to the wounded until its closure in 1921. In the 1920s he was secretly tonsured with the name Seraphim. Patriarch Tikhon often proposed to consecrate him to the episcopate, but he refused. He was the spiritual father of **Fathers Vladimir Krivolutsky, Demetrius Kryuchkov and Alexander Gomanovsky**.

In 1923 (1922) he was arrested and imprisoned in Butyrki prison after which he was exiled for three years to Ust-Sysolsk, Zyryansk region together with Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, Archbishop Thaddeus (Uspensky) and Bishop Athanasius (Sakharov). He returned from exile in 1924 (1925), and lived in Moscow, serving every day in various churches. According to another source, he lived in Pushkino. He often lived for long periods in the Diveyevo monastery, in the Seraphimo-Ponetayevsky monastery, and in the Anosino desert. He witnessed that the relics of St. Seraphim had been preserved from the Bolsheviks by the Diveyevo nuns.

He served his last Liturgy in a Moscow church on April 13, 1927, after which he served at home and in village churches. He rejected sergianism, and said: "The head of renovationism, A. Vvedensky, did not do as much harm to the Orthodox Church as Metropolitan Sergius has done by his actions."

Schema-Monk Epiphanius writes: "Before the revolution, Father Vladimir (B.) graduated from the Physics and Mathematics faculty of the Moscow State University. Following this he was Professor of Physics in this same university at the same time that his father was professor of another faculty. During the

revolution he abandoned his teaching career and became an unassuming celibate priest.

"While a student, he had been called 'elder' by the Optina elder, Hieroschemamonk Ambrose. And that is what he became. Once Elder Ambrose had visitors, and the conversation turned to eldership. Hieroschemamonk Ambrose explained that eldership is a special gift of God that is bound neither to age nor to a hierarchical position in the Church. Looking through the window, he drew the attention of his interlocutors to a student who was passing in the yard.

"Look, you see, this is a student. But he is already an elder. He gives to others correct spiritual counsel on how to live, how to save oneself, how to struggle with the passions. And this is a rare gift of God..."

"Years passed. The student became a professor at the Moscow State University next to his father. Then the son became a priest. With the publication of Metropolitan Sergius' declaration recognizing Soviet power as God-given, Fr. Vladimir separated from Metropolitan Sergius. When all the Moscow churches, for fear of the Soviet authorities, became sergianist, as before they had become renovationist, Protopriest Fr. Vladimir was serving in the Serbian podvorye in obedience to the Serbian patriarch. The elder gave spiritual food to many educated people, mainly in secret.

"He had the habit of delivering very short, pithy sermon-appeals of two to three minutes' duration, in the spirit of short ascetic instructions from the holy Fathers. These sermons did not fatigue people, but, on the contrary, favoured a prayerful mood and concentration. In his actions he followed the rules of St. Hesychius of Jerusalem, who taught that 'the outer is the enemy of the inner', and for that reason the elder carefully avoided anything that could appear to be in the nature of self-advertisement. His whole spiritual activity was hidden from human eyes. But it seems that towards the end of his life he was a monk and bore the name of Seraphim. But this was not made public knowledge.

"He was, of course, persecuted by the Soviet authorities. They often arrested him and he was not only in prison but also in camps. On being freed he hid himself and directed secret Catacomb communities of believers. He taught everyone to have no communion with the sergianist church, because it was a political false-church united with the God-fighting authorities.

"One of those spiritually fed by the elder, a Moscow priest, said:

"It so happened that, together with Batyushka Vladimir, we also, priests who had enjoyed his spiritual direction, were arrested. They kept us in Butyrki prison in a room full of priests of every kind. Both the renovationists and the neo-renovationists [the sergianists] were there. We kept apart, our group being united by our elder. He remained all the time in prayer.

"The day of the Holy Trinity arrived. We got up early and prayed, standing by the big window, which was somewhat darkened by the prison "cap" or "muzzle". We even read through the Vespers kneeling prayers. The elder read them from memory almost perfectly. And after this, since the Lord had sent him in a parcel the reserved Gifts, we all, led by the elder, received communion... Only we did not know what to do with that thin piece of paper in which the Gifts had been wrapped. You see, there were some imperceptible small particles on it. The elder told us that this paper had to be burned on the window sill, covered with a sheet of zinc and tin. We did this. But some light ashes were still left, and again we did not know what to do.

"At that very moment, when the cigarette paper was burning quickly, with the same speed there appeared a white dove on the window-sill. It pecked up all the ashes and disappeared behind the edge of the sill. We were stunned by the sight. A holy miracle had been accomplished before our eyes. The symbol of the Holy Spirit, the white dove, had consumed the imperceptible burnt remains of the Holy Gifts. With tears of tender feeling, the elder said:

""Let us thank the Lord!""

In 1929 Fr. Vladimir moved to Bratovschina, and year later settled secretly in a house on the outskirts of Sergiev Posad (according to another source, in Pushkino). Here he served secretly with another catacomb elder, Archimandrite Seraphim (Bityukov). Fr. Vladimir died on November 10, 1931. He was considered to be an elder, and the Optina elders sent many people for spiritual advice to him.

*

Fr. Vladimir was close to **Archimandrite Seraphim** (in the world Sergius Mikhailovich Bityukov), who took on several of his spiritual children after his death, and was perhaps the last Josephite priest to serve openly in Moscow. He was born in 1880 in Moscow, of a merchant's family. He received a higher technical education, and worked in one of the capital's companies. He visited Optina Desert. He attended lectures in the Moscow Theological Academy. In 1919 he was ordained to the priesthood, serving in the church of the Resurrection in Sokolniki in Moscow with Fr. John Kedrov, the brother of Hieromartyr Pachomius, Archbishop of Chernigov. In 1920 Fr. Sergius was summoned by Patriarch Tikhon to serve in the church of the Holy Martyrs and Unmercenaries Cyrus and John on Solyanka, where he remained until the end of 1927. In 1922 he was tonsured into the mantia with the name Seraphim. In 1926 he was raised to the rank of archimandrite. Then he served in churches in Moscow region. In 1926 he was arrested for a short time on a charge of hiding church valuables, but was soon released when it was realized that the valuables belonged to the Serbian Church, whose podvorye was situated in the church of SS. Cyrus and John. After Metropolitan Sergius issued his notorious declaration, in July, 1928, Fr. Seraphim joined the Catacomb Church. For some time he lived in various places, but then settled in Sergiev Posad in the house

of **Nun Xenia (Grishanova)** of Diveyevo. As was revealed in his interrogation, he was the spiritual father of other Diveyevo nuns who had been forced to leave the convent after its closure in 1927. Like Fathers Alexis and Sergius Mechev, Fr. Seraphim was guided by the counsels of Elder Nectarius of Optina. Another of his guides was Elder Zosima (in schema Zachariah), who had come to Moscow after the closure of the Holy Trinity - St. Sergius Lavra.

Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov) writes about him: "With his priestly rank he received something which is rare in our time - the gift of the exorcism of demons. The elder received this special gift for the healing of the possessed, the oppressed, 'those under the constraint of the devil'. Thus when he was serving, the church of the podvorye resembled a hospital for the mentally ill, in which there gathered every possible maimed, hunchbacked and epileptic person, as well as those clearly oppressed by evil spirits."

The following story is ascribed by Schema-Monk Epiphanius to Fr. Seraphim and by another to his spiritual father, **Elder Zachariah** of Sergiev Posad, who died in 1936.

"A special prayer service was being read over a possessed man. The man being healed was letting his eyes rove around in a terrified manner and muttering unclear words. It was as if something were boiling inside him..."

"'No, no, I will not go out!' 'he' cried in a strange, rough voice which was not his own.

"But the prayer commanded the spirit 'in the name of Jesus Christ', 'in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' to come out of him and never enter into him again..."

"The priest repeated his call to set free God's creation... But that which was inside the man stubbornly remained within him:

"'No, no! I will not come out. I do not want to!...'"

"But suddenly the priest said:

"'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, I command you: tell me: was my father with you?'"

"'He was! But your prayers got him out!'"

"'And my mother: was she with you?'"

"Again, in a disconcerted tone, suffering and despairing:

"'We did not see her!... For she strewed her whole path with pieces of bread...'"

“Here it is necessary to make a clarification.

"The demon was talking about something that the man being healed did not know... In the time of the terrible famine of 1921 and 1922 the mother of Father Seraphim took upon herself the task of feeding homeless children. She literally collected pieces of bread from among her acquaintances. She did this day and night and thereby fed unfortunate children who had been left to the mercy of God. The demon was recalling this exploit when he said that 'she strewed her whole path with pieces of bread', that is, through her unparalleled mercifulness towards the unfortunate children she obtained an unhindered ascent to Heaven...

"After the possessed man had obeyed the priest as he adjured the demon to reply in the name of the Lord, the priest again said:

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I command you, unclean spirit, come out! In the name of the Holy Trinity I command you...!"

"And suddenly, instead of a reply, there was a soul-rending shriek. And the oppressed man fell down, trembling throughout his body. He became black like a corpse... But the priest read the appointed prayers from The Book of Needs by Metropolitan Peter Moghila...

"That is how the demon was driven out, leaving with a terrible scream. But the sufferer himself knew nothing of this, he absolutely did not remember what had happened to him... They brought him to the Holy Cross and the Holy Icons. He willingly and fervently kissed them. But if they succeeded in doing that before his exorcism, it was only with great difficulty, with a struggle..."

Archimandrite Seraphim died on February 19, 1942. In the course of an investigation into "the affair of the underground", on December 8, 1943, NKGB agents found his burial place under the floor of a house in Sergiev Posad. According to the official report, "some parts of the body (his hands and face) preserved the colour of flesh". Fr. Seraphim was buried in a ryasa and epitachelion and with a wooden cross.

*

Protopriest Alexander Ivanovich Gomanovsky was born on August 12, 1886 in Kimry, Tver province (or the Volga region). From his earliest childhood he dreamed of becoming a priest, but for a long time his mother did not agree. Alexander married, but not for long. At the marriage service his bride was supported on both sides – she was in the last stages of tuberculosis. Alexander sent her to be treated, but she soon died. He was ordained, and in 1911 he began to serve in the church of St. Philip of Moscow on Povarskaya street in Moscow. In the same year he was transferred to Kazanka settlement,

Astrakhan province. In 1915 he joined the army and became a regimental priest in Galicia. He was at the front, and was given awards.

When the revolution came, Fr. Alexander firmly rejected it, although he was meek and humble by nature.

At first he was the spiritual son of Archimandrite Philaret of the Chudov monastery. Another of Fr. Philaret's spiritual children, Nadezhda Fyodorovna Blagushina, recalls that Fr. Alexander would give all his money to the monastery without leaving anything for himself to buy food. But it always miraculously appeared. Once he blessed an empty table, and then one neighbour brought in some pies, and after her another – some fish.

In 1919 he became preacher and secretary of the Brotherhood of the Zealots and Preachers of Orthodoxy, and was rector of the church of St. Sabbas the Sanctified on Devichy polye. He also served in the house church on Vorovsky Street. He served as a groom in the Central Bacteriological Institute, and at the moment of his arrest was working in the Palace of Arts. He became the spiritual son of Fr. Vladimir Bogdanov, and on October 9, 1926 received the monastic tonsure secretly from him, taking the name Daniel.

Fr. Vladimir and Fr. Alexander would often go with a group of pilgrims to Diveyevo. N.F. Blagushina relates that from the station they would walk for a long time chanting the akathist to St. Seraphim. Then the akathist would be cut up and a phrase would be given to each to chant. It turned out that the phrase each one received suited him or her in a wonderful way.

Zoya Vasilyevna Kiseleva recounts the following conversation between Fr. Alexander and his spiritual father at table which demonstrates Fr. Alexander's obedience:

“Well, children, were you at liturgy today?” asked Fr. Vladimir. “You, for example, Sophia?”

“I was at St. Sabbas the Sanctified.”

“What was the epistle reading?”

“I don't remember, batyushka.”

“Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Sophia? What distracted you?”

“I was looking at Fr. Alexander’s hair and thinking: ‘What wonderful hair he has!’”

“Do you hear, Fr. Alexander? Immediately get your hair cut, otherwise you will answer for her soul.

“Batyushka?!” we all cried.

“No, he must get his hair cut,” repeated Fr. Vladimir.

Fr. Alexander got up smilingly and immediately went and got his hair cut.

It was a difficult time, with inflation and hunger. Fr. Alexander was serving a pannikhida. When those who ordered it asked how much they should pay him, he said:

“Twenty kopeks. Clothing is dear, footwear is dear... Twenty kopeks. I won’t budge.”

At that time everyone was reckoning in the millions, but he insisted on his “Twenty kopecks. I won’t budge.” It turned out that these people were very poor.

“Your batyushka is blessed,” they said to Nadezhda Fyodorovna.

Fr. Alexander lived in a large room with many books. In the comparatively prosperous periods of his life Fr. Alexander would spend practically all his money on books, restricting himself in everything else.

Once, towards the end of the 1920s, Sergius Alexandrovich Nilus unexpectedly visited him. Fr. Alexander was very glad.

“How come?! You’re alive?! The whole world is looking for you to kill you!”

Sergius Alexandrovich replied that he had been in Optina and a schema-monk had advised him to read the 26th, 50th and 90th psalms everyday – “and nothing will happen to you,” he said. “They’ll shoot you out of a cannon, but it won’t kill you.”

Sergius Alexandrovich died in 1929. That autumn Fr. Alexander visited his wife in Krutets, where she gave him her husband's coat.

In 1929 Fr. Alexander came home from some trip and found a message from the authorities at home. He could have decided not to go because the message was given when he was away and handed to the cleaner, Catherine Stepanovna. But he went in any case. He decided to suffer as the others had suffered. On October 29 he went with Nadezhda Fyodorovna to the authorities, who arrested him and on November 20 condemned him for "organizing a sisterhood at the church of St. Sabbas the Sanctified and commemorating prisoners and those killed from the ambon". In accordance with article 58-10 he was sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to Uralsk in Western Kazakhstan. On July 3 he was sentenced to three years' exile in Kazakhstan. On May 28, 1933 his mother petitioned for a lightening of his lot because of his various illnesses, but her petition was refused. On July 3, 1935 he was released and, not being allowed to live in Moscow, went to live in Kalyazin, Tver province.

According to another source, however, Fr. Alexander was sent to Solovki. Claudia Ivanovna (Jikoyevich) recalls: "He wrote to us from there. And it was possible to write to him, but he warned: "When you write don't put all the letters, don't forget the big animal" (the first letters of Solovki's full name spelt SLON, meaning "elephant"). According to this source, after his release in about 1932 he was not allowed to live in Moscow, and so lived in the city of Kalyazin, near Moscow, and in other places. According to one source, he was transferred from Solovki to a settlement in Kem. His spiritual children did not forget him there, either, and went to see him, bringing him what they could, although the trip itself could earn them a prison sentence - the NKVD did not welcome such links. They would come, and he would go to the next village to see them, and would not appear again for two days. Strange as it may seem, the bosses overlooked these absences of his, although it was a gross violation of the rules. Moreover, they even entrusted him with some responsible tasks. Once they sent him off as a guard. He went up into the tower and looked at the passing trains, which were taking exiles. Once he looked into the window of a carriage and some Tatyana Katuar, whom he knew well. He rushed onto the platform and for a long time waved at the disappearing train...

"In August, 1933," recalls Claudia Ivanovna, "I, Macarius Mikhailovich Suvorov and Natasha Polyanskaya went to see Fr. Alexander. Natasha walked on crutches and was not able to carry anything, Macarius and I had to carry everything. We arrived at the place and for some time waited for permission [to see him]. We received it, and began to cross [the river] on a boat. When we had crossed, Fr. Alexander hurriedly came up to us. We gave him a prayer-book, medicines and money. But when he went back they picked on him: 'Why did you leave the zone?' He could find nothing better to say than: 'Today was Natasha's namesday.' And again, strange as it may seem, they let him go, and

then gave him a short vacation so that he could spend some days with us. One of his guards said: 'He is a batyushka for all batyushkas.'

"We paid the railwayman and hired a little carriage. It was on the rails in a siding. There were many such houses on wheels. Fr. Alexander served a moleben. Since the World War he had a small suitcase with a double bottom, with an antimins. We lived for several days in the little carriage. It was the beginning of autumn, quiet and peaceful. It rained gently for a long time, but it was not cold. Officially, Fr. Alexander had been given a week's vacation, but it was possible to live longer there. Fr. Alexander was neither joyful nor sad. He accepted everything as inevitable, as a trial sent from above. And in essence he did not hope for any change. He accurately assessed the time in which he lived."

In 1935 they received the news that Fr. Alexander was in Saratov. Claudia Ivanovna went to see visit him, but at some station she was given a telegram from Macarius Mikhailovich: 'Dyedushka (that is, Fr. Alexander) has moved to Uralsk. Return.'" She got out at that station. But unexpectedly the thought came to her to go to Uralsk. She sold her already-bought return ticket and went first to Saratov, and then by boat to Astrakhan. From Astrakhan she got to Uralsk, but had no idea where to look for Fr. Alexander. And then, quite unexpectedly, she met Vladyka Seraphim (Zvezdinsky). They went to his house. And again a miracle: she saw at his house an address written in Fr. Alexander's handwriting.

"Where did this come from?!"

"But this is my favourite batyushka," replied Vladyka Seraphim.

The next day she ran to meeting, but then, to make things worse, a convoy came from Tashkent. There was a pile of passports on the boss's table. He called out the prisoners in turn and sent them to "voluntary" settlement. She waited for a long time until they had all passed on, and finally made up her mind. She gave her passport and said:

"I have to meet Gomanovsky."

The boss, whose name, as she later learned, was Popov, said spitefully:

"How do you think you're behaving yourself?! I could right now take your passport and send you where I've sent them..."

But then he relented and allowed her to meet Fr. Alexander. He was in the local prison, and had arrived with the preceding convoy from Central Asia. There the People's Commissar for Education Mantashev had helped him – he knew Fr. Alexander and was very well disposed towards him. Claudia Ivanovna's arrival gladdened Fr. Alexander, but he hurried her up. Her vacation was drawing to an end, and he was afraid that she would be late. In those times that was fraught with consequences...

When Fr. Alexander was sent to the settlement, Claudia Ivanovna tried to help him to prepare for the severe local winter. But it didn't turn out well. There were many exiles, and there wasn't enough for everybody. She wrote: "I didn't manage to get wooden logs..."

From December, 1940, as all sources agree, Fr. Alexander was living illegally in Moscow with his spiritual children, secretly serving in flats and giving communion to the sick in hospital. He was known for his humility, self-sacrifice and joyful disposition.

According to one version, he was arrested in 1941, and died in camp in Karaganda in 1943. Claudia Ivanovna said that there was very little food there, so Fr. Alexander got weaker, fell ill and soon died. According to another version, however, he died in Moscow. Someone even remembered that in this last, Muscovite period of Fr. Alexander's life he had such bad rheumatism that when he walked the creaking of his legs could be heard through the room. They say that Claudia Ivanovna knew much about this period of his life. She also knew where he was buried, but carefully concealed this from everyone. It seems that **Macarius Mikhailovich** also knew about this. He was not only Fr. Alexander's cousin, but also his spiritual son. But he also was silent about this. He was a deeply believing person, who, though not tonsured into monasticism, led a truly monastic life, for which the Lord granted him the gift of clairvoyance. Claudia Ivanovna was buried next to Macarius Mikhailovich in Khovansky cemetery. A lit candle would not go out on his grave even in a strong wind...

*

Priest Vladimir Vladimirovich Krivolutsky was born on November 25, 1888 in the city of Orel. In 1910 he graduated from the Law Faculty of Moscow Imperial University and served as a lawyer. From 1915 to 1918, after finishing artillery courses, he served at the front as a volunteer. In 1918 he was demobilized and moved to Moscow. From 1918 he returned to military service, and was in the 33rd artillery brigade in the rank of brigade adjutant. After demobilization in 1921 he studied at the National Orthodox Academy, and attended theological courses and lectures read by Fr. Paul Florensky, S.N. Durylin and others. His spiritual father was Fr. Vladimir Bogdanov. On February 21 / March 6, 1922 he was ordained to the diaconate and served both in the church of SS. Cyrus and John and in the church of the Saviour of the Transfiguration on Pesky. According to one source, he was arrested for

opposition to the renovationist heretics. On August 27 / September 9, 1923 he was ordained to the priesthood by Patriarch Tikhon. From October, 1924 to 1930 he served in Moscow, in the church of the Mother of God of the Sign in Sheremetyevsky pereulok, where the honorary president of the church council was Archbishop Tryphon (Turkestanov). He was arrested in 1927, and released a few months later.

He did not recognize the “declaration” of Metropolitan Sergius, and wrote a denunciation of it from an eschatological point of view. He wrote: “Although the path chosen by the former Metropolitan Sergius and Sergianism has done no formal damage to the teaching of the Orthodox Church through heresy with regard to the dogmas, it is something more terrible than heresy. It is exactly what the holy Apostle Paul warned about: ‘This know also, that in the last days perilous times will come. For men will be (here the Apostle describes the future state of these men, and he concludes): ‘having a form of godliness, but denying the form thereof’ (II Timothy 3.1-5). Alas, only the appearance has been preserved, while the inner content, the power of confession of the Christian faith has turned out to be trampled upon, substituted, destroyed!...

“Until now mankind has known the first three forms of political power: but mankind has so far had no experience of the fourth kind, that is, the *consciously God-fighting* kind. This power was destined to appear when people matured in the sin of apostasy from God, of the struggle against God.

“And lo! The appearance of ‘the horseman on the pale horse’, to whom was given ‘power over one quarter of the earth’, signifies *the appearance for the first time on earth of a consciously and deliberately God-fighting power.*” This power is only allowed by God, although the will of this power is directed to the annihilation in people of all that is from God, and even His very name. The Almighty Lord allowed this power to rule over men, for the will of the great majority of people, in passing through most serious sins, has matured in evil and resistance to God to the point of fighting against God (that is, Satanism).”

From January 22, 1930, after the closure of the church of the Sign, he served in the St. Nicholas church in Kotelniki. On December 28, 1930 he was arrested for belonging “to the Moscow branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church” and exiled to Pinega, Archangelsk province, for three years, sharing this exile with St. Nikon of Optina. Towards the end of 1932 he was transferred to the devastated Krasnogorsk monastery on the banks of the river Pinega. Released in December, 1933, he lived in Mozhaisk and Yegoryevsk, serving secretly in the homes of the faithful as a priest of the True Orthodox Church.

He was arrested for the third time on April 21, 1946 during a secret Paschal Mattins, and on November 30 was sentenced by the MGB to ten years in a forced labour camp for “anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda and the creation of a group” (article 58-10). Fr. Vladimir served his term first for three years in Krasnoyarsk, then in a prison in Moscow, and then in the so-called “death

camp" located in the village of Spas, in the district of Karaganda (according to another source, the village of Dolinskoye, in the Karlag camp), where there were 25,000 prisoners. According to one source, he died on September 9, 1952 and was buried in a now unmarked grave on the outskirts of the city of Abakan. According to another source, however, he was released from the camps in 1955 because of illness. Or more exactly, he was let out "to die". In 1956 Fr. Vladimir wanted to go to the northern Caucasus; but then his close relatives reported that he had died, in Moscow on March 29, 1956 from tuberculosis of the lungs. According to one source, he confessed and received the Holy Mysteries from Igumen Ioann (Seletsky) before he died. He was buried in the Vvedensky cemetery in Moscow.

*

Priest Alexis Ivanovich Gabriyanik was born in 1895 in the village of Manchitsy, Volkovysskiy uyezd, Grodno province. He graduated from a pedagogical institute in Moscow. From 1915 to 1917 he served as a private in the army, first in the 166th regiment and then in the 12th reserve regiment. In 1917 he entered the Third Medical Institute in Moscow and also went to lectures at the Moscow Theological Academy. At the same time, from 1917 to 1920, he was a teacher in one of the villages of Irbit uyezd, Perm province. In 1920 he took social-historical courses at the Academy of Popular Education, and entered the medical faculty of Moscow State University. From 1921 to 1922 he worked as a teacher. From 1922 to 1924 he worked as a cashier in Sergievo, Moscow province. In 1924, while studying at Moscow Theological Academy, he married Anna Alexandrovna, the daughter of the Academy Professor A.P. Golubtsov. He was a spiritual son of Elder Alexis (Sobolev) of Zosima desert. From 1924 to 1925 he was unemployed. In 1925 (according to another source, 1924) he was ordained to the priesthood by Patriarch Tikhon (according to another source, Bishop Bartholomew (Remov) of Sergievo in the Vysokopetrovsky monastery in Moscow). He served in the church of the village of Mikhailovskoye, 40 kilometres from Sergievo, and then, until 1928, in the church of the Apostles Peter and Paul in Sergiev Posad. In April, 1928 he was banned for refusing to commemorate Metropolitan Sergius. Within a week the ban was removed; he was transferred to Moscow and for a short time served in the church of SS. Cyrus and John, becoming a spiritual son of the rector, Fr. Seraphim (Bityukov). In May, 1928 he was arrested in Sergievo together with more than one hundred other people in connection with the affair of the "attempt on the life of agitprop deputy Kostomarov" and was exiled for three years to Central Asia. First he was cast into Butyrki prison, then into Vladimir city prison. On his return he lived in Voronezh, but in 1933 he was sentenced to two years in the camps according to article 58-10 and was sent to kishlak Guzar, Karshkadarinskaya province, Uzbekistan. On October 12, 1931, after completing his term, he was deprived of the right to live in twelve places in the country, Urals province and some border areas. He settled in Pavlovsk, Voronezh province, where his family followed him. However, they were so poor that Fr. Alexis had to beg for alms. In 1933 he was condemned in Voronezh for "belonging to a monarchist organization", and was sentenced in accordance

with article 58-10 to the Temkinskye camps in Mordovia for three years. In 1935 he was released, but was not allowed to live in Moscow, so he lived in Strunino on the Yaroslavl railway and worked in a warehouse. From 1936 to 1937 he worked as a laboratory technician; from 1937 to 1940 – as a medical orderly in a clinic of infectious diseases in the village of Arsaki, Moscow province; and from 1940 to 1941 – as a sanitary doctor in a factory in Sergiev Posad. In September, 1941, in connection with the beginning of the war and the evacuation of the factory, he was deprived of his registration. With the blessing of Fr. Seraphim, he went around the villages of Vladimir province, serving in the houses of believers and working in various institutions. He belonged to the “non-commemorators”, and was in communion with **Hieromonk Andrew** (Elbson) and **Fr. Alexander (Ilyin)**.

On March 10, 1946 he was arrested on the street as he was going to a meeting of his catacomb community. He had been denounced by one of his spiritual daughters. He was cast into the Lubyanka prison, and was sentenced to four years in prison in accordance with articles 58-10 part 2 and 58-11 for “participation in an anti-Soviet church organization” and “anti-Soviet agitation”. The investigation established that Fr. Alexis had had meetings with Fr. Seraphim in Sergiev Posad, and also with Fr. Vladimir Krivolutsky. He had also hidden Christians in his flats in Moscow and Sergievo. In October, 1946 he was moved to Vladimir strict regime prison. In March, 1950 he was sent from Vladimir prison into exile in Krasnoyarsk region. On the way, in the transit prison in Kirov, he fell ill with tuberculosis and died on May 17, 1950.

*

Priest Demetrius Kryuchkov was born on September 10, 1874 in the village of Lyakovka, Glukhov uyezd, Chernigov province, in the family of the peasants Ivan and Eudocia Kryuchkov. He had the title of people’s teacher. In 1882 the Kryuchkov family together with other poor peasants left for Omsk province and settled in the village of Rozhdestvenka not far from the city of Tatarsk. But the eight-year-old Demetrius did not go with his parents: on the day of their departure he ran away and hid himself. In order to survive, he got a job with the landowner Ratchenko in the village of Zarudskoye looking after bees. He worked there for about five years. At the age of thirteen Demetrius went to work for the landowner Trophimenko in the city of Glukhov, Chernigov province, where he learned gardening. He was about six years with this landowner, and in 1893, at the age of nineteen, he left Glukhov for Moscow, where he was hoping to study. Since he had no money, he was forced to earn his living, and with this in mind he enrolled in a church choir. By 1908 he had become the reader in the church of the village of Kraskovo, near Moscow. In the same year he married Anastasia Semyonovna, a native of Smolensk province. The marriage turned out to be childless. Demetrius Ivanovich served for seven years as a reader. In 1916 he was ordained to the diaconate in the same church.

In 1917 Fr. Demetrius was transferred to Moscow to the church of the Exaltation on Brazhka (in Plyuschikha). Once, during the summer of 1918, **Fr. Vladimir Bogdanov** came to the church of the Exaltation to serve the funeral for his niece. Fr. Demetrius was concelebrating with him as deacon. During the service Fr. Vladimir pointed out certain things to him. This first short communion in prayer with Fr. Vladimir made a very deep impression on Fr. Demetrius. At the end of the funeral Fr. Demetrius asked permission from Fr. Vladimir to stay in his flat in order to learn how to serve and not make any more mistakes in future. Fr. Vladimir agreed, and very soon Fr. Demetrius became his regular visitor, and later his spiritual son.

In 1919 Fr. Demetrius was ordained to the priesthood for the same church in which he had served as deacon. In 1922, at the request of the clergy of the church of St. Sabbas the Sanctified (in Savvinsky pereulok), Fr. Demetrius was transferred there. This was the year in which the requisitioning of church valuables by the Bolsheviks took place. The mass arrests also affected the clergy of the church of St. Sabbas: all its clergy were arrested, including Fr. Demetrius. On May 8 he was condemned by a military tribunal for “reading the appeals of Patriarch Tikhon against the requisitioning of church valuables”, and was sentenced to five (according to another source, three) years imprisonment (according to another source, in a corrective labour camp). Since he had been in the habit of working since the age of eight, he occupied himself with beekeeping and shoemaking in prison. He was freed from prison on amnesty before the end of his term, in 1924. In 1925, while serving a pannikhida for Protopriest Alexis Mechev, he got to know his son, the future hieromartyr **Fr. Sergius Mechev**.

In 1927 Fr. Demetrius rejected the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and attached himself to the True Orthodox Church, to which other pastor-confessors in Moscow also belonged: Fr. Sergius Mechiev, Fr. Vladimir Bogdanov, Fr. Seraphim (Batyukov), Fr. Vladimir Krivolutsky, Fr. Alexis Kozyaev, and others. At about this time he retired because of illness.

In 1928-1929 Fr. Demetrius was invited unofficially to serve in the church of Saints Cyrus and John on Solyanka (the Serbian podvorye), which was one of the centres of the True Orthodox Church in Moscow, while living in the village of Tomilino, Moscow province. In November, 1931 Protopriest Vladimir Bogdanov reposed. Fr. Demetrius served his funeral service.

On April 5, 1932 Fr. Demetrius was arrested for being “a participant in the Moscow branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and together with other Catacomb priests was detained in Butyrki prison. He was involved in the investigation of the case of Bishop Seraphim (Zvezdinsky) of Dmitrov. He refused to plead guilty. “I have no political views,” he said to the investigator. “I hardly know anyone, and am interested only in the inner life.” During the interrogations he prayed continuously, sometimes aloud, and did not name a single name.

According to the sentence of the Special Convention attached to the Collegium of the OGPU of the USSR, on July 7, 1932 Fr. Demetrius was exiled according to articles 58-10 and 11 to three years' exile in Western Siberia, to the village of Timsk in Narymsk region. After serving his term of exile, in 1935, he settled in the city of Gzhatsk and got work as a wood-cutter.

In 1937 Fr. Demetrius, now aged sixty-three, moved closer to Moscow, to the village of Tomilino, Moscow province. Here with the money he had earned he built himself a little house of seven square metres, which those who knew him called a shed, and obtained work as a gardener in a kindergarten. His spiritual children and friends lived in Moscow; at great risk Fr. Demetrius now took upon himself the burden of their spiritual welfare. He regularly visited them in Moscow and in the villages near Moscow, serving the liturgy secretly in flats and dachas, confessing and communing, baptising and burying. Through a miracle the Lord preserved him from arrest.

In 1941, as the Germans approached Moscow, the kindergarten in which Fr. Demetrius worked was evacuated from Tomilino, but the director of the school did not offer that Fr. Demetrius go with them, although he wanted that. He remained as gardener for the military hospitals that took the place of the school. He grew seedlings of cabbage, tomato, beetroot, carrot and flowers. When the hospital left Tomilino, he remained as gardener for the day nursery of the Semashko factory.

On May 17, 1946 Fr. Demetrius was arrested by the MGB for the third time and accused of being "one of the leaders of the anti-Soviet church-monarchical underground". To all accusations he replied: "I deny all this." To questions on the purpose of people's visits to him he replied: "On business... in connection with the need to repair my primus, there were no other conversations... I went to the flat so that she might help me to get a currant bush from her acquaintance..." During the investigation Fr. Demetrius had to endure twenty interrogations which lasted from two to eight hours. "I will never admit to any political crimes," he said at one of the last interrogations. He was transferred to the Lefortovo prison.

On September 30, 1946 Fr. Demetrius was sentenced to five years in exile. After completing his term of exile he went to live near the city of Abakan in Krasnoyarsk region. He died on September 9, 1952 and was buried in a now unmarked grave on the outskirts of Abakan.

81. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR ANTHONY, SCHEMA-ARCHBISHOP OF TAURIS (+1942)

Schema-Archbishop Anthony, in the world Prince David Ilych Abashidze, was born on October 12, 1867 on an estate belonging to his family in the village of Vedzhiny, Sigiakhsky uyezd, Tbilisi province, Georgia. On his mother's side he was related to the Bagrations. The Abashidze family was rich, highly honoured and had access to the imperial court. David's family were preparing their heir to multiply the worldly glory of their family. After studying in a Tbilisi gymnasium he went to Tbilisi theological seminary. In 1891 he graduated from the New Russian Imperial University in Odessa, after which he was tonsured with the name Demetrius (on November 16, 1891) and ordained to the diaconate (on November 21). Then he entered the Kiev Theological Academy, from which he graduated in 1896. In the same year he was ordained to the priesthood, and began to teach in the Tbilisi theological seminary.

In 1897 Fr. Demetrius was appointed inspector of the Kutaisi theological seminary, and in 1898 - inspector of the Tbilisi theological seminary. According to some, it was he who expelled Joseph Dzhugashvili, better known as Stalin, from the seminary, while others assert that he was particularly kind to Stalin, which is why he was so often released from prison. However, Fr. Demetrius himself only said that he knew Stalin as one of the pupils of the seminary.

Another of the students, P. Talavadze, recalls: "I remember 1898. Once, after lunch, we, the students, were sitting in Pushkin square, near the seminary. Suddenly someone shouted: 'Inspector Abashidze is carrying out a search in the room of Dzhugashvili!' I rushed into the seminary and ran to the cloakroom, which was on the ground floor, where our things were kept in boxes locked by us. Entering the cloakroom, I saw that Inspector Abashidze had already completed his search. He had broken the box of Soso [Stalin] and removed some illegal books from it. Taking them under his arm, he went up to the first floor of the building. Soso went beside him..."

"Suddenly a sixth-class pupil, Basil Kelbakiani, unexpectedly ran up and pushed the monk in order to shake the books out of his hands. He failed. Then Kelbakiani hurled himself on the inspector from the front, and the books immediately fell on the floor. Soso and Kelbakiani quickly took up the books and ran away..."

Inspector Abashidze, taken back, remained with nothing..."

In 1900 Fr. Demetrius was appointed rector of the Alexandrovsky Ardonsky seminary with the rank of archimandrite. On April 23, 1902 he was consecrated bishop of Alaverd in the Tbilisi Alexander Nevsky military cathedral. The ordination was headed by Archbishop Alexis (Opotsky), the exarch of Georgia. On November 4, 1903 he was made bishop of Gurijsko-Mingrelia, on June 16,

1905 – bishop of Baltzy, a vicariate of the Podolsk diocese. On June 25, 1912 he became bishop of Tauris and Simferopol.

In 1914 he carried out pastoral duties in the Black Sea fleet, and was on the warship “Rostislav”. The simple sailors were very fond of him and more than once saved him from the clutches of the communists...

On May 6, 1915 he was promoted to the rank of archbishop. In March, 1917 he protested against the election and enthronement of Bishop Kirion as Georgian Catholicos. Vladyka Demetrius was “more Russian than the Russians” and did not sympathize with the nationalist designs of the leaders of the Georgian Church.

When Archbishop Demetrius was in Moscow for the Local Church Council of 1917-18, he would walk along the streets with his first-aid kit and give help to those wounded in the battle for Moscow. During the Council he was appointed president of the section on the Orthodox Church in Transcaucasia, and in connection with the Georgians’ declaration of the autocephaly of their Church was elected a deputy member of the Holy Synod.

In May, 1919 he was a member of the Higher Ecclesiastical Administration in the South of Russia and helped organize the South-Eastern Church Council in Stavropol. In 1920 the Bolsheviks carried out terrible atrocities in the Crimea, and Vladyka escaped being shot only by a miracle. He emigrated together with the White armies, but in 1922-23 returned, was put temporarily in charge of the Theodosia vicariate. (According to one source, he petitioned for retirement on September 14, 1921 and retired to a monastery in the Theodosia uyezd.) He was imprisoned in Simferopol for two months in 1923. In May, 1923 he was exiled from the Crimea to Kiev, choosing as his place of residence Kitayevsky Hermitage, which belonged to the Kiev-Caves Lavra and was about nine kilometres away from it.

In 1928 or 1929 he took the schema with the name Anthony, and lived in private flats in Kiev.

In Kiev he was revered as a great ascetic, a man of prayer and a Spirit-bearing, clairvoyant elder. Orthodox from Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia and Georgia came to him for advice. "He did not live for himself," wrote Archbishop Leontius, "but for God, for the Church and for people. Every Orthodox bishop, and even some from the renovationists who later repented, came to his humble dwelling and dropped in for a spiritual conversation. At his place I got to know Metropolitan Anatolius (Grisyuk) of Odessa, Archbishop Pachomius of Chernigov, Bishop Paulinus (Kroshechkin) of Rylsk, Archbishop Arsenius (Smolenets) of Rostov, Bishop Damascene (Tsedrik) of Glukhov, Archbishop Paul of Baku, Bishop Luke (Voino-Yasenetsky) of Tashkent, Bishop Manuel (Lemeshevsky) and Bishop Parthenius (Bryanskikh) of Ananiev."

According to one source, after 1927 Vladyka Anthony continued to commemorate the sergianist Metropolitan Constantine of the Ukraine. However, according to another, he was the organizer of the Georgian Catacomb Church and its first-hierarch from 1926 to 1943. He also fought against the Ukrainian autocephalists, and was one of the authors of the "Kievan Appeal" of 1927. And according to another (dubious) source, in 1928 he signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church through Archimandrite Spirydon (Kislyakov?).

In 1930 he was arrested in Kiev. He was released, but forbidden to live in the six main cities of the USSR. He chose to remain in Kiev, in the Kitayevo hermitage. After the closure of the hermitage he settled in a little hut on Klovsy spusk. Here he also served. Among his cell-attendants were Hieromonk Leontius (Filippovich), the future Archbishop of Chile, and Hieromonks Michael (Lyubimov) and John (Smurygin), who were later repressed and exiled to the north.

On March 13, 1933 Vladyka Anthony was again arrested and imprisoned together with his cell-attendants and several of the brothers of the Kiev Caves Lavra, in a special block of the Lukyanov prison in Kiev. He was accused of being "the ideological inspirer of the Kiev counter-revolutionary formation. Over a series of years, being closely linked with members of the counter-revolutionary organization of the Caucasus and other places in the Union, he systematically received peasant pilgrims from various places in the Soviet Union, giving them instructions and carrying out anti-Soviet work. He was closely linked with [Metropolitan] Seraphim Yakovlevich Mescheryakov, an active member of the church-monarchist organization. 'The South Russian Synod', which was liquidated by the OGPU in 1933. He sent his cell-attendant, Monk Michael Lyubimov, to the former superior of the Lavra [Archimandrite Hermogen] Golubev, who was in exile."

On June 29 he was condemned to five years in the camps. But when the Bolsheviks saw that he was very weak and could die (he indicated his year of birth as 1857 instead of 1867), his sentence was commuted to three years conditionally. On July 22 he was released. He lived very simply in a little hut at Klovsy Spusk with a layman, the future Fr. Demetrius (Biakay), head of the Russian spiritual mission in the Holy Land, and two nuns, Mothers Xenia and Seraphima, who looked after him (and may have been spying on him). One of the nuns worked in a hospital, while Fr. Demetrius worked on the railway.

After the seizure of Kiev by the Nazis, on September 14/27, 1941, Vladyka Anthony returned to the re-opened Kiev-Caves Lavra with his monks and settled in the little house of the former superior of the Near Caves. There he restored a little house in it that the Soviets had destroyed, serving alone with Hieromonk Demetrius and some monks on Sundays and feasts. Nearing his end, he said goodbye to his spiritual children, saying: "When things are bad for you, come to me at my grave." He died on November 1 (or 2), 1942, and was buried on the territory of the Kiev Caves Lavra. According to another

source, however, he died in December, 1943, just one month after the Soviets recaptured Kiev, and is buried at the entrance to the Near Caves.

**82. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS ALEXIS OF ROVNO (+1943),
MANUEL OF BELOTSEKOV' (+1942) AND PANCRATIUS OF
BELGOROD (+1942)**

And those with them

Hieromartyr Alexis (Gromadsky) was consecrated Bishop of Lutsk on August 21 / September 3, 1922. On April 4 / May 3, 1923 he was transferred to the see of Grodno, and on May 21 / June 3, 1928 - to the see of Kremenets. From May 21 / June 3, 1928 to April 15/28, 1934 he was temporarily in charge of the Grodno diocese. On August 18, 1941, a Council of Bishops meeting in the Pochaev monastery elected him as Metropolitan of Rovno and Volhynia and leader of the Ukrainian Autonomous Church (UAC), which based her existence on the decision of the 1917-18 Local Council of the Russian Church granting the Ukrainian Church autonomy within the framework of the Russian Church.

On March 30, 1942 the UAC sent an Archpastoral Epistle to its children declaring that the newly formed autocephalists were the same as "the Lipkovtsy sect", and all the clergy ordained by them - graceless. In consequence, and because the Autonomous Church did not go along with the extreme nationalist politics of the autocephalists, it suffered persecution in the German-occupied regions from both from the autocephalists and the Ukrainian nationalist "Benderite" partisans, who had formed a close alliance.

S. Raevsky writes: "The autocephalist bishop in Rovno, Platon Artemiuk, was immediately linked with the Benderite centre in Derman; he twice went to their headquarters and was twice triumphantly received by them, going between two rows of Benderite youngsters dressed in Gestapo-like uniforms, and sat at a meal with them. Here at the centre it was decided to kill the head of the Ukrainian Autonomous Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Alexis (Gromadsky), and the resolution was put into effect on May 7, 1943." According to another source, the date of his death was May 8/21.

S. Raevsky continues: The Benderites also killed another hierarch of the Autonomous Church, **Manuel (Tarnavsky)** [of Belotserkov', consecrated May 11/24, 1942], who was taken from his flat in Vladimir in Volhynia at night and hanged in the wood [on July 9/22]. The Benderites mercilessly liquidated the older priests who did not want to betray their oath and enter into the Ukrainian Autocephaly, while the younger ones were beaten almost to death and expelled from their parishes. So many older priests perished, receiving martyrlic deaths for standing on guard for Orthodoxy. As an example we may speak about the martyrlic death of the elder and **protopriest Meletius Ryzhkovsky** in the village of Malaya Moschanka, in Dubensk uyezd, who refused to serve services in Ukrainian. The Benderites arrived at his house and began to beat him, then cut him up with knives, before casting him still half alive head first into a well."

The NKVD also killed **Bishop Pancratius** (Gladkov) of Belgorod, who had been appointed by the Synod of the Ukrainian Autonomous Church on June

9/22, 1942, after cutting off his nose and ears and gouging out his eyes, **Fr. Ioann Shmon** from Nezhin and **Fr. Ioann Labuntsov** from Prilychina.

83. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR BASIL, BISHOP OF KINESHMA
(+1945)

and those with him

Bishop Basil, in the world Benjamin Sergeyevich Preobrazhensky, was born in 1876 in Kineshma, Kostroma province into the family of Protopriest Sergius and Matushka Paula.

In those years many of the clergy did not distance themselves from the worldly environment, and borrowed worldly tendencies and a worldly cast of mind from it. But Fr. Sergius Preobrazhensky and his wife Paula were not like those. There was nothing worldly in their home, and no objects of secular culture. After all, how could anything secular compare with the Sacred Scriptures!

Fr. Sergius did not accept in his home guests whose aim was vain talk. The whole sense and aim of earthly life for the couple was the cleansing of the mind and heart by prayer and the sacraments. And a purified heart was better able to detect the insidious traps of this world and the craftiness and evil thoughts coming from the devil. And for that reason the parents tried in every way possible to protect their children from the influence of the world, knowing how difficult it is to uproot the thorns of sin and passion once they have already grown.

Benjamin Sergeyevich was brought up from infancy in an atmosphere of prayer and spiritual exploits. Only prayer, only church services, only spiritual exploits, only true joy filled his life from early childhood. The whole structure of the life that surrounded him was similar to the monastic. Neither news, nor gossip, nor vain conversations - nothing of all this penetrated the high fence of their house, which the children were forbidden to leave. And it was a joy for the child when their house was visited by poor brothers and wanderers. On the very day of his baptism, when Benjamin was brought home from the church, an old wanderer woman arrived in their house, looked at the boy and said:

"He will be a great man."

And there were other prefigurings of his exceptional future.

His parents did not even consider the study of letters to be important, and did not make haste about it. And this absence of worldly vanity taught the boy mental concentration, so that when the time came to study, he finished Kostroma theological seminary with distinction. (One of his fellow-pupils was the future hieromartyr, **Archbishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky)**.)

Then he entered the Kiev Theological Academy. When he was studying in the academy, Benjamin Sergeyevich began to preach in the town churches. His sermons soon became so well-known and popular that he was also invited to

the villages on the patronal feasts of the village churches. In 1901 he graduated with the degree of candidate of theology.

On June 28, 1901 he was appointed a teacher of polemical theology, history and polemics against the Old Ritualist schism and local sects in the Voronezh theological seminary. Having been interested since youth in the ascetic side of the Christian struggle, he wrote a dissertation "On the Skete Paterikon", for which he was awarded the degree of master of theology.

In 1910, having acquired a good knowledge of both the ancient and the modern European languages, he went to London in order to continue his education and become more closely acquainted with European culture. He got to know the English scout movement, and listened to lectures by Baden-Powell, the founder of the scout movement.

In 1911 he was appointed teacher of foreign languages and general history in the Mirgorod men's gymnasium in Poltava province, and in 1914 – teacher of Latin language in the Petrovskaya gymnasium in Moscow.

In the same year he went on a special trip to England and spent some time at a summer scout camp. On his return, he published a book on the boy scouts, and in 1917 – a second book on the subject together with V.A. Popov. In his book, "The Russian Scout Movement", Yu.V. Kudryshov considers these two books the best of their kind. Benjamin took part in the Second All-Russian Congress of Instructors and those interested in Scouting from December 28, 1916 to 1 January, 1917.

In 1917 he graduated from a pedagogical institute.

At that point Benjamin Sergeyevich had decided to devote himself to pedagogy. However, a critical incident made him change his mind. On returning home in the summer he arranged with some friends to go on a restful trip in a boat. But for some unknown reason the boat capsized, and all those who had been sitting in it began to drown. And then Benjamin turned in prayer to the Lord, beseeching him to preserve his life and vowing to abandon secular education and devote himself to the service of the Church. He had hardly had time to utter this prayer in his mind when he saw a long, thick plank. Taking hold of it, he swam to safety. All the others who had been sailing with him drowned.

Also, towards the end of October, 1917, Benjamin was a witness of the battle for the Moscow Kremlin between the junkers and the Bolsheviks.

Shaken by these events, Benjamin Sergeyevich decided to leave Moscow and devote his life to God. He became a reader in the Ascension church in Kineshma, helping his elderly father. He founded Orthodox circles for the study of the Holy Scriptures attached to the churches of the Kineshma diocese. In 1918, the authorities issued a decree forbidding the preaching of the Law of

God in schools; so the light of Christ was forcibly removed from the hearts of the children. However, Benjamin Sergeyeovich began to gather the children in the Ascension church and preach the Law of God to them there. And then he became a missionary-preacher in his native land of Kineshma, going round the parishes on foot and founding circles of zealots of piety wherever he could, drawing them in by the reading and interpretation of the Word of God.

He carefully examined the parishioners of the churches in which he had to preach during church services, and chose from amongst them a strongly believing woman who had a good knowledge of the Word of God, round whom he began to collect a church circle. In this circle the Gospel was read and then interpreted. Benjamin Sergeyeovich himself did some of the interpreting. Besides this, the appointed church services were read, and church chants and spiritual verses beloved by the people were sung.

It was difficult to organize these circles, but once created they gave fruit a hundredfold, educating many souls in such faithfulness and love for Christ that none of the misfortunes that came after could shake them. During the renovationist heresy these circles became unshakeable fortresses of Orthodoxy.

From September 30 to October 1, 1919, Benjamin Sergeyeovich took part in the Congress of Scoutmasters of the South of Russia in Novorossiysk.

Being strict with himself and a strict fulfiller of the canons and regulations of the Church, Benjamin's father did not consider him ready for ordination to the priesthood and monasticism before he was forty. So only on July 16, 1920 was Benjamin ordained to the priesthood as a celibate; he was then 45. The ordination took place in the town of Kostroma and was performed by Archbishop Seraphim (Mescheryakov) of Kostroma. Soon after this, his father died, and Benjamin received the tonsure with the name of Basil, in honour of St. Basil the Great.

In 1921 he was arrested by the Ivanovo Cheka as having been "politically unreliable as a hostage in the days of the Kronstadt uprising".

On September 19, 1921 Fr. Basil was consecrated as Bishop of Kineshma, a vicariate of the diocese of Kostroma. Archbishop Seraphim of Kostroma and Bishops Hierotheus (Pomerantsev) and Sebastian (Vesti) carried out the consecration. After his consecration, he redoubled his ascetic efforts. Having renounced all personal property, he settled on the edge of the town in a small bath-house which was in the kitchen-garden of a soldier's widow, Anna Alexandrovna Rodina. The hierarch had no possessions or furniture, and he slept on the bare floor, putting a log under his head and covering himself up with some clothes. He hid his exploit from outsiders, receiving no-one in this place. Those who came met him in the chancellery, which was attached to the Ascension church.

The bath-house was a long way from the church, one had to go through the whole town, but the hierarch did not want to find a nearer place for himself, although at that time he served daily. Every morning while it was not yet light he would walk across the whole town to the church, returning home late at night. Not once was he apprehended by robbers on the street, but he meekly and lovingly gave them everything he had, and soon they began to recognize him from a distance and did not come up to him anymore.

Besides the daily church services, in which he always preached without fail, the hierarch confessed his numerous spiritual children, going round the homes of all who needed his help and word of consolation, visiting monasteries and the circles he had founded scattered throughout the uyezd.

On major feast-days the hierarch served in the cathedral, and from Thursday to Friday there were all-night vigils in the church of the Ascension. The people loved these all-night vigils which were dedicated to the memorial of the Lord's Passion, and were present at them in great numbers. They were especially beloved of the workers, many of whom lived not in the very centre of the town, but in the environs, two hours' walk from the church. They stood through the all-night vigil and it was only late at night that they got home - in the morning they were again at work. But such was the grace of these services that people did not feel tired. During the Divine service the hierarch himself read the akathist to the Passion and there was such quietness in the church at that time, as if there were not a single person there, and every word was heard in the furthest corner.

The grace-filled words of Bishop Basil's sermon pierced the hearts and drew more and more people into the churches. After his sermons many completely changed their lives. Some, following the example of the hierarch, gave their property to the poor, dedicating their lives to the service of the Lord and their neighbours.

The light of faith and grace began to reach even the unbelievers, and Jews began to come to the church so as to hear the hierarch's words about Christ the Saviour.

Whatever people might think of the Christian faith and the Orthodox Church, almost everyone felt that the hierarch's words responded to the inner demands of the soul, clearly returning life to the soul and a feeling of meaning to life. And the authorities began to be more and more disturbed. But they found no excuse for arresting the hierarch, while his popularity amidst the people was so great that the authorities could not bring themselves to arrest him. And then they began to infiltrate people into the church whose task was to tempt the hierarch with questions during the sermon so as to confuse him.

Vladyka Basil knew that there were such people in the church, and he replied to many of their questions beforehand. Convicted in their conscience,

and understanding the pointlessness of their situation, the atheists left the church without asking any questions.

Soon after his consecration Basil of Kineshma got to know his future cell-attendant, who would share with him the difficulties of exile and imprisonment. Later, in exile, Metropolitan Cyril (Smirnov) of Kazan used to say of him:

"I have seen many cell-attendants, but not one like Alexander Pavlovich. Vladyka Basil has been lucky."

Alexander Pavlovich Chumakov was born at the end of the 19th century in the village of Polka in Kostroma province in a peasant family. He had a deeply religious mother who from childhood tried to instil a love for God and the Church into the boy. When Alexander came of age, she insisted that he went to the elders in Optina desert and received their blessing for his future life. And while he was going to Optina, past the villages he knew, all the girls poured out onto the road so as to laugh at him - look at the monk, they said. And he himself went with a heavy heart and was embarrassed by these gibes.

But when Alexander came to Optina and was present at the services and heard the Optina chanting, then his heaviness disappeared in a flash. And he felt as if he were standing in the heavens.

Alexander was for two years in Optina; when the Russo-German war began he was drafted to the front.

Soon he found himself in captivity, twice he ran away and twice they caught him and imprisoned him, cruelly beating and mocking him.

In captivity, while he was carrying out forced labour, he was seen by a rich German woman who was enflamed with such a passion for him that she immediately proposed marriage to him. Alexander refused, she tried to persuade him, but her persuasion had no effect, and she began to compel him to live with her by force and threats. But the courageous warrior of Christ withstood this pressure, too. However, seeing that his life was in danger, he again fled, and this time succeeded in reaching his homeland. By this time the war had begun to change to civil conflicts, and Alexander Pavlovich became a psalm-reader in the church of the village of Polka.

Alexander Pavlovich went to a hierarchical service in Reshensky monastery specially in order to look at an unusual hierarch. He walked beside Vladyka Basil, chanted together with him and Vladyka liked him.

"Alexander Pavlovich," he said, "come and serve as psalm-reader in the church of the Ascension."

"Alright, holy Vladyka, but first I must go to **Elder Anatolius of Optina** and receive his blessing."

"I myself used to go to Elder Anatolius," replied the hierarch, "but he's dead now."

"Then bless me, Vladyka, to be your psalm-reader," replied Alexander Pavlovich, bowing to the hierarch.

In 1922 famine broke out in the Lower Volga. Thousands died every day. In some cases the authorities took orphaned children and sent them to children's homes in other towns. Not long before Pascha they brought some of these children to Kineshma.

After the service Vladyka gave a sermon to the people, calling on them to help the starving children.

"Soon the festive days of Pascha will be with us. When you come from the feast and sit at table, remember the starving children..." said the hierarch.

After this sermon many took children into their homes. The bishop himself rented a home for the children and put five girls in it together with a nurse, a pious believer by the name of Olga Vasilyevna. He often visited them, and sometimes had to stay the night there. But on those occasions he did not change his rule, but lay on the floor in the kitchen with a log under his head.

In the summer of 1922 the heretical church movement of renovationism arose. Throughout the country the renovationists captured churches and drove out Orthodox priests and bishops whom the authorities gave over to imprisonment and death. In those parishes whose church had been seized by the renovationists Vladyka blessed the priests not to leave their flocks, but to celebrate the Liturgy in the squares of the villages. He himself gave an example of this, and after every service he delivered a sermon which hundreds and thousands of people came to listen to.

The hierarch Basil served the Liturgy with the greatest reverence; often during the proskomedia his fellow-servers saw tears flowing abundantly down his cheeks. He told one of those close to him that during the Liturgy of the Presanctified, when the choir sings: "Now the heavenly powers are with us...", he had seen with his own eyes the heavenly powers standing in front of the altar in the form of white doves.

The hierarch was both a refined ascetic and overflowing with simplicity and love in his relations with people. When he visited, the news of his arrival spread quickly, and people hurried to come and meet him, fitting themselves in where they could. Vladyka often sat on the floor, singing spiritual songs and accompanying himself on the cithara. And his sermons, discussions of the Gospel and singing were so full of simplicity and love that it seemed as if he

were a spiritual pipe in the hands of God. He wished for and sought no other lot. Neither gold, nor silver, nor a place in the world - none of this did he wish for; nothing except to be a true servant of God.

None of those present wanted these discussions to end. For many their meeting with him became the guiding star leading them for the rest of their life.

Soon the Lord began to reveal to those around that He not only gave His servant grace in his sermons, but also heard and carried out his prayers and petitions.

Thus there was a girl who fell into difficult circumstances and under the instigation of the devil became more and more despondent; and things came to such a pass that she finally decided to commit suicide. Kind people brought her to the hierarch, in whom she confided her whole story. He heard her confession in silence, and in parting blessed her and kissed her on the head. At that moment her heaviness and the tormenting thoughts that had oppressed her for so long fell away.

Once a couple came to the bishop and began to complain that they had no children. They asked him to pray for them. He prayed. Soon after that a daughter was born to them.

A widow with four small children fell seriously ill with dysentery. Her condition deteriorated rapidly and finally became critical. Realizing that she was dying, the widow called the hierarch to give her the last rites. Vladyka Basil came to the house of the sick woman. The four little defenceless children surrounded their mother's deathbed. The hierarch's heart was seized with profound compassion and pity, and he began to pray fervently to the God of widows and orphans to give the woman life. After praying, he confessed her and gave her communion. And from that moment she began to get rapidly better and soon recovered completely, and she died only in deep old age.

Sometimes children came to petition for their hopelessly ill parents. Once a girl knocked at the hierarch's cell. He opened the door and recognized her. She was one of those who came to the church to learn the Law of God from him.

The whole way there she had been weeping bitterly, and when she saw him - he was her last hope - she began to weep still more. And no wonder, when her deeply beloved father was dying.

The hierarch immediately got ready and set off with her for the dying man, whom he found already in his death throes.

And the hierarch began to pray. He prayed long and fervently. Then he gave the dying man the Holy Mysteries and, leaving the rest to the will of God, departed. Immediately the illness reached crisis-point, the sick man began to improve quite rapidly and soon recovered.

In the village of Belizanets, the whole family of the churchwarden Basil P., a spiritual son of the hierarch, fell ill with typhus.

The illness dragged on, sometimes there was an improvement, sometimes a deterioration, but no final recovery. The hierarch, who was at that time in Vichuga, was informed of this.

It was a nasty autumn day, rain was falling, and night was approaching when the hierarch left the town. His journey through the rain, in the dark, along the muddy road was long and difficult. Only late at night did the bishop reach the house of the warden. He confessed the adults, gave Communion to everyone, and went on. A few days after his departure the family had recovered.

Like many true God-pleasers, the hierarch had the gift of clairvoyance.

Once he was asked to ordain a man to the priesthood.

"Let's wait a little," replied Vladyka.

The man turned out to be ill and soon went mad.

Another time a woman came to him and asked him to bless her to go on a journey.

"No," replied the hierarch, "you must now receive Holy Unction and receive Communion."

During Holy Unction she began to lose the use of her tongue, and soon died.

One woman asked Vladyka to bless her to eat once a day during Great Lent.

"No, I don't bless you to do this, eat twice a day, otherwise you won't make it to Pascha."

It turned out that at the beginning of Great Lent both her daughters-in-law fell ill. Their recoveries were short-lived - and she had to look after not only the sick women, but also their children and their livestock. She hardly had the strength to manage.

The hierarch did not serve long in his see, one year and eight months in all, and on May 10, 1923 he was arrested in Kineshma and exiled for two years to Ust-Kol in Zyryansk region, Komi SSR, where there were four bishops and two metropolitans at that time. One of them, **Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan**, gave Bishop Basil his hierarchical vestments. He carefully looked after them, and before his death gave the blessing for them to be cut up and distributed to his spiritual children as sacred objects.

Six hierarchs assembled with some exiled priests who had come for the service in a small hut in the taiga. After the service a hierarch gave a sermon. By common consent, the hierarch Basil of Kineshma was inferior only to Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan in the grace-filled strength and depth of his sermons.

Soon Vladyka Basil's cell-attendant came voluntarily to share with him the bitterness of exile.

On May 19, 1925, his term of exile came to end and he returned to Kineshma. His spiritual children began to come to him, gathering together in small groups in the Ascension church. Here he confessed them after the evening service. The confessions lasted well into the night - many unresolved questions had accumulated, and everyone wanted to confess all his sins, down to the smallest. The hierarch did not want to hurry them, wishing to give place to the action of God and His grace.

The hierarch did not change his routines, whether in regard to services, or to preaching, or to anything else. And the Church began to grow stronger.

Like a true pastor, Bishop Basil protected his flock from every kind of evil and error. If he learned that one of his spiritual children was thinking incorrectly, then without wasting any time he hastened to visit this person.

Not far from the town of Vichuga there lived a sick eldress by the name of Martha Lavrentyevna Smirnova. She was a great ascetic. From childhood she had led a God-pleasing life, and the last 22 years she had passed in immobility, ceaselessly giving thanks to God. For this the Lord gave her the gift of discernment, which many of those who came to her for advice profited from.

In exile Bishop Basil learned that the eldress had begun to receive people who were in heresy and were going round everywhere glorifying her as a saint.

On returning from exile, Vladyka did not change his rule and set off on foot for Vichuga, visiting the homes of his spiritual children on the way.

He arrived at the cell of the eldress in the evening. It was full of people and the hierarch asked everyone to leave so that he could remain alone with Martha Lavrentyevna and her cell-attendant.

"I want to test you," said the hierarch, "to see whether you are in spiritual deception or not. I have learned that you are visited by some people from Ivanovo who have even given you their photographs and glorify you throughout the town as a saint. And yet they are not Orthodox. If you continue to mix with them, I will exclude you from my circle."

Without hesitation the eldress agreed to stop seeing the heretics.

In the home of one of the hierarch's spiritual children, Eudocia, the oil-lamp in front of the icon began to light of itself at midnight.

"It seems that the Lord is calling me to get up and pray," she thought, not sure whether to accept this phenomenon as from God or a deception. But she had already felt the spirit of deception in her heart - you pray so much, she said to herself, that the Lord Himself lights the oil-lamp.

In order to test this phenomenon, she invited an acquaintance of hers to stay the following night. But the oil-lamp lit up in her presence, too. Then she invited another witness to stay the night with her. The same thing happened with her. At midnight the oil-lamp lit up of itself.

This finally persuaded Eudocia to accept this phenomenon as from God.

When he had heard her out, the hierarch said to her severely:

"No, this phenomenon is not from God, but from the enemy, and because you have accepted it as coming from God I am laying a penance on you - you are not to have Communion for a year. And the oil-lamp will not light up again."

And truly, from that day the oil-lamp did not light up.

On Christmas Day, January 7, 1926, the authorities, worried by the revival of Church life under Bishop Basil, demanded that he leave the town. Alexander Pavlovich suggested that they go to his homeland, the village of Anapol, Kostroma province, and there wait till the difficult times were over. Vladyka agreed. Before leaving for the village he went to Vetluga and visited his sister there.

During the two weeks of the hierarch's stay with his sister, Alexander Pavlovich built a small house like the one he had lived in Kineshma. When the bishop arrived, an altar was constructed and daily services were then celebrated in it according to the typicon. He lived there as an exile, devoting the whole of his time to prayer. He served together with Alexander Pavlovich, no outsider being present since there was no Orthodox church in the vicinity.

Here Vladyka Basil lived in almost complete isolation for about half a year. Then he went to Sarov - to pray for the last time at the relics of St. Seraphim. From Sarov he returned by the beginning of the Apostles' Fast to Kineshma and immediately began to serve in the Ascension church.

He had served several months in all in his see when, in 1926, he was transferred to the see of Vyazniki, a vicariate of the Vladimir diocese, as temporary administrator. He served for half a year in Vyazniki, until June, 1927, when he was expelled to Kostroma.

According to one (dubious) source it was in this period that he signed the decisions of the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church, which took place between March and August, 1928.

After staying in Kostroma for some months, he returned to Kineshma in August, 1928. However, after only a month, in September, 1928, he was arrested in connection with the Kineshma branch of the True Orthodox Church. If until that time it had been difficult to find a "lawful" way of sentencing the hierarch to prison, now the publication of the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) gave the authorities ample excuse for persecuting the Orthodox. Bishops, priests and laymen were now arrested in their thousands and sent to prison, where hunger, cold, forced labour and death awaited them. Bishop Basil rejected the declaration, and on November 19, 1928 (or February or March, 1929) was sentenced to three years in exile. Together with him they arrested the priest of the Ascension church, **Fr. Nicholas Panov**, and **Catherine Alexandrovna Knishek**.

The bishop was sent to prison in Ivanovo-Voznesensk, and in February or March, 1929 was taken under convoy to the small taiga hamlet of Malorechka, twenty-five kilometres from the district town of Taborovo, Sverdlovsk province.

Here, too, Alexander Pavlovich shared all the difficulties of exile with the hierarch. The two of them set up an altar in the little house, the hierarch consecrated it, and they celebrated Divine services there every day.

Prayer, Divine services and heavy work in the woods - all this was like the strictest form of skete life. Life was poor, and Alexander Pavlovich earned some extra by making wooden wash-tubs and catching fish.

They conversed little with each other. Sometimes they had a kind of break for an hour, and they sat amidst the woods in the fading twilight. Fish splashed in the dark waters of a little river. A bonfire burned, lighting up the concentrated face of the hierarch, whose soul was totally immersed in prayer. The gloom of the woods wrapped them round every more closely, and it was then that Alexander Pavlovich wanted to strike up a conversation with the hierarch, to ask him something, but on looking at Vladyka, he decided not to trouble him.

According to Nicholas Balashov, in 1931 Bishop Basil was again given the choice: accept the declaration or go to prison. He refused, and was subjected to tortures.

In 1931, in a brochure called Ryasniki and published by the local section of the militant atheists in Ivanovo, the following was written about Bishop Basil's followers: "Among the Old Tikhonites of our region there is a branch of the so-called Basilites. They received this name after the name of the founder of this

group, Bishop Basil (Preobrazhensky). We already know that this ryasnik was in the group of Ryashentsev. The Basilite programme differs in no way from the programme of the Old Tikhonites, but this group is distinguished by its activism. In those places where the priests belong to the sergianists, the Basilites leave the membership of the religious communities, cease to go to the church and organize house prayer-centres, giving as the reason for their departure the fact that the priests have changed their stripes and forgotten the true God. 'Once I went into the church,' says the profiteer Mazina, leader of the group, 'and I felt a pang in my heart, my head went dim and a voice told me to leave and pray at home' (village of Semenovskoye, Kineshma district)."

Three years passed in isolation, prayer and work, and the fourth was already coming to an end. The hierarch's thoughts began to incline towards the idea of staying forever there, where they had acquired a desert.

But it turned out that it was impossible to choose exile voluntarily. He only decided to ask the local authorities for permission to stay when they themselves had begun to demand his departure.

"Give us permission to stay," he asked.

"No, you can't stay here. Leave. You can go to any town except the forbidden ones."

"I must think about it," said the hierarch and went out into the street where his cell-attendant was waiting for him:

"Well, Alexander Pavlovich, where shall we go?"

"I'm not the one who gives the orders, holy Vladyka, you choose."

The hierarch pondered. But where, where were they to go? What place of exile should he choose? Desolate Sarov... Diveyevo... Optina desert. Alexander Pavlovich often used to tell the hierarch about his stay in Optina, and he loved listening to stories about the monastery so beloved by the Russian people. He loved to hear about the obediences Alexander Pavlovich had to labour in.

"Tell me, where was the baker Photius from - the one you helped in Optina?"

"From Orel."

"Well that's fine then - let's go to Photius' homeland."

They lived for in Orel from September, 1932 to March 31, 1933, when they were summoned by the NKVD. During interrogation, Vladyka said that Soviet power was a temporary power, while he did not believe in the idea of the construction of socialism-communism. The struggle against religion was allowed by God in order to test the moral-religious life of the people. In this

period of trial there would undoubtedly be a schism between the believers and the unbelievers. Moreover, the believers might turn out to be in the minority. However, in spite of everything the Church would conquer and the gates of hell would not prevail against her.

The Bolsheviks demanded that they leave the town.

"Where shall we go?" asked the hierarch.

"Go to Kineshma."

For the last time the hierarch entered his native diocese, where he had sown so many good seeds. Although physically separated from his flock, he had never been separated from it spiritually, and by prior agreement they even prayed at the same time.

It was the last time that Vladyka Basil beheld his native town, because immediately after his arrival he and his cell-attendant were thrown into prison and brought to trial in connection with the Kineshma branch of the True Orthodox Church.

This time it was the atheists' intention to kill them. But the Lord judged otherwise. The schoolchildren who had been called to the trial to witness against Vladyka Basil and his cell-mate refused to give evidence, saying that they did not know the men in the dock and were seeing them for the first time. After the failure of the prosecution, the judge sentenced Bishop Basil and his cell-attendant to five years in a hard labour camp for "creating a net of counter-revolutionary circles whose aim was the anti-Soviet education of the religious masses and the overthrow of the existing order".

This was in July, 1933. He served his term not far from the town of Rybinsk, in a camp whose inmates worked on the construction of a canal. Alexander Pavlovich was exiled to the vicinity of Murmansk.

Some priests who were summoned for interrogation after him were told by the torturers: "That Preobrazhensky is not like you, he's straight, he's not for turning, while you are for us to our face and against us behind our backs."

In January, 1938, Vladyka Basil settled in Rybinsk, and then, after a short period, he moved to the village of Kotovo, near Uglich, where he had the intention of ending his days. At the invitation of the choir director of the church in Kotovo, he went to live with her, serving in a church secretly constructed in a bath-house in a kitchen-garden. Soon a circle was formed in the village.

In 1943 the metropolitan of Yaroslavl offered him a see.

"I don't recognize Sergius as Orthodox," wrote Basil to him in reply. "And I ask you not to offer me any other sees, because I am old and too worn out by exiles."

The metropolitan promised.

But the very thought that a hierarch who was faithful to God and His Holy Church was still at liberty terrified the torturers, and on November 5, 1943, three months after this correspondence, Vladyka Basil was again arrested, in Kotovo.

From November 7, 1943 to January, 1944 Bishop Basil was in the inner prison of the NKVD in Yaroslavl. Although he had heart problems and the doctor said he should go to hospital, he was subjected to constant interrogations and tortures. On January 26 he was taken, scarcely alive, to the inner prison of the NKVD in Moscow. On July 13, 1944 he was transferred to the Butyrki prison.

In the same month he was sentenced to five years' exile in Krasnoyarsk district, and was sent under convoy, first to prison in Krasnoyarsk, and from there to the remote village of Birilyussi. The little Siberian village was in a remote area surrounded by boundless woods and a network of rivers. The young people had already been deeply corrupted by atheism and made cruel by the war. Even young children became savage in the surrounding cruelty. For a long time the bishop was not able to find a suitable flat for himself, and finally he settled in the house of a widow who had three young children. When he was praying, they used to gather little balls of horse manure and throw them at him, saying:

"There you are, granddad, eat."

Soon the Lord gave him some alleviation from his sufferings: some believing women found another flat for him. The landlady was single, and an exiled nun was living with her at the time.

In Birilyussi Vladyka suffered a partial paralysis, and it was now difficult for him to walk and he needed nursing.

The war was coming to an end, and the authorities were establishing a concordat with the Church whereby from the Church was demanded everything while the authorities promised in exchange not to kill bishops and priests or subject them to imprisonment, and to open a certain number of churches and seminaries. Once again the authorities tried to compel Vladyka Basil to recognize Sergius' Synod.

"You know why you're in exile. Recognize the Synod and we will immediately free you and take you by air to Moscow, where you will be treated and will be able to live."

The hierarch refused.

"Then stay where you are, we have no right to let you go."

Seeing that the bishop was seriously ill, the believing women asked the local bishop to send a priest with the Holy Gifts. This was done. But Vladyka refused to receive communion from the sergianist priest.

At Pascha, 1945, he wrote to one of his spiritual daughters, congratulating her on the feast and saying: "My child! Once more I congratulate you on the feast. Christ is risen indeed!... I met Pascha very well. The Lord has blessed me with all good things - all your wishes were fulfilled. Glory to the Creator for His mercies and kindnesses.

"... My child! Do not be upset, everything is in the will of God, I have already reached the term of human life, 70 years, and from now on life has little of interest to offer me. Of one thing I am certain, that I will not last five years in Birilyussi. I am not frightened of death. I would like to die surrounded by children and relatives, so that I can talk with and bless them all. Or at least have one person who is close to me by my side, someone to whom I can entrust my will and instructions with regard to my burial.

"Alas! There is not one such person. Complete isolation is a heavy burden. I am being treated, I am taking iodine, but I received the most precious medicine on Great Thursday. I thank the Maker for all these joys and consolation. I am choking with a cough, it's difficult to breathe, I lie down most of the time. But I shouldn't lie down too much. Still, complete immobility helps my breathing, I can inhale with my whole chest.

"... Farewell, my child! Don't be downcast that I'm too tired to go on writing. Be healthy. Entrust yourself entirely to the will of God. Bow your head and say: Thy will be done. Pray. I believe in the prayers of children, they often help me. You will find consolation in prayer. I wish you good health and a long and happy life.

"Bishop Basil of Kineshma, who sincerely loves you.

"Send my greetings and best wishes to the children. I ask forgiveness of all and bow to the earth."

At the same time, in spring, 1945, he wrote to Alexander Pavlovich, inviting him to come. Alexander Pavlovich replied that he would come when the haymaking was over.

But the hierarch knew that he would not live to the autumn.

However, Alexander Pavlovich did not hasten to come, and when he did arrive the hierarch was already dead.

Shortly before his death, Bishop Basil asked the nun who was living with his landlady to read the canon for the departing of the soul. Having read the canon, she began to read the final prayer. The hierarch listened attentively, and when the prayer was over said "Amen" in a firm voice and quietly passed away. He died on July 31 / August 13, 1945 (according to another source, August 18, 1947).

When the news of his death came to his spiritual children, by common agreement of those close to him the funeral service was performed in another place by the hierarch's spiritual son, **Hieromonk Benedict** of Lukhsky monastery, who was living in hiding at that time near Kineshma.

Some sermons have been preserved from Basil of Kineshma's writings, as well as most of his "Conversations on the Gospel according to Mark", in which one can clearly hear the voice of the great preacher converting the hearts of thousands of people to Christ.

In July, 1993 the holy relics of St. Basil of Kineshma were translated to the women's monastery of the Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple in Ivanovo. In August the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate glorified the bishop who had rejected them all his life. A part of his relics are now to be found in the cathedral in Kineshma.

A close disciple of Bishop Basil was **Victor Alexandrovich Rayevsky**. He was born on February 20, 1902. In 1905 his parents moved to St. Petersburg; Victor's father, Alexander Dmitrievich, was a painter and earned his living giving lessons in painting. Between the father and the mother, Xenia Andreyevna, a quarrel took place, and she went to Kineshma taking her daughter with her, while the son remained with his father. The father was a deeply religious man, and the son was brought up in a religious spirit.

The First World War began, and Alexander Rayevsky was called up into the army. At that time Victor was studying in a modern school in Gatchina. In 1918 news from his father stopped coming. Victor moved to his mother in Kineshma and continued his education in the sixth class of the modern school. In 1918 the authorities everywhere removed the study of the Law of God in educational institutions, and as a sign of protest the youth left school and went to work in a mill. When there arose disturbances among the workers he made a speech in front of them. For this he was arrested and sentenced to three months in prison.

At this time the future hieroconfessor, Bishop Basil of Kineshma, was shining like a star from the heights of his cathedra. Victor listened to him with trembling, feeling the fire of the love of Christ burning ever more brightly in his heart. And it became ever more clear to the youth that the career that his relatives proposed to him - that of a secular painter - would be chains and captivity for his soul.

Victor went to Bishop Basil and asked his blessing to become a fool for Christ. Vladyka blessed him to begin with the feat of silence. And so, abandoning all, Victor settled in the St. Macarius women's monastery in the village of Reshma, which was on the banks of the Volga about thirty kilometres from Kineshma. Here, muzzling his feelings and his rebellious tongue, he silently worked as a groom for two years.

But no ascetic feat undertaken for Christ's sake is left without attacks from the enemy of mankind. And the devil chose to attack him through the person closest to him, his mother. On learning that her son had gone to a monastery and had taken upon himself the feat of silence and foolishness for Christ, she was very angry. She accused Bishop Basil, and demanded that he force Victor to return home. Bishop Basil tried for a long time to dissuade her, but when she wouldn't listen he finally said to her firmly:

"He himself has chosen this path, and this is the will of God for him."

Furious, the mother went to the St. Macarius monastery. On getting out of her carriage, she did not want to enter - the very sight of the monastery and monastic clothing disturbed her so much. And when Blessed Victor came out to see her she was still more angry. She tried to persuade him to stop playing the fool, return home and take up the career of a painter. Victor loved his mother, but he loved God more, so he said: "If I follow this path to the end, then not only you, but the whole of our family will be in paradise. There things are eternal, here - fleeting."

Xenia Andreyevna again tried to persuade her son to return home, but he was silent. Angrily she parted from him and left. Victor remained to finish his course. He lived in a tiny room that he shared with the sheep, sleeping on the floor. There was no door onto the street, and to prevent the sheep from wandering he blocked the passage in with logs. The entrance was so low that the priests who came to see Victor would say:

"The way to you is cramped."

"To the Kingdom of the Heavens the entrance is still more cramped," the blessed one would reply.

If people came to him trying to look attractive and well dressed out of vainglory, he would go round thickly covering his face and hands with soot. And in both summer and winter he went barefoot. Once during the all-night vigil on Saturday night one of the monastery novices summoned her village friends to come and have a look at the blessed one. They came, and saw Victor cutting wood. They stopped not far away and looked, instead of going to the church to pray. The blessed one did not like this. He picked up a hatchet and rushed at the girls. They rushed away from him into the church...

Soon the gift of clairvoyance began to manifest itself in the blessed one. Once Alexandra Karacheva brought him some milk and eggs, without saying from whom she had received them - she said she had been told to give them to him. The blessed one gave the name of the man who had given them to her, adding that he was a great blasphemer.

On great feasts, when the clergy went round the blessed one's cell in a cross procession, the blessed one would walk with them and publicly denounced the impure life of several inattentive nuns. And sometimes, without saying anything, he would take some soot and smear the bed of some nun and cover her cell with it. It was as if to say: there is dirt in your cell or your conscience is impure.

Sometimes when the nuns were in church he would go round their cells and if he found a feather pillow or a feather-bed, he would immediately tear it up and plunge the feathers in a barrel of water that stood next to every cell. Sometimes he would leave a note: be like me.

If he noticed that one of the nuns had put on a ring or ear-rings, he would take them away and given them to the poor. Thus once a poor peasant came to the monastery. He was intending to give his daughter away in marriage, but he had no rings or anything else to give her as a dowry. Someone advised him to go to Blessed Victor.

"Well, which ones do you like?" asked the blessed one, laying out various adornments in front of him.

The peasant chose what he needed, and Blessed Victor began to wrap it up. Then the peasant asked:

"How much will that cost?"

"Five 'Save, O Lord's', three big ones and two small ones," replied the blessed one.

Not long before the closure of the monastery he began swearing, using the most vulgar words. He went around the monastery swearing. Or one of the nuns would ask him about something, and he would swear instead of replying. They began to be upset by this, and complained to Bishop Basil. He arrived at the monastery to investigate the matter. For a long time he talked alone with the blessed one, who told him in detail about the future fate of the monastery. But he asked him not to reveal this to the nuns. The hierarch could only marvel at the blessed one's purity of heart and the lack of understanding of some of the nuns.

The nuns' request to bring the blessed one to reason brought its own reply - the monastery was soon closed. That happened in 1927. Now people

embittered by atheism wandered round the monastery and its lands with curses and swear-words on their lips.

In October, 1928 Blessed Victor was arrested. Bishop Basil was arrested at the same time. And the Lord gave the blessed one the spiritual joy of being in the same cell with his spiritual father and hierarch. The bishop fell seriously ill in prison, and the blessed one looked after him, trying to relieve his pain. During interrogations the blessed one behaved courageously, and often rebuked the persecutors. When they asked him where he lived he replied:

“In Yurevtsa, in Kineshma, in Reshma. I don’t want to say where else I was or whom I knew because if I said it I would be betraying my near ones.”

When they asked him about Bishop Basil, Blessed Victor replied:

“Since I got to know Bishop Basil I have become deeper and stronger in faith. As regards my being called to account, I will say only one thing - Soviet power persecutes religion, and you have seized me because of this, just as you seized, for example, Bishop Basil. Your only work is to choose spies and follow after me. You have become very clever. What have you turned Holy Russia into? Into a kind of mob. Everything is coming to an end. Here your authority rules, but at the Terrible Judgement you will answer for everything before God. With you only a small group ruling the people lives well, while all the people starve. Everything that Soviet power preaches is absurd. Lenin was half-mad. That’s how I look at Soviet power, but although that’s how I look at it, I have not and do not conduct any activity aimed at the overthrow of the authorities...”

The blessed one refused to sign the protocols, saying that he was not a co-worker of Soviet power, and all its activity was aimed against religion.

He was sentenced to three years exile in Siberia. After his return from exile, he settled in Kineshma, whence he often went to Reshma. The monastery had been destroyed, the nuns ejected, Abbess Dosithea and several nuns had settled in a village not far from Kineshma, where they lived a life of quiet prayer, doing work with their hands. There the abbess died and was buried in the cemetery of the village of Mavrino.

In Reshma the blessed one stayed in the house of the pious widow, **Maria Vasilyevna Kruglovaya** (born April 7, 1877 in Reshma). At the same time and in the same village there lived the girl **Anna Konstantinovna Korygina** (born 9 December, 1905 in Reshma). Since childhood she had wanted to go to a monastery, but the monasteries began to close in the 1920s, and so she, having given away her property, settled on the edge of a ravine in a tiny hut. Maria quarrelled with Anna, but the blessed one persuaded her to be reconciled, saying:

“You bake some biscuits, go to Anna and be reconciled. Don’t rise up against her. You will soon have to walk along the same road with her, sharing the same bread.”

On October 2, 1927 Anna and Maria were arrested for preaching Christianity. They were imprisoned in one room in Ivanovo, and on October 8 were sentenced and shot.

In 1937 Blessed Victor was arrested and died in prison.

84. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS SERAPHIM AND GREGORY OF BELORUSSIA (+1946)

Archimandrite Seraphim, in the world Semyon Romanovich Shakhmut, was born in 1901 in the village of Podlesye, Lyakhovichi region, Minsk province into a poor peasant family. His father died in 1915, and the family fell into extreme poverty. Fr. Seraphim was drawn to the Church from his childhood, and in spite of his family's poverty was able to go to the two-class people's school in Lyakhovichi. Until 1922 he helped his family, but in 1922 he left his family home and on June 25, feeling in himself a calling to monasticism, went to Zhirovitsky monastery, Grodno province. On April 1, 1923 he was tonsured in the Zhirovitsky Dormition monastery, and in 1926 was ordained to the diaconate and priesthood by Archbishop Panteleimon (Rozhnovsky). In the monastery Fr. Seraphim became close to Archbishop Panteleimon, who had been exiled because of his opposition to the autocephaly of the Polish Church. Under his guidance he became a zealous and obedient monk of lofty spiritual life. In about 1937 he was sent to serve in Belovezhskaya puscha. In 1938 he took part in very large cross processions with the Zhirovitskaya wonderworking icon of the Mother of God in order to collect money for the repair of the monastery. He escorted the icon throughout the Grodno diocese, and services were performed not only in churches but also in private houses. Fr. Seraphim was accompanied by his close friend, Fr. Gregory Kudarenko, later **Archimandrite Ignatius**. On June 25, 1939 Archbishop Panteleimon elevated Fr. Seraphim to the rank of igumen.

In June, 1941 the Germans invaded Russia, and Archbishop Panteleimon was brought out of retirement to become the first-hierarch of the Belorussian Autonomous Church (all the hierarchs of this Church joined the Russian Church Abroad in 1946). In August, 1941 he raised Fr. Seraphim to the rank of archimandrite, and then entrusted him and Fr. Gregory with the difficult and responsible task of reorganizing parish life in Belorussia, for it had been destroyed by the Soviets in the pre-war period. They set off for Minsk, not by train, but on horses, hoping thereby to visit as many populated places as possible. Everywhere they gathered petitions from believers to Metropolitan Panteleimon that he opened parish churches. Everywhere they celebrated services, looked over the churches that remained and chose building committees to repair them. They baptized children, buried the dead and preached without ceasing. After arriving in Minsk, Fathers Seraphim and Gregory served in the church of the Transfiguration. Then, in January, 1942, having received a pass, the two missionaries set off further east in the direction of Vitebsk. There Fr. Seraphim wrote a short letter for the newspaper Novij Put' in which he told about the opening of the churches and with what joy they had been greeted by the believers, including young people and children. These words were later used against Fr. Seraphim in the protocols of his investigation. After Vitebsk the missionaries visited a series of towns and villages in Eastern Belorussia. For a time they served in Gomel, then in Bobruysk, and then returned to Minsk. During this journey they opened seventy-four churches.

Everywhere that Fr. Seraphim stayed he collected material on the persecutions to which the Orthodox Church had been subjected in Belorussia before the war. In the whole territory of Eastern Belorussia at the time of his visit "... there was not a single bishop, nor (except in Orsha) was there a single church open for services. Most of the clergy everywhere had been exiled and imprisoned, many had even been shot, and the churches had been turned into clubs, theatres and barns... and many of them had been destroyed. Almost all church property had been destroyed and annihilated by the Bolsheviks." Further the report said "that the people rejoiced at the opening of churches, and in Vitebsk at the opening of the Holy Pokrov church the people were so moved that they all sobbed, and the priests could not serve, and there was a temporary interruption... and in Gomel when we left all the people sobbed..." These words are taken from the protocols of Fr. Seraphim's interrogation. He turned out to be the first chronicler of the sufferings to which the servants of the Orthodox Church in Eastern Belorussia had been subjected during the Bolshevik terror. On the insistence of the Germans, Fr. Seraphim's material on the Bolshevik persecutions was handed over to a certain Kolbach from the department of propaganda, and we do not know what happened to them. Not far from Gomel, in Chenki, the missionaries opened a women's monastery and collected thirty sisters there. Unfortunately, the monastery was soon closed when the Soviets returned.

During their journeys through Belorussia, the missionaries often found themselves in dangerous situations. Fr. Seraphim fell ill with an abscess. He suffered so much that he could get onto his bed only with the aid of a stool. Once, when he was in bed, Soviet aviation began to attack. Suddenly Fr. Seraphim heard a voice telling him to leave the bedroom. The same voice ordered him to call Fr. Gregory. Fr. Seraphim with difficulty got to the kitchen. When Fr. Gregory also got to the kitchen, a bomb fell. One of the splinters, without hitting any important organs, opened up the abscess. The puss came out, the wound healed, and Fr. Seraphim recovered completely...

On returning to Minsk in 1943, Fr. Seraphim began to serve in the church of the Holy Spirit that he had opened (it is now the cathedral church). He also took responsibility for the hospitals, invalid homes and child refuges in the city. He would often be seen visiting people made homeless by the war. He carried out his pastoral duties with unbending strictness. In June, 1944, as the Soviets advanced westwards, Fathers Seraphim and Gregory left for Grodno, where they went round the field hospitals preaching and giving Communion to the wounded.

There, on September 6, 1944, the two missionaries were arrested by the Bolsheviks. At first they were interrogated for five days in Grodno, then they were transferred to Minsk prison. The "investigation" lasted for ten months. It is not known what torments the confessors had to suffer in this period. However, according to a medical certificate contained within the records of the investigation and dated December 31, 1944, Fr. Seraphim is said to have been suffering from heart disease... Officially they were accused of cooperating with

the Nazis, a completely trumped-up charge, but in fact the charge was their missionary work for the Holy Church. It was certainly on this aspect of their activity that the interrogators concentrated their attention. Fr. Seraphim did not hide his views from the interrogator: when asked what he talked about in his sermons, he said that he often said something like the following: "Russia was believing. Our ancestors, fathers, grandfathers and grandfathers believed, and now we shall again begin to live a happy life through faith. It is not good that the atheists have shut down our holy things, and that your fathers and mothers died without receiving the Holy Mysteries and were buried without a priest, while their children grew up unbaptized and not married in church..."

On July 7, 1945 Fathers Seraphim and Gregory were sentenced to five years in the concentration camps. They were sent to Gorky (Nizhni-Novgorod) province, where they were sent to different camps. However, they succeeded in keeping in touch with each other until Fr. Seraphim's death in an NKVD prison in 1946, about a year after sentence was passed on him.

The circumstances of his death are unclear. According to the official version, Fr. Seraphim died from heart failure - probably induced by terrible tortures undergone within the walls of the prison. We know that the confessor met Holy Pascha in 1946 in camp, greeting his fellow prisoners with a joyful "Christ is risen!" This elicited the anger of the camp bosses, and in punishment they threw him into a punishment cell, where he was in water up to his waist. The confessor had no hope of emerging from that ordeal alive, but he was strengthened by an appearance of the Mother of God with Great Martyrs Barbara and Anastasia the looser from bonds. The Holy Virgin extended to him a bouquet of flowers. "O Mother of God, this bouquet will wither here..." he said. Then she blessed St. Barbara to take the flowers...

85. HOLY NUN-CONFESSORS OF VORKUTA (+1950)

In November, 1950, three nuns arrived at the dreaded Arctic camp of Vorkuta. They were assigned to a plant which bricks for construction work throughout the Russian Arctic. Some have said that these nuns came from Shamordino, since it is known that in the 1930s some Shamordino nuns adopted a similarly uncompromising attitude towards Soviet power. However, the author of the following account, the American John Noble, indicates that he does not know where they came from. He simply says: "At Vorkuta these women were referred to as veruiushchie or believers, the term applied to the Christians in Russia who still carry on personal devotions in secret, not unlike the Christians who were the servants of God and not of Satan, they did not propose to bow to the orders of their foreman despite any threats he might make.

"Stripped of their religious garb, the nuns' faith was their armour. They were ready to face anything and everything to keep their vow and they did face their punishment, a living testimony of great courage. They were put on punishment rations, consisting of black bread and rancid soup, day after day. But each morning when they were ordered to go out to the brick factory, into the clay pits, or to any other back-breaking assignment, they refused. This refusal meant, of course, that they were destined to go through worse ordeals. Angered by their obstinacy and fearing the effect upon the other slave labourers, the commandant ordered that they be placed in strait jackets. Their hands were tied in back of them and then the rope with which their wrists were bound was passed down around their ankles and drawn up tight. In this manner, their feet were pulled up behind them and their shoulders wrenched backward and downward into a position of excruciating pain.

"The nuns writhed in agony but not a sound of protest escaped them. And when the commandant ordered water poured over them so that the cotton material in the strait jackets would shrink, he expected them to scream from the pressure on their tortured bodies but all that happened was that they moaned softly and lapsed into unconsciousness. Their bonds were then loosed and they were revived; in due course, they were trussed up again, and once more the blessed relief of unconsciousness swept over. They were kept in this state for more than two hours, but the guards did not dare let the torture go on any longer, for their circulation was being cut off and the women were near death. The communist regime wanted slaves, not skeletons. They did not transport people all the way to Vorkuta in order to kill them. The Soviet government wanted coal mined. Slave labourers were expendable, of course, but only after years of labour had been dragged out of them. Thus the commandant's aim was to torture these nuns until they would agree to work.

"Finally, however, the commandant decided that he was through trying. The nuns were either going to work or he was going to have to kill them in the attempt. He directed that they again be assigned to the outdoor work detail

and, if they still refused, that they be taken to a hummock in the bitter wind of the early Arctic winter, and left to stand there immobile all day long to watch the other women work. They were treated to this torture, too, When the pale light of the short Arctic day at last dawned, they were seen kneeling there and the guards went over expecting to find them freezing, but they seemed relaxed and warm. met underground in the catacombs and defied the persecutions of Nero."

Noble continues: "When the nuns were first taken to the brick factory, they told the foreman that they regarded doing any work for the communist regime as working for the devil, and, since

"At this, the commandant ordered that their gloves and caps be removed so that they would be exposed to the full fury of the wind. All through the eight-hour working day they knelt on that windy hilltop in prayer. Below them, the women who were chipping mud for the brick ovens were suffering intensely from the cold. Many complained that their feet were freezing despite the supposedly warm boots they wore. When in the evening other guards went to the hill to get the nuns and take them back to the barracks, they expected to find them with frostbitten ears, hands and limbs. But they did not appear to have suffered any injury at all. Again the next day they knelt for eight hours in the wind, wearing neither hats nor gloves in temperatures far below zero. That night they still had not suffered any serious frostbite and were still resolute in their refusal to work. Yet a third day they were taken out and this time their scarves too were taken away from them.

"By this time, news of what was happening had spread throughout all the camps in the Vorkuta region. When at the end of the third day, a day far colder than any we had yet experienced that winter season, the bareheaded nuns were brought in still without the slightest trace of frostbite, everyone murmured that indeed God had brought a miracle to pass. There was no other topic of conversation in the whole of Vorkuta. Even hardened MVD men from other compounds found excuses to come by the brick factory and take a furtive look at three figures on the hill. The women working in the pits down below crossed themselves and nervously mumbled prayers. Even the commandant was sorely disturbed. If not a religious man, he was at the least a somewhat superstitious one and he knew well enough when he was witnessing the hand of a Power that was not of this earth!

"By the fourth day, the guards themselves were afraid of the unearthly power which these women seemed to possess, and they flatly refused to touch them or have anything more to do with them. The commandant himself was afraid to go and order them out onto the hill. And so they were not disturbed in their prayers, and were taken off punishment rations. When I left Vorkuta four years later, those nuns were still at the brick factory compound and none of them had done a day's work productive for the communist regime. They were regarded with awe and respect. The guards were under instructions not to touch them or disturb them. They were preparing their own food and even

making their own clothes. Their devotions were carried on in their own way and they seemed at peace and contented. Though prisoners, they were spiritually free. No one in the Soviet Union had such freedom of worship as they.

"What their example did to instil religious faith in thousands of prisoners and guards there at Vorkuta, I cannot begin to describe. Later on, when I had the opportunity as a locker-room attendant for the MVD men to talk with some of the more hardened Russian communists about religion, not one of them failed to mention the Miracle of the Nuns. With a puzzled expression, each would ask my opinion of it. How could such a thing happen, they would say. How could God have saved these women from freezing on that hill!

"I could not answer, except in terms of my own experience with prayer and with faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I told them how I was saved from starvation and said that evidently the nuns had found the same strength through prayer. They were visibly moved by this additional demonstration of the fact that God's power exists.

"The rationalist looks in vain for an explanation of such an event. God showed His hand in a miracle on that hill in the Arctic wastes of Russia and by that miracle brought faith to Vorkuta. Thousands of prisoners were buoyed up in their resistance to Communism. Many communists themselves were touched and an unadmitted hunger in their hearts for religious faith was thereby brought to light..."

86. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR TIKHON, BISHOP OF KIRILLOV
(+1955)

and those with him

Bishop Tikhon, in the world Alexander Lvovich Tikhomirov, was born in Geneva on August 26, 1882, the son of the famous monarchist writer and penitent former revolutionary, Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov. His family came from the Tula region and was of the clerical estate.

"On his birthday on the 26th of August, 1888," writes Lev Alexandrovich, "Sasha and I attended church for the first time. Thank God, the Russian service apparently made an enormous impression on Sasha. He prayed with special feeling, he admired everything, all things elated him. Upon leaving church, not waiting for my question, he immediately began to comment on how everything was exceptional in church."

In 1889 Lev Alexandrovich obtained permission to return to Russia and moved first to Novorossiysk before finally settling in Moscow. He had already become the editor of the famous newspaper, Moskovskiye Vedomosti, in which he brilliantly demonstrated the genuineness of his conversion to Orthodoxy. On June 25, 1889, in Novorossiysk, Sasha was baptized by Bishop Misail (Krylov), whom he himself buried several years later, in the 1920s. His father wrote that his son behaved so well during the service and took such a serious attitude to the sacrament "that my heart rejoiced".

At one time Sasha fell ill with meningitis or pneumonia, and a well-known doctor said:

"People do not recover from such illnesses".

However, he did recover in church, and his father wrote: "Sasha's recovery filled me with a kind of gratitude to I knew not whom. Sasha lived precisely 'under God'. I felt a mystical force. Religious feeling clearly took hold of and drew the child, who was ill and sickly, but at the same time noble in soul, with a certain special subtlety of spiritual perception. I learned to believe in the spiritual principle from observing this dear child, and I myself learned more from him, it seems, than I gave to him."

In 1902 Alexander Tikhomirov entered the Moscow Theological Academy, where he led an ascetic life, praying for nights at a time and scarcely giving himself any rest. On August 13, 1907 (or 1905) he was tonsured into monasticism with the name Tikhon in the Academy church by Bishop Eudocimus (Meschersky), rector of the Academy. His parents blessed him for this path with an icon of the Iveron Mother of God.

In 1906, Fr. Tikhon graduated from the Academy with the degree of candidate of theology, and was appointed a teacher of homiletics in the

Novgorod seminary. In 1907 he became an assistant in the Synodal vestry in Moscow. In 1908 he became a teacher in the Bethany theological seminary in Sergiev Posad, and on August 10, 1912 - inspector of the seminary. From July 28, 1911 he was supervisor of the Petrovsky theological school in Petrovsk, Saratov province.

During his years in Sergiev Posad, Fr. Tikhon got to know the future confessor-bishops Arsenius (Zhadanovsky) and Seraphim (Zvezdinsky) and worked with them on the journal Golos Tserkvi (The Voice of the Church). In 1915 his article "Asceticism as the foundation of Russian culture" appeared in this journal. He also wrote an akathist on the "Feast of the Ten Virgins" of St. Methodius of Patara, and translated the kontakia of St. Roman the Melodist from Greek into Slavonic. According to those who knew him well, he was a very prayerful, quiet monk, intent on acquiring the unceasing prayer of Jesus. He slept little and only in a sitting position. Once a student who was passing by his cell noticed a smell of burning. Opening the door of his cell, he saw that Fr. Tikhon was lying on the floor leaning against the anaglyph with his candle fallen out of his hand. They immediately wakened him, and from that time Fr. Tikhon learned to arouse himself from sleep lest a similar accident take place again.

On June 22, 1913 he was appointed rector of the Novgorod seminary with the rank of archimandrite. He was the last rector of the seminary - in the spring of 1918 it was closed. On March 22, 1920, he was consecrated bishop of Cherepovetsk (Kirillovsk), a vicariate of the Novgorod diocese. He was also appointed superior of the Kirillo-Belozersk monastery, but the authorities did not allow him to stay there in peace, and he was forced to wander. Thus he spent the winter of 1921/22 in the Leushinsky monastery of St. John the Forerunner.

These were terrible years for the Church. In 1918 **Bishop Barsanuphius of Kirillovsk** had been shot by the Bolsheviks together with **Abbess Seraphima** of the Ferapontov monastery. Almost all the churches were occupied by the renovationists. In 1922 Vladyka Tikhon was arrested and imprisoned in Cherepovetsk prison. He left it a sick man. Then he was subjected to great pressure by the Bolsheviks to join the renovationists. But by the mercy of God the Kirillovsk diocese did not become renovationist.

After the closure of the Kirillo-Belozersk monastery in 1924, Vladyka moved to the Desert of St. Nilus of Sora, which became a stronghold of opposition to renovationism. The Desert's superior was **Igumen Innocent** (Kalinin), a faithful helper of Vladyka Tikhon. After the closure of the Desert in 1924, Fr. Innocent served as a parish priest in the Ascension church in Sorovo, seven versts from the Desert. Several nuns from the Therapontov and Goritsky monastery settled on a peninsula near this church. Bishop Tikhon often served here, as well as in the parish church of the Unmercenary Cosmas and Damian and in churches and monasteries around Kirillovsk. Fr. Innocent died in prison in Belozersk in 1938.

Bishop Tikhon settled in Sorovo, serving in Sorovo. He served with great ardour, and demanded a strict observance of the Typicon. For example, the prayer of St. Ephraim the Syrian was read without fail during the Christmas fast.

In 1927, because of his opposition to the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, Vladyka went into retirement. In the same year he was arrested and sentenced to three years in the camps. He was put to work in a camp felling logs, and sometimes had to work up to his waist in water. He came out of the camp an invalid.

For a time he went into hiding with **Nun Hermogena** (Telytsyn), a nun of the White Lake Goritsky monastery, then in the home of his mother and sisters in Sergiev Posad, and then with some spiritual children of his in Yaroslavl.

In Yaroslavl Vladyka lived literally underground, in a camouflaged room. Mother Hermogena secretly collected alms so that Vladyka should not die of hunger. In spite of the very difficult conditions of life, Vladyka wrote much in this period, including eleven akathists on the major feasts, and was constantly joyful. But he spoke very little and would answer questions unwillingly. In effect, he lived the life of a recluse, praying on his knees for long hours.

According to one account, not long before his death, the Soviet Patriarch Alexis (Simansky), hearing that there was a holy hermit in Yaroslavl, wanted to meet him. They sent a car for the hermit, but since he had no shoes he went to meet the patriarch in slippers. After this meeting (no details are known of what happened during it), Vladyka Tikhon was given a pension of thirty roubles.

Vladyka Tikhon died in Yaroslavl on March 26, 1955. Mother Hermogena died a year later. They are buried on the Tugova hill, near the altar apse of the ruined cemetery church. His spiritual children composed the following verses in his honour:

*Gentle in heart and humble you were,
as the Lord willed for us all.
Amidst the world your sojourn did endure,
Wisely with life you united this all.
... Under humility's wondrous sign,
the beautiful oft you worked.
... A pastor exemplary,
to your last days did you remain.*

*You loved Christ God from your very youth
With all your heart and your pure soul,
Him you blessedly and humbly did serve
and by word, and faith did abide.*

*As you, a person I had not yet known,
You wholeheartedly hearkened to spiritual needs,
Heedful to sorrows, stranger to evil and gain,
Chaste was your life, and resplendent.*

**87. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR PETER, SCHEMA-BISHOP OF
NIZHEGOROD (+1957)**

and those with him

Early Years

Schema-Bishop Peter, in the world Patapius Trofimovich Ladygin, was born on December 1, 1866 (according to other sources, 1860 or 1861) in the village of Seleg, Krasnogorsk region, not far from the city of Glazov in Udmurtia. His parents Trophimus and Theodora were poor, pious peasants from the village of Selega. They had six sons and one daughter. Patapius was the fifth child.

In his autobiography Schema-Bishop Peter writes: "I lived an ordinary life in my youth. At the age of eight I began to study from an old priest, Fr. Paul. We didn't have a school. I went to him for two winters. That was the sum total of my education in my youth.

"In 1875, when I was ten, they brought us the icon of the Mother of God 'the Consolation of the Sorrowing', which came from Mount Athos. The first miracle [from this icon] was worked on Vladimir Nevolen. He was deaf and dumb. Immediately he kissed the icon of the Mother of God he began to speak and hear. The miracle took place on November 19, 1866, and after this all kinds of miracles came from this icon of the Mother of God, and everyone was healed. During prayer services [in front of this icon] I would always weep. I couldn't help myself, something unusual worked on me.

"During my youth I never went for walks or played games, but in my free time I went fishing. I caught a lot of fish, everyone was amazed.

"My mama died when I was 18. Papa and my younger brothers John and Simeon remained. And at that point they took it into their heads to marry me. My father had never put a finger on me, but when I didn't want to marry, he twice beat me on the back with a belt and took me weeping to my bride. There I said to my bride Catherine:

"Don't marry me, I don't want to. We have a very bad older sister-in-law, it'll be bad for you. Don't marry me.'

"But she didn't believe me. Our matchmaker was my aunt, my mama's sister. They married me, but while I was being crowned I couldn't believe it. But then I was reconciled with life and a year passed.

"I became seriously ill. I had pneumonia during Great Lent. They lost all hope that I would live. In May I went fishing and I got a cold in my legs, completely losing the use of them. In June and July I lay in hospital. The doctors said that my legs would not work - I had severe rheumatism. I was in terrible

pain. My wife Catherine looked after me. Every night she would put nettles on my legs. Katya was always crying, and I always reminded her:

"I told you not to marry me.'

"After the Dormition of the Mother of God an old wanderer came to us. In the evening they began to bind my legs with nettles.

"What,' said the man, 'have you been ill like this for a long time?'

"We told him. He said:

"If you pray to God and beseech the Mother of God, I will heal you.'

"I gave him my promise, and while I was still ill I promised that I would join the army. We got up in the morning. The old man asked:

"Are they going to bake bread here?'

"They are.'

"He asked for a tub, and put a prop for my legs against the tub. And when the bread was baked, he took one loaf, broke it and put it on the bottom of the tub, and my legs on the bread... And the pain in my legs became less sharp. He left asking me not to forget the Mother of God or to pray. And he also ordered that this should be done two more times. And when it had been done three times I recovered completely and began to walk.

"Two weeks passed. On September 9, 1888, my wife Katya gave birth to a daughter, who was called Euphemia in baptism. On the fifth day after giving birth Katya went and did some washing. Aunt Domna came in and said:

"Katya, are you working after giving birth?'

"She went away and Katya fell ill. She contracted a high fever, and on September 19 she died. My daughter remained alive for nine more days. She was looked after by my in-laws. On November 19, the day of the feast of the Mother of God "the Consolation of the Sorrowing", she died without pain. The Mother of God took her to herself.

"And on the evening of the same day I went to enrol in the army. I was accepted into service on November 22. The doctors who had treated me did not want to accept me because I was ill - my legs were no good. But I had given a promise when I was ill that when I recovered, even if I would have to go far away, I would still join the army. The doctors still did not want to accept me. I demanded that they accept me. But I was left on one side. They accepted three people. I began to ask insistently for the commanding officer, and he ordered me to be accepted, saying:

"If he falls ill there, send him back.'

"And they accepted me. I made the sign of the cross and left. But my papa began to cry and said:

"You've destroyed yourself. You'll die, and we'll never see you again.'

"I said: 'I won't die. The Mother of God will preserve me...'"

Mount Athos

The young Patapius fulfilled his military service in Kiev, serving as a non-commissioned officer. He learned engineering with the sappers. In his free time he would go to the Kiev Caves Lavra, where he venerated the relics of the saints and read the Kiev Caves Patericon. He became a spiritual son of Elder Jonah (in schema Peter), who was himself a spiritual son and novice of St. Seraphim of Sarov. Patapius asked Elder Jonah to bless him to enter the Kiev Caves Lavra after his military service, but instead the elder directed him to go to Jerusalem and Mount Athos:

"When you've gone there and seen everything, and visited the holy places, then you'll be able to come here and join. Monasticism will not run away from you. Look, I've been a monk for more than 40 years and the enemy continually disturbs me with the thought that I haven't been to Jerusalem or Athos. But it's difficult to leave here, they don't let you out of the monastery."

Patapius followed the elder's advice, and in September, 1892, at the end of his military service, he went home to receive his father's blessing and earn some money for the fare to Jerusalem. Then, on June 12, 1893, the feast of Saints Peter and Onuphrius of Mount Athos, he set off. The steamer from Constantinople stopped at Mount Athos, where the monks of St. Andrew's skete invited Patapius to stay until Christmas. But Patapius said:

"What are you saying?! You don't let people sleep! During the day you sleep it off, while the pilgrims go round the monasteries. But at night you don't let us sleep!"

The monks laughed and said:

"Did you really come here to sleep?!"

Two weeks later, in October, Patapius boarded a steamer going from Odessa to Jerusalem, where he arrived at the end of the month. On the second day of Christmas he met the abbess of a monastery in Samara who suggested that he go to Mount Athos. But Patapius told her:

"I can't live on Mount Athos. The monks there don't let one sleep. I quarrelled with them and only just made it to the steamer two weeks later."

But the abbess said:

"Child, these thoughts are from the enemy. Think how many ascetics are there and what a holy mountain it is. The Mother of God feeds and consoles and saves all those who live there."

And she continued, weeping:

"How fortunate are those who live on Athos, in the lot of the Mother of God."

But Patapius still did not agree to go.

Then the abbess suggested that they cast lots in the name of the Trinity: the first for going to Athos and staying there, the second for staying there, in Jerusalem, and the third for going to Russia. They went to the Holy Sepulchre, laid the lots on the Tomb of the Lord and prayed for a long time. The lot which they chose was for Athos. Patapius was terrified. But the abbess calmed him:

"Don't worry, let's cast lots three times."

And on the third day of Christmas, after again praying all night at the Holy Sepulchre, the lot fell on Athos. Then Patapius felt calmer and said:

"How many people live there!"

But the abbess said that they should cast lots a third time. So on the fourth day of Christmas, after again praying at the Holy Sepulchre, they cast lots. The lot fell on Russia. The abbess said:

"This is your destiny with the Lord and the Mother of God. Go to Athos, the lot of the Mother of God. She has blessed this path for you with two lots. But with the third lot the Lord has shown you that you will be sent from Athos on obedience to Russia, and there you may end your life."

And this is what happened in fact...

And so, after visiting the holy places again, Patapius went to Jaffa and on January 16, 1894 set sail for Athos. That night there was an all-night vigil in honour of St. Anthony. Patapius prayed to him, as the leader of all monks, to indicate which community on Athos he should go to. After casting lots, the lot fell on the St. Andrew skete.

Patapius arrived at St. Andrew's skete on January 20. Igumen Joseph gave him obediences in the chancellery and the candle-shop, gave him a cassock, a

jacket and a prayer-rope, and blessed him to pray three prayer-ropes: two to the Saviour and one to the Mother of God. And he warned him:

"When you pray, take care not to be frightened - the enemy will try to frighten you. Don't move from your place, stand and pray. He won't do anything to you."

Patapius was living in the guest-house with six pilgrims. When they had gone to sleep, he began to pray his three prayer-ropes.

"Suddenly," he writes in his biography, "there was a terrible blow at the door. I thought that the door was going to fly away. But I stood and prayed. Then there was a second blow, in the corner. You would think the whole building was going to collapse. But I stood and prayed with fear. Although it was frightening, I stood and prayed in accordance with the blessing of the igumen. Then from under the bunks where the pilgrims were sleeping a trunk of one of the pilgrims was thrown out against my legs. All the pilgrims jumped up and were terrified. But I stood in my place and prayed. The pilgrims took the trunk and put it back under the bunks, and themselves went to sleep while I finished these three prayer-ropes. When I had finished, I lay down to sleep and didn't wake up until Mattins. At the signal for church everyone went to church. When the monks and novices go to church they all kiss the icon and receive the igumen's blessing. I also kissed the icon and went up to receive the igumen's blessing. The igumen asked me:

"Brother Patapius, how did it go? Did you pray the prayer-ropes?"

"I did."

"Well, did they try to frighten you?"

"They did."

"You come to me in the daytime, after the service."

Patapius was then given a cell with Novice Matthew. They prayed together, and the devil did not trouble them. Later the igumen said to Patapius:

"So, Brother Patapius, the Mother of God, the Apostle Andrew and St. Anthony the Great have sent you here to us. Remember that you will answer in fear before the Lord for every word or deed that you have done out of laziness or not in accordance with righteousness. Know that it is not I that have given you such a great obedience, but the Mother of God, the Apostle Andrew and Anthony the Great. They will help you in everything if you carry out your holy obedience with humility and a pure heart."

And then the igumen gave him the very responsible obedience of calculating the money to be given to all the workers and the desert-dwellers. All the monks

were amazed that a newly arrived novice should be given such a difficult and responsible obedience. Besides this, he was given the obediences of waking up the brethren for services and serving in the altar as an ecclesiarch.

"On March 25, 1895," continues Bishop Peter in his biography, "on the feast of the Annunciation, I the sinful and unworthy one was found worthy to hear the chanting of angels. There was a vigil in the church of the Mother of God 'The Consolation of the Sorrowing'. The vigil began at 7 o'clock and finished at 6 in the morning. During the vigil they read the akathist to the Annunciation of the Mother of God. The vigil came to an end, and the young monastic clergy were going to serve the late Liturgy. I had to come early into the church in order to prepare the censer, the warm water and do various chores. After the vigil I went to my cell to rest for one-and-a-half to two hours. My cell was under the altar of this church. My window was open. At seven o'clock in the morning I heard chanting in the church. They were chanting and reading the akathist to the Mother of God and chanting: 'Rejoice, O Bride Unwedded'. When I heard it I jumped up and thought that I had overslept. I was frightened and ran to the church. I ran up, but the doors of the church were locked, and in the church everyone was continuing to chant. I ran back down the corridor to the altar. I ran up to the altar door and again the chanting was continuing. I was filled with fear - I had never heard such chanting before. I went back to my cell and fell on my knees. I wept and listened to the chanting. And suddenly they began to chant the verse "The Pre-Eternal Counsel" in my cell. They chanted the whole verse. I don't remember whether I was in heaven or on earth.

"At 7.45 I gave the signal for the beginning of the church service. Everybody came and I went into the church. I told my spiritual father and the igumen about it. They said:

"'Thank God and don't forget it. Always chant this verse...'

"At Pascha my father came to see me at the feast. He stayed for three weeks and wept a great deal, calling me to return home.

"'You know, it's difficult for you here.'

"I said to him:

"'You stay here if you want to see me.'

"'No,' he said, 'I can't stand it. One has to pray for a long time.'

"I accompanied him and he wept a great deal. When he returned home, a year later, on the second day of Pascha, he died."

In Great Lent, 1896, Patapius was tonsured as a ryasofor-monk and given the name Pigasius. A week later he had the following vision: "The igumen sent me off with a package:

"You must take this package to this address.'

"I left the monastery and went towards Athos, to the Kalyagrou jetty. A desert-dweller by the name of Macarius was with me.

"We had not gone very far when suddenly we saw a huge snake lying across the path. Macarius saw it and said:

"I won't go, I'm frightened.'

"But I decided to carry out my obedience, crossed myself and jumped over it. I went on alone.

"After a while I came across another huge snake which was lying in the form of a ring across the path. It was impossible to pass it by. On the left was a cliff and the sea, and on the right - a huge rock. I stood by the snake for a long time, praying to the Mother of God and the Apostle Andrew. I did not want to return home, but I feared to go on because of this snake. I crossed myself and jumped into the ring and then out of the ring and further.

"I went on for a while and came to the Kolyagrou jetty. There was a big level area by the sea. The whole of the area was filled with various snakes. Some had died, others were still alive after a fashion. I passed through there without fear. It began to get dark. It was night, I couldn't see the path.

"I saw a small light and a little hut. I prayed and the answer came: 'Amen.' I showed the man the address on the package and asked him how to get there. He said:

"Okay, I'll show you now, and you'll get there.'

"I saw that there was a great number of snakes in his cell, and I thought that he had collected them... But he said:

"I didn't take them or bring them here. They come here of themselves in order to tempt me during prayer, and I don't believe them. I pray, and they immediately die.'

"We left his hut and he said:

"Go straight ahead, don't turn to the left and also not to the right. Go straight on.'

"After a time I suddenly saw some houses. A man came out and I asked him where the house on the address was. He showed me the house and I went in.

"There were many cobblers there sewing boots. I gave them my package. They tore it up and immediately all stood up. And from men they turned into demons.

"So you've been tonsured!" they said and began to tear my cassock into shreds.

"We'll give you a tonsure!" they shouted.

"I ran away from them, but they got hold of my cassock and tore it to pieces. I got hold of one piece, stuck it on, and it became one whole cassock. I kept running and suddenly I saw a church. The doors were shut, and there was an open space under the church. I ran into it. It was dark, and the demons were still tearing at me. I fell on my knees and shouted:

"Mother of God, save me!"

"And suddenly a light appeared in the corner and all the demons disappeared, and it turned out that there was an icon in the corner, the Kazan Mother of God. It was all shining, and diamonds were glittering on it. And above the icon of the Mother of God was an icon of the Saviour wearing a crown of thorns. And above the Saviour - the Crucifixion. And from the icon of the Mother of God a voice spoke to me:

"Fear nothing, I will always help you in everything."

"At that point I woke up.

"The bell was ringing, and I went into the church. When I went up to ask the igumen's blessing, he said to me:

"Father Pigasius, how you've changed!"

"And I told him the terrible dream. And he said to me:

"After the service come and tell me about it."

"I went and told him everything in detail, and he blessed me to go immediately to Macarius the icon-painter.

"And tell him what size the Saviour and Mother of God and Crucifixion were, and let him paint them. And you always keep them in your cell. And pray to them, and the demons will do nothing to you. And carry out the holy obedience which the Lord has blessed you to carry out with fear and trembling."

"The icons were painted, and the igumen himself blessed them and said:

"You will have many sorrows, but don't be depressed. The Mother of God has told you that she will not leave you, and has shown you how the Lord Jesus Christ suffered and was crucified for us sinners.'

"I always took these icons with me and kept them, but in 1930, when I was arrested for the third time, they took them away from me. Maria, Olga and Cleopatra saw these icons and prayed to them. I prayed to them for 34 years."

In 1897 Fr. Pigasius went to Constantinople, where he was operated in the stomach for haemorrhoids.

In 1898 he was tonsured into the mantia with the name Pitirim.

On May 14, 1900 he was ordained to the diaconate, and in 1901 he was sent on obedience to Constantinople to serve as a hierodeacon in the metochion (podvorye) and to do the accounts of the income and expenditure of the community. In May while he was in the podvorye, he had the following vision:

"Two people of unusual beauty came to the podvorye and said:

"Get ready to come with us!"

"Where?" I asked.

"The Heavenly Queen has appointed you to command a ship, you have to go to sea.'

"I've never been a sailor,' I said, 'and I don't know how to command. I'll sink the ship and drown myself.'

"They said: 'We can't leave you, for the Queen has sent you, you must go.'

"I went. We came to the Winter Palace in Saint Petersburg. At the quayside of the river Neva there stood a beautiful sailing ship. We went onto it, and suddenly the Queen, the Mother of God, came out and said:

"So you must take this ship to the other side of the ocean, together with all these people whom I'm entrusting to you.'

"I wept, and fell at the feet of the Mother of God and said:

"I can't.'

"Have no fear,' she said, 'I myself will be with you. Command the ship to go out to sea.'

"We went out to sea, and a terrible storm rose up. Our ship was going fast and the storm had no influence on it. On the sea we met two huge ships full of

people. The waves were hurling them off the ships from all sides, and you think they're going to send them to the bottom of the sea now. We quickly passed by them. They remained in the midst of the sea, but we quickly arrived at the shore. It is impossible to describe how beautiful it was on the shore; there were various trees and fruits. We all got out onto the shore and the Mother of God said to me:

"So we have passed over the terrible deep.'

"At that point I woke up.

"I told Hieromonk Fr. Ambrose about this. He said to me:

"Write all this down, and for the time being tell nobody anything. The Mother of God will entrust you to rule a flock.'

"And then we went into the church of the wonderworking icon 'The Consolation of the Sorrowing' and served a prayer service to her and thanked her for caring for us."

In 1902 Fr. Pitirim returned to Athos, and on September 25, 1904 he was ordained to the priesthood. He continued to serve his obedience as a steward, which involved feeding the vast numbers of pilgrims who came to the skete for feasts. And with his engineering skills he was much in demand for building projects both in the St. Andrew skete and the Thebaida skete.

The Heresy of the Name-Worshippers

Once, in the second week of the Great Fast, 1907, he went to his cell after the all-night vigil to rest for an hour or so before celebrating the late Liturgy at 8 o'clock. He read his rule, and there were still 20 minutes remaining before he had to go to the church at 7.15. He was sitting beside a lamp reading a book, and began to nod off.

"While I was dozing I saw that our brothers had condemned myself and two youths to death by crucifixion. I asked the brothers, not for myself, but for the youths, saying that they were guilty of nothing. But the brothers said:

"This is not your business!"

"They brought a cross made out of bits of rails and began to crucify me. They pierced my hands with clamps and bolted them down. What a terrible pain I suffered! They dug a hole and put the cross in it. I was hanging with a terrible pain in my hands. They said:

"He'll be hanging there for a long time, we'll have to break his shins.'

"And they began to beat my shins, and it was terribly painful, unbearable. When they had broken my shins, I immediately died and remained the same, only in the air. I saw my body hanging and heard everything they were saying:

"Now he's dead, let's take him away and unscrew the bolts.'

"They took me down and laid me on a stretcher, the kind on which they put dead people, and placed my body in the church. My friend Florentius the sacristan said:

"We have to read the Gospel.'

"He brought out the Gospel, laid it on the anaploidy and began to read. They came into the church to celebrate the Liturgy and saw me lying there, so they did not begin the Liturgy but began to chant the funeral service. I heard and saw everything, but couldn't speak. When they had buried me and begun to chant: 'Come, brethren, let us give the last kiss', the brothers all began to say farewell to my body, but so joyfully, while five of the monks who had crucified me did not want to say farewell. They stood by the left kliros, and the others began to force them, but they didn't want to. Then the brothers dragged them up and forced to say farewell. When they had come up to my body and kissed it, two angels immediately appeared and said to me:

"Now we'll show you everything!"

"And then everything was immediately revealed to me, everything that I had done since my youth, good and bad. I saw everyone with whom I had had any dealings. I even saw myself on military service with my comrades-in-arms fitting a silver lampada to the icon of St. Nicholas in the barracks where I prayed. I hung it and it burned and I felt so happy. I saw all my relatives. When the vision was over, the angels said to me:

"Well, we've shown you earthly things, now we'll show you heavenly things.'

"And immediately we began to go rapidly upwards. We stopped in the air and the angel on the right side went off somewhere. The angel on the left side stayed with me. During this period I felt such fear and terror that I fell down. I knelt and shouted:

"O Mother of God, Apostle Andrew and Anthony the Great, save me from falling!"

"At this point the second angel appeared before me, and I was joyful and we continued to go upwards, stopping five times. When we stopped the sixth time, the ecclesiarch came out of the church and knocked on the door so as to call me in the church. I then absentmindedly put on my ryasa and went into the church without locking my cell.

"I went into the church but was unable to do the proskomedia. Archimandrite Joseph and others had already arrived in order to celebrate the late Liturgy. They went into the altar and saw that my face had completely changed and I was all trembling.

"What's the matter?' asked the igumen.

"I told him everything. They made another monk continue the Liturgy and sent me away to calm down and rest. When the late Liturgy was over, the igumen invited all the clergy and told me to tell the whole vision.

"I was given two days to calm down and rest. Another hieromonk served me. And the igumen told me:

"You will have to suffer much, but believe that the Mother of God and the Lord will not leave you. The angels which you saw will always help you in your sorrows..."

In November, 1911 (according to another source, 1910), Fr. Pitirim was appointed superior of the skete's metochion (podvorye) in Odessa, and on December 1, 1911, he arrived in Odessa.

The year 1912 passed successfully; "but in 1913 my cross began, which I had seen on Athos, when they crucified me. In January, 1913, a division took place among the brothers on Athos, and the worship of the name of God began. In the Caucasus a certain schema-monk Hilarion had published a book in which he wrote that God Himself is included in the name 'Jesus'. But this was an incorrect opinion. The monks on Athos began to divide over this book, some being for it and some against.

"The book was given to the Patriarch of Constantinople. The Patriarch studied it and condemned it as heresy. Whoever was in favour of it was expelled from the Church.

"The book was also given to the Russian Synod, which condemned it. In our skete of St. Andrew on Athos, Hieromonk Anthony Bulatovich was a partisan of the book, and gathered other partisan monks, especially the young ones, and beat up the igumen and elders, and threw them out of the monastery and took over the monastery. They sent me a telegram telling me that Igumen Jerome and all our elders had been removed from the monastery and telling me to submit to them.

"They threw out Igumen Jerome and elected a new archimandrite, David. Igumen Jerome also sent me a telegram in Odessa. He wrote what had happened and asked me not to carry out the commands of David and his supporters. I took these telegrams and went to Archbishop Demetrius of Odessa and the Chersonese. I asked him what to do. And he blessed me not to

carry out the commands for the time being, but to wait for a resolution of the matter.

"I did that, but within two weeks Archbishop Demetrius had died. In his place they appointed Archbishop Sergius, who told me that he would not interfere in the matter. And I had to take everything on myself. When I did not carry out the orders of either side, the Athonites sent a declaration to the bank and post office in Odessa, saying that I was not their attorney. Then they sent two monks to remove me from the podvorye and take it over themselves. They took 2000 roubles from there, but the customs removed this money, put it into the treasury and asked me:

"Can we give it to them or not?"

"I told them: 'Until the clarification of the matter, you mustn't.'

"And with regard to the monks I sent a telegram to the Most Holy Synod, since Bishop Sergius refused to interfere. The Synod replied:

"Return the monks to Athos and give them the 2000 roubles.'

"I sent them back to Athos, but kept the money in Odessa since they could go by rail from Constantinople to Russia.

"On their return to Athos, they began to say that it was necessary to calm down and return the former igumen. Then Anthony Bulatovich himself decided to go to Russia, and in 1913, on the day of the 300th anniversary of the House of the Romanovs, he forcibly obtained the signatures of 330 monks to his election. He wanted to be presented to his Majesty, so that his Majesty could confirm the monastery's rule by Archimandrite David and his supporters.

"He travelled on the same steamship as Patriarch Gregory of Antioch, who was also going to the 300th anniversary of the House of the Romanovs. When the steamship arrived in Odessa, everyone was there to meet the patriarch. A train was prepared for him at the station. Anthony Bulatovich arrived at the podvorye in a carriage. I searched Bulatovich, inviting Okolodchy from the police. They began the search, and found all the signatures in a portfolio. He struck the table and said:

"Pitirim, I'll see that you rot in prison!"

"They searched him, and set off to search his monk, while Monk Michael was placed outside his room so as not to let him out. He asked to go to the lavatory, and Anthony Bulatovich was let out without his hat. He went straight to the station just as the train with Patriarch Gregory was moving out.

"They told me that Bulatovich had escaped and had got on the train. So in the evening I sent a telegram to the Procurator of the Most Holy Synod in

Petersburg, Sabler, and a second to Archbishop Anthony [Khrapovitsky] of Volhynia, who was a member of the Holy Synod. They immediately gave orders that he should be arrested as they were leaving the train. But in Zlobin he got off the train, got on a train for Moscow and in Moscow went to Grand-Princess Elizabeth Feodorovna. From her he obtained a letter allowing him free access to his Majesty Tsar Nicholas.

"The train with Patriarch Gregory arrived in Petersburg, and he was not on it. Then the Procurator Sabler told the superior of our podvorye in Petersburg, Hieromonk Antonin, that immediately he appeared at the podvorye he should inform the Procurator. He appeared two days later, and the superior Antonin told him that they were looking for him to arrest him. He immediately went into hiding and hid in Petersburg for six months.

"In May at the request of Bulatovich and Great-Princess Olga Alexandrovna, his Majesty Tsar Nicholas Alexandrovich directed the Synod to cease the persecution of Anthony Bulatovich, to give the monastery to the name-worshippers and to expel the monks from the Russian St. Andrew skete and put them in the St. Elijah skete and the St. Panteleimon monastery. But the Greeks on Athos and the Patriarch of Constantinople had ordered all the name-worshippers to be exiled to Russia.

"Then I decided to go personally to Petersburg and intercede on behalf of the St. Andrew skete. On May 14, 1913 I arrived in Petersburg and went to the Synod. May 20 was already the Synod's last session. The members of the Synod were Metropolitan Vladimir of St. Petersburg [the future hieromartyr], Archbishop Nikon of Vologda, Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, Archbishop Anthony of Volhynia and others.

"I explained everything to them in detail and said that it was essential for them to send a commission to Athos. I had to find and explain it to all the members of the Synod individually, and I went to the flat of each of them. On May 20 the Synod decided to send a commission to Athos. They appointed Archbishop Nikon of Vologda and Professor Sergius Victorovich Troitsky as members of the commission. They said that they would set off in four days' time. And they said to me:

"'You must obtain permission for the commission to go abroad, and see that the Greek authorities cooperate.'

"I had to obtain this from the Minister of Foreign Affairs. At that time he was Sazonov. He was in Moscow for the coronation of his Majesty Tsar Nicholas II. His first deputy was Neratov, and second deputy - the landowner Prince Trubetskoy. I couldn't see Neratov, and all the foreign ambassadors directed me to Trubetskoy. But I did not agree because he was friendly with Bulatovich.

"Then I decided to go to Princess Cleopatra Petrovna Cherkasskaya, whom I had once met. The niece of the princess was married to Sazonov. She

immediately gave me her visiting card, so that I could go to the priest Petrovsky, who was the spiritual father both of the princess and Sazonov, in order that I could ask to see the first deputy Neratov. Protopriest Petrovsky gave me his visiting card and wrote asking that I be received immediately.

"I went to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with this visiting card and handed it over. I was given an appointment for 8 o'clock in the evening... Neratov received me very kindly and in response to my petition ordered that the Constantinople embassy take the most energetic measures on behalf of the commission so that everything necessary should be given it.

"I thanked Neratov. I had still had business with Sevastianov, the director of posts and communications for the whole of Russia. I went to him and presented my petition asking that I be allowed to receive the post, the money, the parcels and the transfers. He shouted at me:

"That's just like you monks, creating a rebellion on Mount Athos!"

"He shouted and shouted at me. I simply stood and waited until he had finished. Then I began to say:

"You are the Minister and Director of the post of the whole of Russia, and you occupy this post in a lawful manner. If your junior officials came to you, beat you up and expelled you from this building, would you begin to make a fuss or not?"

"Of course I would."

"And that's just what I'm doing. Although I was not there, and they didn't beat me up, but have been in Odessa now since 1911 and entrusted with the capital and property. In Odessa I publish a journal entitled The Confirmation of the Faith.

"I gave him the journal.

"I print this journal, but I need money for paper and materials, and for printing. They send money for me to the post office, and besides, correspondence comes for the brothers and the pilgrims, and all that is lying in the post-office in Odessa, and by law in three months' time it all has to be sent back. For that reason I beseech you to allow me to be given all the correspondence which has been held up. You can decide not to give me the correspondence which is addressed to Igumen Jerome and David... until the affair is resolved."

In the end the Minister gave in, and Fr. Pitirim returned to Odessa, received his mail, and began to prepare for the arrival of the commission. Two days later the commission arrived. On May 28, 1913, the commission departed for Constantinople together with Fr. Pitirim's monk Bessarion. Having arrived in

Constantinople and received the blessing of the Patriarch to go ahead, the commission together with the Russian ambassador and 200 soldiers set off for Athos.

On June 3, the commission arrived at St. Panteleimon's monastery and went straight to the church, where the usual litiya was served. After this Archbishop Nikon began to give a sermon. The monks began to whistle and shout. Then the archbishop stopped his sermon, left the church and went to the refectory. There he was surrounded by groups of ten to fifteen monks who shouted at him and did not allow him to speak a word. Finally, the embassy official Shcherbin took the archbishop and Troitsky back to the ship. As they were leaving the shore, the name-worshipping monks began to hurl stones at the ship.

The next day the commission appealed to the Greek authorities. The local Athonite authorities then took it upon themselves to write to each monk individually and ask whether he recognized the authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch and the Russian Synod or whether he recognized the heretical brochure. The census lasted two weeks, after which it was revealed that 487 monks were on the side of the name-worshippers.

Then the Greeks decreed that they should be removed from Athos and demanded that the Russians send a steamer. The Russians sent the steamer "Kherson", which docked at the St. Panteleimon monastery on June 17. The heretical monks locked themselves into one block and refused to go out to the steamer. Then Russian soldiers and sailors decided to open the roof of the block and pour cold water through a hose onto the monks. They couldn't stand this, so they opened the door and were led out under convoy.

This left the monks of the St. Andrew skete, who had locked themselves up for six months. Bulatovich's assistant, Protodeacon Thaddeus, was caught by the Greeks and Shcherbin, and he agreed to persuade the monks of the St. Andrew skete to open their doors on condition that he himself would not be taken. Then Thaddeus went to the skete and told the monks that the Tsar had sent the steamer, that at the intercession of Bulatovich and the Tsar they would be given either the Kiev-Caves Lavra or New Athos, whichever they wanted, and that each monk would be given 100 roubles per year. And he showed them a supposed gramota which confirmed this.

This delighted the monks, and they agreed to meet the commission at 10 o'clock the next day. So when the commission arrived, they were met triumphantly with the ringing of bells. But then, while a "Many Years" to the Tsar and Bulatovich was being chanted in the church, 100 sailors were let into the skete. They took up positions preventing any escape and promptly began to ask each monk whether he recognized the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Russian Synod, or the heretical brochure. It turned out that 183 were name-worshippers, while 345 recognized the authority of the Patriarch and Synod. They were then led quietly out to the steamer.

When they had been put onto the steamer, the commission introduced the exiled Igumen Jerome and the elders into the skete.

The steamer with the 736 name-worshipping monks arrived in Odessa, and each monk was then given money for his ticket back to his homeland and the opportunity to be registered in a Russian monastery if he recognized the authority of the Synod. But 26 people were detained in the St. Andrew podvorye until they were taken for trial in Moscow, where Fr. Pitirim was called to give evidence.

Bulatovich was not condemned at this trial because his godfather was close to the Tsar. And the Tsar and Tsaritsa were inclined to take pity on the exiled monks. So an appointment was made for Fr. Pitirim to see the Tsar and explain the matter to him. He explained the matter so well to the Tsar and Tsaritsa that the Tsar was persuaded of the rightness of the decision.

But Bulatovich then petitioned that his case be brought up in the State Duma. Since he was himself a left socialist revolutionary, the revolutionaries took his side. So Fr. Pitirim was again summoned to Petersburg to explain the matter before the Duma. Finally, the revolutionaries were persuaded to drop the matter. That was the end of the Bulatovich affair.

War and Revolution

In 1914 the war with Germany began, and all communications between Russia and Athos were cut off.

In Odessa Fr. Pitirim was the first to open a hospital for the war wounded, and was given awards for his work by the Red Cross, the Holy Synod and the War Ministry.

In February, 1917 he was summoned to Petersburg and asked to take over the administration of two monasteries in Bessarabia which belonged to the Athonite Bulgarian monastery of Zographou. The Bulgarian monks who administered these monasteries had been forced to move to Ryazan province because of the war. So Fr. Pitirim was asked to take responsibility for the Moldavian monks who remained - which he did until the occupation of Bessarabia by the Romanians.

While in Petersburg, Fr. Pitirim was invited to attend the critical session of the Duma on February 23, at which Kerensky said: "Down with the Tsar and the ministers, they've been tormenting the people enough. The workers are starving and they cannot give them bread. We, the workers, shall do everything, we'll take the bread from the peasants who produce corn, give them a firm price of one rouble per pound and force them to take the corn to the railway stations. And if they don't bring it, then we'll go with arms. The workers will do everything."

On February 27, the first full day of the revolution, Fr. Pitirim left Petersburg for Odessa. In November, he was again in Petersburg and on 30 November he went to congratulate the newly-enthroned Patriarch Tikhon on the great and heavy obedience he had undertaken. The Patriarch received him kindly, and while they were talking the newly-appointed Metropolitans Agathangelus and Cyril arrived. From that time Fr. Pitirim always continued to correspond with these great leaders and future hieromartyrs of the Russian Church.

At the end of December, 1917, Fr. Pitirim was summoned by the Holy Synod to Petersburg in connection with the Bessarabian monasteries, and in June, 1918 the Patriarch summoned him to Moscow and entrusted him with a gramota to the Patriarch in Constantinople, from whom he had received no communications since November of the previous year.

Fr. Pitirim had to go to Lenin himself in order to obtain permission for himself and several wounded people to leave Moscow. With great difficulty he reached Kiev in August, where he visited the grave of the New Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev before celebrating the feast of the Dormition with the new metropolitan, Anthony (Khrapovitsky). It was not until October, as the war was ending, that he reached Constantinople on a steamboat together with a large embassy from the Hetman of the Ukraine.

Having arrived at the residence of the Patriarch, Fr. Pitirim was told that the Ecumenical Patriarch had received Patriarch Tikhon's gramota already in November, 1917, and welcomed the restoration of the patriarchate in Russia.

He then petitioned for, and obtained, the transfer to himself of the seven Russian metochia (podvorya) in Constantinople, and proceeded to transfer 3700 Russian prisoners of war into them in preparation for their repatriation to Russia.

He continues the story in his biography: "On November 1st, 1918, the English, French, Italian and Greek fleets arrived in Constantinople and occupied it, making it neutral from that day on. It was ruled by four powers: England, France, Italy and Turkey. On November 3rd, our prisoners were clothed by the English, who gave each man three pairs of underwear, shoes, soldiers' blouses, greatcoats, service caps, waterproof raincoats and provisions in the form of tinned food. The prisoners began to sell everything in the market and get drunk. Then the command went out from all the powers that no one was to buy English military clothes from prisoners of war. Typhus appeared among the prisoners and they began to die. I myself had to clothe the dead and go to the cemetery to sing the burial service. The whole of November passed in this way. I was tormented together with them. They began to pull up the floors, cut them up and burn them, and then boil themselves tea. There was any amount [of wood] in the courtyard, but they didn't take that, but burned the floors in the house. Then I began to ask the powers to allow me to bring twenty-

four people from Athos, three for each podvorye. They gave me leave to go to Athos.

"Of the 700 prisoners who had arrived in Odessa, the majority turned out to be Russians, not Ukrainians. The Hetman's authority refused to receive them and began to return them to Constantinople.

"When I received the document enabling me to go to Athos, only military vessels went there. It was impossible for me to leave unless I could bring two monks from Odessa to go with me. When the monks arrived, I left them to look after the podvoryes instead of me while I myself left on December 12th on a military vessel to Thessalonica, and from there to Athos by mule. I had to go for four days over hills and through forests. I found a driver and agreed with him, but since it rained heavily during the night he refused. Then I decided to go on a French steamboat which went to Kovana for wood for the armies. This steamboat passed by Athos. I got on the steamboat with a Greek, a monk from the Panteleimon monastery. The captain of the steamboat, a Frenchman, took an interest in me and called me into his cabin and began to ask me about what was happening in Russia. I couldn't speak French, so the Greek translated. We sat there the whole night. I didn't ask the captain to drop me off at Athos. At ten in the morning the mountain of Athos appeared. The captain suddenly turned the steamboat towards Athos. I don't remember what happened to me: such tearful joy, I hadn't been on Athos for eight years, I had experienced such sorrow; I had been separated from Athos since 1914.

"At three in the afternoon the ship came up to the quay of Daphni. The captain asked me about my return journey. I said that I would return in two weeks. He said that on January 7/20 he would drop by for me on his return journey. After this they let down the small boats and let us out on the quayside. Then I sent the Panteleimon monk to the Panteleimon monastery to tell them about my arrival, and after two hours they came for me on horses and at six o'clock in the evening, on the eve of the Nativity of Christ, I arrived at the Panteleimon monastery. They met me so triumphantly and with such joy: none of them knew whether I was alive or dead. They took me straight to the abbot of the monastery. He, like all the monastics, was amazed. I told them how I had arrived there, and they all listened with amazement. They gave me something to eat, but there was no time to eat - I was talking to them the whole time. After one-and-a-half hours I said:

"'Take me to my community, the St. Andrew skete.'

"But under no circumstances would they let anyone out at night. They said they would take me the next day. I promised that afterwards I would come and tell them everything, but they said:

"'No one will go with you on the eve of the feast.'

"I said that I would go alone, only would they give me a mule or a horse. They gave me a mule which went each day to Karyes to bring provisions for the members of the Athonite Synod. So the mule knew the road. It was dark and foggy. I left the Panteleimon monastery. Along the whole route I met only three desert-dwellers in various places. The mule brought me to Karyes, where it used to bring provisions, but wouldn't go a step further. Then I got off the mule and went in front of it, leading it. We arrived at our community, I tied the mule to the pavilion, went up to the gates and knocked. A monk opened the gate. He didn't know me. He asked who was there. I replied: 'One of ours.' He opened up and I went in. But since he didn't know me, he said:

"'Who are you? You're not one of ours.'

"But I said: 'No, I am one of yours.'

"He got frightened and said:

"'Go away, otherwise they'll rebuke me for letting in a stranger.'

"I asked: 'Who is now the oldest gate-keeper in the community?'

"Fr. Archippus,' he replied.

Fr. Archippus was not to be found, he had left on some business. I asked the monk at the gate to tell him that such-and-such a monk had arrived, and then myself went out of the gates and began to untie the mule and my baggage. When Fr. Archippus arrived, his assistant told him that some stranger had arrived. Fr. Archippus came out and began to ask me:

"'Who are you?'

"I replied: 'It's me.'

"He again asked: "But who *are* you?'

"'Well, I'm me,' I replied.

"When I said: 'Well, I'm me,' he recognized my voice, fell at my feet and said:

"'Give the blessing.'

"Then we greeted each other and kissed each other.

"'Is the abbot well?' I asked.

"He replied that he was sick.

"'Look, don't tell anyone that I've arrived,' I said.

"Then we went to the guest-house. We went to the buffet, where the guest-master Protodeacon Stratonicus was reading his rule. When I opened the door and went in, his book fell out of his hands. He only stood there and looked at me.

"What are you looking at me like that for?' I said. 'It's Fr. Pitirim.'

"Is it you, or a vision?'

"I assured him that it was me and we greeted each other. Then I said:

"Give me a room with a window onto the courtyard so that I can see how the monks go to church.'

"He gave me a room and offered some tea.

"But I said: 'First you go to Vladimir and Joasaphat, and quietly tell them that I have arrived, but tell noone else that I'm here.'

"First he went to Vladimir. He asked in what room I was and himself ran up to me. The guest-master then went to Joasaphat. Vladimir ran with such joy that he dropped a shoe off his foot, hurled himself at me, and we kissed each other and wept copiously. Meanwhile, Joasaphat arrived. We greeted each other and began to talk. I began to tell them my story in short. Meanwhile they gave me tea. While we were talking and drinking tea, the bell began to ring for the all-night vigil. Vladimir had to go and serve the sick abbot. They agreed not to tell anyone anything, but when the service began I would go into the church. Already the younger desert-dwellers were kissing the icons. I went up to kiss the icon of the feast of the Nativity, and one of the monks said to me:

"Where are you going? Our own monks have not arrived yet, and you're going to kiss the icons?'

"I kissed the icon of the Mother of God and in accordance with Athonite custom in the middle of the church opposite the royal doors I made three bows, and then bowed first to the right kliros and then to the left and then to the brothers behind. When I was bowing to the right kliros, the chanter on the right kliros Maurice recognized me and said to the others:

"It's Pitirim.'

"They replied that he had gone out of his mind: from where would Pitirim turn up there? I went straight into the sanctuary. Everyone was already reading the rule. I went up to the altar-table and bowed. All the clerics were standing and looking, none of them said a word. The sacrist, Hieromonk Florentius, decided to go up to me and asked:

"Fr. Pitirim, is it you or a vision?"

"I said that it was me, and then everyone began to greet me and we kissed each other. Then we began to pray. At the magnification I went out, and all the monks saw me. After the magnification I began to anoint all the monks. Then they were all convinced that it was me. After the all-night vigil had finished, I wanted to serve the early Liturgy, and six hieromonks and three hierodeacons served with me. Almost all the monks came for the early Liturgy. After the service they all invited me to have tea. I didn't go, but went into the guest-house together with all the clergy, chanters and all the other monks. There they poured out tea and while we were drinking I spoke. They all wanted to know what we had gone through during this period and how I had come to Athos.

"On the second day of the Nativity I went to the St. Elijah skete and stayed there for a day. I told them about their podvorye in Odessa and how the monks were living there. Then I returned to my community. The heads of the monasteries began to come to me and agreed that when we went they would each give me three people. I needed twenty-four people. I told them that a steamboat was coming for me, and we would go on January 7/20, 1919. Around the New Year people were sent to me from the Panteleimon monastery, and I went there and stayed there for two days. They took me on the cutter to the skete at Thebadia, where there was a church, so that I could see how they had finished the church, which my workmen had finished without me. On January 3rd I returned to my community again and remained there until the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. On the feast I celebrated the Liturgy and began to get ready to go to the Pantaleimon monastery, where the steamboat would arrive. It was very hard for me to leave my community. I didn't want to go, but I was compelled by the fact that in Constantinople I had accepted the responsibility for some communities and I had to hand them over to those to whom they belonged. From Constantinople I would be able to return again to Athos, but the main thing was to fulfil the charge given me by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and bring the gramota from the Ecumenical Patriarch to our Patriarch. And so I, for the sake of holy obedience, had to return to Russia and give this gramota to his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon.

"On January 7th the French steamboat put in at Athos. I boarded it with tears. While it was passing for two hours by Athos, I could not restrain myself and wept all the time. On January 8th I returned to Thessalonica, and on the 9th - to Constantinople. On January 16th there arrived the monks who had been appointed for the podvoryes. I handed over to them the acts whereby the podvoryes were received from the Turkish government, after which I could go to Russia.

"While I had been on Athos, the Bolsheviks had taken Odessa. There was no longer any Hetman. They began to send all the Russian and Ukrainian prisoners to Odessa. I left on the next steamboat. On January 29th I arrived in Odessa. There Soviet power was in control.

"In 1919 a certain Petlyura appeared and drove the Bolsheviks out of Odessa. They fought for more than a year. In 1920 armies began to come to Odessa from Crimea under the command of a certain General Imeling, and in February the Bolsheviks again took Odessa. This was already the last battle, and all the armies, and the intelligentsia, too, left Russia for Constantinople. In 1920 the war came to an end, only in Siberia there was Kolchak, who was also gradually retreating towards Manchuria and Vladivostok.

"We had nothing to live on in Odessa. I began to ask for some land to be given to us. We were sixty people at the podvorye. They gave us some land near the Yermievka station, fifty versts from Odessa, in the village of Kuzmenko. We had nothing: neither horses, nor ploughs, nor harrows. We began as follows. First six monks would go there. Tailors and cobblers in the villages began privately to sew boots, jackets and coats, and in exchange for this work each would plough as much land as he could, so that we could sow something. I also arrived on a pair of horses, as did the president of the village. They stopped near me. The president, Manuel Sidorenko, came up to me and said:

"Drop it and leave, so that nobody's here tomorrow.'

"I said: 'We won't go - the government has given us this land.'

"He struck me twice. A boy from Kotalovka was with me. I said to him:

"You see how Sidorenko beats me.'

"I see,' he replied.

"Go,' said Sidorenko for the second time.

"I will not leave the plough,' I replied.

"He hit me again, pushed me away with his feet and left. I finished ploughing as much as was necessary, sowed some oats and barley, and then started harrowing. The boy had gone home with the horses, so I got on a train and went to Odessa. I described everything in detail and went to the court. A week later, Sidorenko was arrested and driven on foot to Odessa. A trial was arranged, the boy and I were summoned to appear before it. When they interrogated the boy, he described everything that had happened in great detail. The judge said:

"If Archimandrite Pitirim forgives you, then fine. Otherwise you will be sentenced to three years, one year for every blow.'

"He began to weep and begged me for forgiveness:

"I have children, I was drunk and don't remember anything.'

"I forgave him, but the judge still gave him one year's forced labour. After this no one touched us. We began to work the land and live on it."

The Renovatist Heresy

"In 1921-22 they began to remove the silver and golden things from the churches. Patriarch Tikhon wrote that church vessels in which the services were carried out should not be given up, in accordance with the church typicon established by Anastasius and the Ecumenical Councils. When the Patriarch did not allow this, three bishops, Eudocimus, Antonin and Leonid, were found, together with the Protopriests Vvedensky, Krasnitsky, Boyarsky, Stadnik and others. They declared that they did not agree with the Patriarch, that his ban was unlawful, and that they allowed it. Then, on May 2nd, 1922, the Patriarch was arrested. He handed over his administration to Metropolitan Agathangelus, the first candidate [for the post of patriarchal locum tenens] who had been appointed by the Council [of 1917-18]. Agathangelus issued an epistle stating that he was accepting the patriarchal locum tenancy. 'Every ruling bishop must lead his flock in accordance with his hierarchical conscience, with which he gave his oath on being established as a bishop. But if he is in perplexity about anything, let him address my humility.'

"When the metropolitan issued this epistle, he was immediately arrested and exiled to Siberia. But Eudocimus, Antonin and Leonid then consecrated the protopriests Vvedensky, Krasnitsky, Stadnik and others to the episcopate, while they made themselves metropolitans. They created a Higher Church Administration which was confirmed by Soviet power. Then they became the ecclesiastical rulers throughout Russia. They created a programme [of twenty-eight points], in which it was said that 'our Lord Jesus Christ is not God, and the Mother of God is not a Virgin' and other points which go against our Church and the decrees of the Ecumenical Councils and Apostles. That had been [decided upon] earlier, when Arius did not recognize the Saviour and the Virgin Mother of God. Both he and all those who followed his teaching were condemned by the Ecumenical Councils and anathematized.

"Then in Moscow this Higher Church Administration began to demand that all the bishops and priests should recognize them, while all those who did not recognize them were thrown into prison. The three metropolitans: Vvedensky, Krasnitsky and Boyarsky went one evening to Metropolitan Benjamin [of Petrograd] and suggested that he also unite with them. He said:

"I was elected to this see by the people. Without the people I cannot decide. Tomorrow is Sunday, the people will be free. We shall ask the people to assemble at the Alexander Nevsky Lavra. Then you explain to them what renovationism and the Living Church is.'

"They all agreed to this. That same evening Metropolitan Benjamin phoned the deans of Leningrad that they should immediately announce in all the

churches that some metropolitans had arrived from Moscow who had suggested that he accept renovationism

"Tomorrow, May 28th, I shall serve in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra. At the end of the Liturgy the representatives of the Living Church will explain what renovationism and the Living Church is. And I shall ask the whole people and all the believers who are interested in Church matters to come at ten o'clock to the Lavra.'

"On May 28th, 1922, the people began to come together from the whole of Leningrad, and in front of the entrance they placed notebooks in which everyone's name could be recorded. From these notebooks it is calculated that 12,000 people gathered, as well as the clergy from every church. Three people: Archimandrite Macarius [the future bishop-confessor of the Catacomb Church], Hieromonk Seraphim and Hierodeacon German wrote down everything that happened and sent it to me in Odessa.

"At the end of the Liturgy Metropolitan Benjamin addressed the people, saying:

"There have arrived from Moscow representatives of the Living Church. They propose that we accept their teaching. I cannot do this without you, who elected me. So I have invited all of you who are interested in Church affairs. Listen carefully. They will explain their programme to you, and then I will express my own opinion!'

"Then, on the ambon, Metropolitan Benjamin appointed eight members of the presidium; the metropolitan himself, four clergy and three laymen. Then he declared the session open.

"Vvedensky came out onto the ambon. He began to explain his programme as follows:

"Brothers and sister, up to now,' he said, 'we have been subject to the Tsar and the metropolitans. But now we are free, and we ourselves must rule the people and the Church. More than 1900 years have already passed since it was written for us that the Lord Jesus Christ was born from the Virgin Mary and is the Son of God. But that is not true We recognize the existence of the God of Sabaoth, about whom our whole Bible and all the prophets have written. And we recognize them. But Jesus Christ is not God. He was simply a very clever man. And it is impossible to call Mary, who was born of a Jewish tribe and herself gave birth to Jesus - the Mother of God and Virgin. And so now we have all recognized the existence of God, that is, the God of Sabaoth, and we must all be united: both Jews and Catholics must be a living people's church.'

"When he had said this, the whole people cried out:

"We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of God and God, and we recognize the Mother of God to be a Virgin!"

"Then Krasnitsky came out and said:

"Brothers and sisters, the baptism of small children has been accepted by us. But when the child is just born he does not know or understand anything. They baptize him, put a little cross on him, and he grows up with the obligation of wearing this cross and not taking it off. But when he has grown up, he will learn and know everything - the cross will be quite unnecessary for him. So we do not recognize the baptism of young children, and when he comes of age let him be baptized and wear a cross. In the same way we do not recognize marriage: it is unnecessary and wrong. Why bind people? It should be like this: they should get together, register a civil marriage, and if one doesn't like the other, then let them go off in search of another and let him take another woman. We have freedom now. So we do not recognize any saints or relics. Nor do we recognize monasticism. We don't need any monasticism. Before, bishops had to come from the monks. This is wrong, because a man cannot live without a woman, nor the woman without a man. Bishops must be married, and priests also. It used to be that if a priest's wife died he had to remain a widower until his death. That is wrong. Now there is freedom. We can take a second and a third wife."

" Then Boyarsky came out. He said:

"Although Vvedensky said that Jesus Christ is not God but a clever man, and the Mother of God is not a Virgin, I do not agree with this. I recognize that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and the Mother of God a Virgin... But baptism, marriage, holy relics, monasticism - I do not recognize!"

"When he had said this, the people cried out:

"We do not need your explanations. We do not want your new Living Church"

"There was a disturbance and shouting among the people. Metropolitan Benjamin began to calm them down. When the people were settled, Metropolitan Benjamin said to them:

"You have all heard all the explanations of the representatives of the Living Church. Perhaps there is someone who will agree to join them. But I cannot, because this is the same blasphemy which was previously preached by Arius and his followers. And so I, in accordance with the rules of the Apostles and the Ecumenical Councils am obliged to anathematize all the leaders of this living and new church and their followers."

"Then he immediately turned towards the Royal Doors and said:

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and of the All-pure, immaculate and Ever-Virgin His Mother, the Birth-giver of God, I anathematize...'

"And there and then the protodeacon pronounced anathema on all the teachers and followers of the 'Living Church'. But while they were chanting anathema, Vvedensky, fled out of the sanctuary through a side-door into the courtyard of the Alexander-Nevisky Lavra, and informed the GPU by telephone of what had happened. But Metropolitan Benjamin began to preach and give further explanations to the people. While he was speaking, there appeared representatives of the Soviet authorities and arrested Metropolitan Benjamin and the four bishops and three laymen who had been appointed members of the presidium.

"Immediately, they took them out into Gorochovaya street, where the GPU was situated. All the people who had been in the Lavra went there and demanded that the authorities release the metropolitan and those who had been taken with him. The whole people gathered and towards the evening of May 28th about 30,000 people had gathered on the square of the GPU. No one left, they continued demanding their release, but the authorities did not release them. It was already late in the evening when the people were dispersed by a cavalry army.

"The Living Church was proclaimed in Leningrad on May 29th. If a bishop or priest wanted to join it he stayed where he was, while all those who did not join them were arrested and exiled. From this time it was announced to all the churches in Russia that now there was no longer any patriarchal rule in Russia, but only the Higher Church Administration - the HCA. This HCA's rule began to be accepted throughout Russia and they began to commemorate in the litanies, not the Patriarch, but the HCA. All the priests and several of the bishops freely accepted this rule, but some of them were taking stock and waiting for a detailed explanation, and for that reason they commemorated neither the Patriarch nor the HCA. Some people knew who Metropolitan Eudocimus, Anthony and Leonid were and did not accept them, and the priest and bishops refrained for the time being. But Metropolitan Sergius, formerly of Finland, who was known to everyone since he had been a member of the former Synod under the Tsar, joined the HCA in June, 1922, and began to write to church journals that this was the only correct administration, the only canonical administration. In July these journals were distributed throughout the churches of Russia. Then all the priests and bishops began to accept the HCA and almost everyone accepted this administration and submitted to it, referring to the authority of Metropolitan Sergius. They all went over freely: only some believers from the monastics and a few priests refrained. But there were not many of them.

"I in Odessa was very upset and unhappy, but I did not commemorate the HCA for one day, although I did not know in detail what was happening in Moscow and Leningrad. On the same day, August 17th, I received letters from

my brothers Archimandrite Macarius and Metropolitan Agathangelus. In Metropolitan Agathangelus' letter was an epistle in which it was said that he had taken [the administration of the Church] upon himself in accordance with the will and blessing of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, who had been arrested, and that 'I, as the first candidate chosen by the Council in accordance with the will of God, take upon myself this great work of the administration of the Church of the whole of Russia, and I give my full blessing to every bishop, archimandrite and priest to lead his flock along the true path which has been given to us by the Holy Apostles and the Ecumenical Councils. Everybody must firmly take stock of the church situation. Now the so-called Living Church, in which the HCA [is involved?], has been founded and confirmed by the authorities in our land. But I remain by the apostolic conciliar decrees, and if you are perplexed about anything, address my humility.' There was nothing more from Metropolitan Agathangelus. But Archimandrite Macarius wrote from Leningrad everything that I have indicated above, about how Metropolitan Benjamin anathematized the HCA. Immediately I received the epistle from Metropolitan Agathangelus and Macarius, I went to the ruling bishop of Odessa and Kherson, Alexis. I gave him to read the epistle I had received, and the detailed explanation from Leningrad of what had been happening there in the month of May. When he had read it all, Vladyka ordered the secretary of the Odessa-Kherson diocese, Nicholas Vladimirovich Chishchakov, to be invited there, and gave him, too, to read it. Then immediately, on August 19th (it was a Friday, at two o'clock in the afternoon), they decided to instruct all the Odessa clerics and the spiritual presidents, i.e. of the church councils, to come to the Dormition church. They all assembled and the epistle from Leningrad was read out to all. It was decreed that the epistle of Metropolitan Agathangelus should be re-printed on typewriters. On Saturday the 20th it was announced throughout the city of Odessa that [the epistle] would be read out on the Sunday, so that all the people should know what was being done in the Church and in the diocese. On the evening of the Saturday Bishop Alexis telephoned all the deans, telling them to come to him on the Sunday, but that they should not read the epistle for the time being. And I was told by phone that I should not explain anything to the people for the time being. But I did not obey the bishop - I proclaimed it at the early and later Liturgies. The people dispersed, and the news spread throughout the city about what Metropolitan Agathangelus had written and the fact that in Leningrad the HCA had been excommunicated from the Church and anathematized by Metropolitan Benjamin.

"On August 23rd, Vladyka Alexis (Bazhanov) summoned me to his quarters. Angrily he said:

"'You were told on the telephone that you should not for the time being proclaim it to the people, but you did proclaim it. Does that mean that you do not submit to your diocesan bishop?'

"I replied that in the Dormition church it had been decreed that the news should be proclaimed to the people on Sunday, and should be sent separately

to each church in the diocese, so that the people should know what was being done in our Church.

"I find it unnecessary to proclaim it for the time being," replied Vladyka.

"That means that you agree to join the HCA and commemorate them," I said, "but I have not commemorated them and will not commemorate them in the future."

"I ban you from serving," said the bishop.

"I replied: 'I do not recognize your ban - it means that you, too, are a renovationist.'"

"He said that he was not a renovationist.

"I objected: 'If you were not a renovationist, you would not have rescinded the decree of Metropolitan Agathangelus. And from today I do not recognize you and will not commemorate you at the litanies'... And I left Alexis.

"I went home to the podvorye, gathered together the five monks and three hierodeacons, and declared to them that from that day I would not be commemorating the bishop of Odessa and Kherson. I told them everything in detail, that he had forbidden me to serve and that I did not recognize him and that he was a renovationist. Out of all the eight people present, only one hierodeacon did not agree with me.

"I will commemorate Bishop Alexis," he said.

"If you want to commemorate Alexis," I replied, "go to him and serve there, but I will not allow you to serve with me in the podvorye."

"I did not allow him to serve, and he went to the bishop's house, where he served. From August 23rd Alexis was not commemorated with us in the podvorye. Nor was the HCA. The whole city knew about that in the St. Andrew podvorye Archimandrite Pitirim had forbidden his monks from commemorating Alexis of Odessa and Kherson.

"On October 25th, I was arrested and taken to the GPU. I went with joy for the purity of the faith. They kept me there for seventeen days for interrogations: why did I not recognize or commemorate Alexis? I explained that I was from old Athos, there I was tonsured into monasticism and ordained as a church-server by a Greek bishop and I was in obedience to the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. According to our Church law, one must commemorate the person one is in obedience to. After interrogation I was freed.

"Vladyka Alexis was unhappy. He summoned a Diocesan Congress for November 7, 1923 [1922?], at which it was decreed that the Athonite podvorye

should be closed and handed over to the Administration of the Odessa-Kherson Diocese, since it was a menace for the world.

"During this period, on January 2nd, 1923, I saw a vision: it was as if I was in my community on Athos and the reposed Archimandrite Joseph was blessing me for a new obedience. He was making me a bishop, vesting me in a hierarchical mantia and omophorion, and putting a staff in my hand, while by the other column on the left stood the Apostle Andrew, who was also blessing me. And they put me on the left kliros of the church. I looked at them with such joy - at my elder Joseph and the Apostle Andrew. The service continued for some time until suddenly two people came up to me and said:

"Let's go. You have been appointed our bishop. Everybody's waiting for you there!"

"They took me by the hands and led me out of the church, and suddenly a simple peasant cart drawn by a pair of horses appeared. I kept on thinking how I was going to sit in this carriage in my mantia and omophorion and staff. Then suddenly I was in the carriage, while behind me there was a carpet and railings. The driver set off, and we left my community and Athos. We went over the sea on the horses. It was as if we were crossing dry land. Suddenly the inhabitants brought me up to a large church. They were ringing the bells as one does when meeting a bishop. We went up to the church and again the same two people who had taken me out on Athos appeared. They took me and led me into the church. When we entered, there was a lot of dirt and dust in the vestibule. I said to them:

"Where have you brought me?"

"They replied that there was a clean, good place with them. We went up the left-hand side-chapel and came to the iconostasis. There were no icons - they had been broken up. And suddenly a priest came out from the central altar with a cross, in the way priests always meet bishops. I took the cross and kissed it. Suddenly there appeared in front of me a boy of extraordinary beauty, who said to me:

"So you've come to us - good. We are all alive and we shall live, and you will be with us."

"I said: 'Is that all?'"

"He said: 'That's all.'"

"He was not tall. I said to those who had brought me:

"Raise me up, I shall kiss him."

"They raised me up. I asked:

"What is your name?"

"I am called Malachi," he replied with a smile, and immediately disappeared.

"The third of January was indeed the commemoration of the holy Prophet Malachi. Then they led me into the central chapel, where on the left side the steps of the ambon were broken. They lifted me up and I found myself on the ambon of the central chapel. The priest went into the altar, and I turned to the people. I wanted to pronounce some words of welcome, and I saw that the middle of this church was covered with Persian carpets, and there were no people. But the right-hand side-chapel was full of people, and they all wanted to hear what I would say. I began to speak as follows:

"Dear brothers and sisters, I have been appointed as your pastor here. I don't know any of you, and you don't know me. I have to say to you that our Church administration here in Russia is not canonical and they do not want to stand for the purity of the Apostolic Church."

"And I began to weep and sob, and immediately woke up.

"Two weeks later, on January 17th, 1923, on the feast of St. Anthony the Great, I had served the all-night vigil, gone into my cell and had only lain down to sleep a little when I had the following vision: I was going into the cathedral church of Odessa to the right-hand doors of the right-hand chapel. I went - and saw no one. On the right-hand iconostasis there were no icons - they had all been broken. I went into the sanctuary and kissed the altar-table. The altar-table was in its usual place. I made three prostrations and began to kiss the altar-table. At that moment the Prophet Malachi appeared between the altar and the high place and said to me:

"Look what's happening in the Church now."

"I went into the central chapel to kiss the altar-table, went up to the altar and saw that the whole sanctuary was full of men and women crowding round the altar-table. When I was moving across to the central chapel where the people were, a Jew was reading on the altar - I don't know what he was reading. I asked him:

"What have you done with the church?"

"It's according to the new style," he said.

"At that moment I saw a vested protodeacon standing on the ambon, while in the middle of the church on the cathedra stood a bishop and many people. At that moment the protodeacon intoned: "Blessed be the Kingdom of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The chanters chanted: "Amen."

All those who were in the sanctuary, men and women, were praying. Then they lay down and in the lying position sang with a laugh: "Lord, have mercy." Then I woke up, shaking all over.

"In March, 1923, Metropolitan Eudocimus, the head of the renovationist church, himself came to Odessa to convince me to accept renovationism. I remained alone. In Odessa the people had stopped going to church, they went instead to our podvorye. During the Great Fast up to 3000 people came to us every day to receive communion. Then Bishop Alexis wrote to Eudocimus in Moscow that in Odessa Archimandrite Pitirim had not accepted renovationism and did not commemorate the HCA, and that all the people were going to him. Then Eudocimus himself came to me. He invited me to come to him without fail. I came, but did not take his blessing. He invited me to sit down. They, Eudocimus and Alexis, were sitting on the sofa. In the bishop's residence Eudocimus addressed me as follows:

"Father Archimandrite! Why do you not commemorate the HCA of your bishop?"

"I replied: 'Your Eminence, I cannot commemorate the HCA because all of them have been excommunicated from the Church and anathematized by Metropolitan Benjamin, who also excommunicated and anathematized all those who confess the new Living Church, in whose programme it is said that Jesus Christ is not the Son of God, and the Mother of God is not a Virgin. This confession has been condemned by the Ecumenical Councils and anathematized. Moreover, on May 28th in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in Leningrad your brothers Vvedensky, Krasnitsky and Boyarsky, in the presence of 12,000 people, confessed and explained what the Living Church was. And you are subject to expulsion. Benjamin excommunicated you lawfully. You shot Benjamin, four bishops and three laymen!'

"And I began to tell them that I knew everything and had read everything. And since Vladyka Alexis had forbidden the epistle of Metropolitan Agathangelus to be proclaimed to the people, I had stopped commemorating him.

"Eudocimus said to me: 'Since you cannot commemorate the HCA and Alexis, remain with your convictions, but tell your hieromonks that they should commemorate the HCA and Bishop Alexis in the litanies, so as not to disturb the people.'

"I categorically refused.

"For this they will put you in prison,' he said, 'close your podvorye and expel all your monks from Odessa. How will you answer before your Athonites, who have entrusted you with both the podvorye and the monks?'

"You understand that you are already excommunicated. If I did not know that, I could still do as you wish,' I replied.

"Eudocimus said: 'You make a compromise. With us in Moscow the monks of the Panteleimon monastery and their abbot have agreed, while they themselves remain with their convictions. The people did not know this and does not know it now, and they are not disturbed.'

"I replied: 'The fact that the Panteleimon monks have made a compromise with you is their business, but I will not do and cannot do it. In our Church there can be no compromises.' And then I left them.

"Three days later they sent Bishop Gerasimus of Boltovsk to me. He was with me for more than an hour, constantly trying to persuade me. I did not agree and he left.

"Two days later they sent Archbishop Pimen of Podolsk to me. He came and tried to persuade me. He said:

"'Because of your stubbornness they'll take the whole of this podvorye. They won't even give you a bed!'

"When he said this I began to laugh. I said to him:

"'Vladyko! Shall we really take beds with us into the Kingdom of Heaven?'

"Then he got up and said: 'Forgive me, I shall not speak with you any longer,' and left.

"After this Eudocimus appointed another bishop for Odessa and took Alexis Bazhanov away with him to Moscow, where he made him Metropolitan of Kazan.

"A week after their departure, on Palm Sunday, we were serving the all-night vigil. At three o'clock the GPU arrived and sealed our churches. In the morning the people arrived, but the churches were closed, so the people stood in the street until 12 o'clock. All the streets were full of people. The police asked them:

"'Disperse - all the churches are open, go and pray there.'

"But the people did not move. At 12 o'clock the cavalry were summoned. They dispersed the people and emptied the streets. Up to Holy Thursday we were still in the podvorye, but on Holy Thursday they moved all of us out of the St. Andrew podvorye to Ilinskoye, where they had appointed their own priests in the church. Since none of the monks would go into the church, the order was given to all the monks to leave Odessa and go wherever they wanted. All the monks chose me to go to Moscow and intercede for all the Athonite

monks to be allowed to go to Old Athos, and if permission was not given, to be given a monastery somewhere in Russia. I wrote down the names of all of them - there were 180 people. I wrote down the Christian names and surnames of each of them, how long they had lived on Athos and in which community. I arrived in Moscow and went to Kalinin. Kalinin said that he could not do this, but that everything depended on his colleagues' opinions of the matter. And he sent me to Sakhorov, who, having looked into the matter, sent me to Krasin. Krasin did not receive me for two weeks. Every day I went to him. His secretary proposed that I go to Chicherin and get a note from him to Krasin. And he told me that I should come to him at eight o'clock in the evening. Krasin was due to arrive a nine o'clock. I arrived and sat in the reception room. At 9 Krasin came in with a comrade, with whom he talked until 10.30. After that they told him about me and Krasin received me. Having read my petition and the list [of names], he said:

"I cannot decide this myself. It has to be passed to a session of my colleagues.'

"And he told his secretary to make a note and give me the number of my case. Krasin told me to go to Odessa, and after the session the decision would be sent to me there. They could cope with things only one at a time. I left Moscow with nothing. On arriving in Odessa in May, I told everything to the monks. They began to disperse - some to their homeland, wherever they wanted. In June, papers came from Moscow allowing the monks to go to Athos and dividing them into three groups of sixty monks each. All those sent away were specified by name exactly as on the list of Archimandrite Pitirim. He himself was allowed to leave with the last group. When the papers arrived in Odessa, there were thirty monks there. The Odessa GPU said that in view of the fact that we were so few they could not allow us to leave. So we stayed.

"In 1923 the renovationists convened their council in Moscow, at which they decreed that Patriarch Tikhon should be deprived of his patriarchal rank and even his monasticism and turned into the layman Basil Bellavin. They sent their decree to the Patriarch, so that he should know that he was a layman and should sign the papers and submit to them. Patriarch Tikhon wrote on the declaration: 'Patriarch Tikhon has read this'. When Metropolitan Sergius [Stragorodsky] saw that nothing was gained from the council, and that Patriarch Tikhon remained the lawful patriarch, he left the administration and the Living Church and HCA. He came to Patriarch Tikhon asking to be forgiven and received as penitent novice. The Patriarch said to him:

"I forgive you since you repent, but you will have to be judged by a Council of the Orthodox Church.'

"And he sent him to Nizhni-Novgorod to turn over a new leaf there.

"In 1923 I [together with all the brothers] was exiled from Odessa to a farm fifty versts from the city [in the village of Yeremevka], where we had

previously worked the land. In 1924, thirty-seven protopriests recognized their mistake. The people were not going to church. They then began to write that they were again returning to Patriarch Tikhon. But in Odessa there was no Orthodox bishop. [The nearest] was in Kharkov, by the name of Onuphrius, but in Odessa itself there was only a renovationist bishop. Patriarch Tikhon blessed Archimandrite Pitirim, who was living near Odessa, to go to Odessa and receive these thirty-seven protopriests. He said that they should give an oath and ask forgiveness of the whole people in the church. I went to Odessa with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon with the letter he had sent me... I united them [to the Church] on four Sundays, dividing them into groups of nine. They repented. I read the prayer of absolution over them and united them again to our Church. I asked the people to accept them and go with them to church without doubting. A month after this, the Soviet authorities ordered me to leave even the farm and told me that I should not dare to live anywhere in Ukraine. And they took from me a written undertaking concerning my future place of residence. I indicated the town of Glazov, in Vyatka province. I went to Patriarch Tikhon in Moscow to tell him of my position. The Patriarch only smiled and said:

"It's good that you have come. I am now going to make you a bishop [of Yaransk]. We need many people here, but I don't have anyone.'

"But I refused, I did not agree and said that I couldn't.

"He said: 'You can't refuse - this is holy obedience. We need bishops, and we can't get them anywhere.'

"I began to ask him to let me go home and rest in my homeland.

"After that, let the will of God be done, I shall carry out the obedience. In 1917 I came to bring you a gramota from the Ecumenical Patriarch, which was considered impossible. But by your holy prayers and blessing I succeeded in everything and now I ask you only to let me go to my homeland and see my relatives."

The Sergianist Heresy

"I was two nights in the Donskoy monastery, where he [Patriarch Tikhon] was accomodated in the small church. There were three rooms attached to it. He served his confinement in this church with the double eastern doors, and when he was released he did not want to live in the patriarchal apartment. So he stayed in the place where he had been confined. On two evenings he invited me to his room, and there we discussed everything. It was then that I asked him:

"Your Holiness, how did you receive Metropolitan Sergius? On what conditions?'

"He said to me: 'I received him as a penitent novice, he cannot rule the Church until a Council. And he must bear whatever punishment the Council gives him. Sergius agreed to this.'

"As for me, [the Patriarch] blessed me to go and rest in my homeland, after which I was to return to him in Moscow. I was with his Holiness the Patriarch in October, 1924, and on December 7, the Patriarch wrote an epistle to all the clergy of the Church. There it was written:

"'Whoever was in the administration of the Living Church in the HCA cannot take up any further administrative position in our Church. And not only can he not be an administrator: he cannot have a vote during a Council.'

"After the publication of this epistle, the living-churchmen took other measures. In January, 1925, they decided to kill him [the Patriarch]. A criminal forced his way into the bedroom in his residence. At two o'clock in the morning the Patriarch went out of the bedroom into another room to pray, while his cell-attendant James went into the bedroom and began to lay the bed. The criminal thought that this was the Patriarch and killed James on the spot, but was himself arrested. After the murder of James, the layman Straton and the protodeacon Mark were appointed to be with the Patriarch.

"The Patriarch continued his work. On the Annunciation, having celebrated the Liturgy, he was completely healthy. At four o'clock Metropolitan Seraphim of Tver came to him. The Patriarch told him that he would serve the next day, but Seraphim said:

"'Do not serve, your Holiness, have a rest. You are very tired and weak.'

"Seraphim left at eight o'clock in the evening.

"The Patriarch felt well and was getting ready to serve the next day. But suddenly there was a ring at the door. When they opened the door, a doctor entered. The doctor said:

"'Your Holiness! You rang us and asked us to come since you were weak. Here I am to examine you and prescribe you some medicines.'

"The Patriarch said: 'But no. I feel fine.'

"'Okay,' said the doctor, 'but just allow me to examine you. Your pulse is weak. You must drink some medicine.'

"The Patriarch asked: 'Why have you come and not my doctor, who always looks after me?'

"'He's not at home now, he's on call, but I was at home - so here I am,' replied the doctor. 'In an hour's time I shall send you a mixture.'

"An hour after the doctor had left, at ten o'clock in the evening, Mark brought the Patriarch a mixture and said that the doctor had ordered him to drink a spoonful.

"Give it to me,' said the Patriarch.

"Mark poured out a spoonful of the mixture and the Patriarch drank it. Immediately he began to vomit (be sick). The cell-attendants Straton and Mark rang the doctor. After a few minutes the doctor appeared. The Patriarch was lying down.

"What's the matter with him?' asked the doctor.

"The doctor prescribed a mixture and ordered us to give him one spoonful,' replied Mark.

"The doctor demanded to see the mixture immediately. They gave it him. On seeing it, the doctor threw up his hands and immediately sent the Patriarch to hospital. Mark and Stratonicus took him out and put him in the carriage. They got in themselves and accompanied him to the hospital. There they gave him some milk, and prepared some baths, but nothing helped. Within an hour and a half Patriarch Tikhon had died. The cell-attendants took him back. At three o'clock the Patriarch was laid out as a corpse at home. I write this from the words of the cell-attendants Mark and Stratonicus, who were with the Patriarch in the place of the murdered Yakov.

[This version of events by Schema-Bishop Peter does not agree with the usually accepted account of the death of the Patriarch and for that reason it may give rise to doubts, first of all because it is well-known that before his death the Patriarch lived in a clinic and died in a room he had taken. - Comment of the editors of Tserkovnaya Zhizn'.]

"In 1925 I was again in Moscow, where I met the cell-attendants [of the Patriarch] and asked how the Patriarch had died. In 1924, when I had been with the Patriarch, he had commanded me to leave my address for Metropolitan Peter. I arrived in my homeland of Glazov, where all my relatives were very glad to see me. I remained there for four months. On learning in Ufa province that I was in Glazov, my cousins and nephews came to visit me. Nun Eustalia came to Glazov and asked me to go and see them. That was in 1925. I arrived in Ufa, went to the church and asked:

"Are your people old-churchmen or renovationists?"

"They replied that they were old-churchmen. [But] in the church they did not commemorate Patriarch Tikhon. I asked the priest:

"Why are you old-churchmen, but do not commemorate Patriarch Tikhon?"

"He replied: 'We are doing what Vladyka John of Ufa ordered us to do.'

"My relatives invited me to serve. The church was in the house of my nephew, while the priest was staying in the flat of my other nephew. I refused to serve with them since they were new-churchmen and did not commemorate Patriarch Tikhon. My nephew Demetrius took me to Ufa so that I could ask John why he was not commemorating Patriarch Tikhon. I went to the Nikolayevsky church, where John was serving. When vespers had finished, they told him that some archimandrite had arrived from Odessa. John immediately invited me to his flat to drink some tea and eat something. During tea we talked. He asked why I had come here. I said that I had relatives here. Then I asked:

"'What, are you new-churchmen? Why do you not commemorate Patriarch Tikhon?'

"'No, no, we are old-churchmen, but we do not commemorate him because we wrote to the Patriarch and he did not bless us - we do not have to commemorate him,' he said.

"'That cannot be,' I said. 'It is never permissible not to commemorate the Patriarch. Now we can find out: where they commemorate Patriarch Tikhon they are old-churchmen, and where they do not they are renovationist.'

"But he continued to assure me that he was an old-churchman and I did not talk to him anymore about this. I asked his permission to serve at my relatives' in Sophronovka village. He kindly gave permission. We ate and said goodbye. I left for Sophronovka. I began to serve on the first Sunday. After the Liturgy I gave the people a sermon on renovationism, how the icons had been thrown out and returned again. The people learned that I had come from Athos and that I was an archimandrite. When they heard that I was commemorating Patriarch Tikhon, which was done nowhere at that time, they began to come to me from all the villages. I served throughout the fast and at Pascha. The wife of the priest of this church then objected to her husband:

"'Why do you allow the archimandrite to serve? Now he will take your place and we will be left without a crust of bread.'

"She wrote a letter to Bishop John, and sent it with her mother-in-law to Ufa. In it she pointed out that the archimandrite was commemorating Patriarch Tikhon and that the people were coming to him from all the villages. The bishop forbade me to serve, saying:

"'Why are you taking the last crust of bread from a poor priest? Come to me and I will give you a place. John's card was given to me at Mid-Pentecost and after this I stopped serving. I decided to go to Vyatka and stay there for a while.

"At that time some people came to me from Kuznetsk, asking me to tonsure the sister of Michael Panchenko into the mantia. He had two sisters: one had tuberculosis and it was impossible to take her to Ufa. Bishop John blessed her to receive the tonsure from Archimandrite Pitirim. I went to Kuznetsk and tonsured Helen before Pentecost. The priest John Lysenko was there. He was very ill and was unable to serve. I served the feast of the Trinity with them. I was accompanied by my niece, Nun Eustalia, who had come to see me in my homeland in Glazov. In Priest Lysenko's house I served Small Vespers. Five people came during the evening: Nun Maria, Michael Panchenko, Cosmas Panchenko, the church warden and the missionary Athanasius Chemenev. They handed me a letter from Archbishop Andrew which read:

"Bring me one of the monks and I will make him a bishop. Bishop John is a real renovationist. You are doing well in not recognizing him.'

"They said that about 3000 people were not going to the church where the priests of Bishop John who did not commemorate Patriarch Tikhon were serving.

"Bishop John wrote a declaration for distribution throughout the diocese, in which he said:

"Up to this time we have been in darkness, but now Soviet power has given us light. In the past we bowed down to the golden calf, but now we have complete freedom. Priests do not have to give sermons in the churches, they can speak openly on the squares.'

"This was signed by Bishop John. When I read this declaration, then it really dawned on me that the poor people knew nothing about what was happening in our church and what kind of church-servers we had. I said that I could not agree to this exploit without the lot and the will of God. They said to me:

"If you do not agree, then you will answer for all of us before the Lord. We shall not go to these churches.'

"I said: 'Then choose three candidates. Tomorrow is Trinity Sunday, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles. Whoever the Lord indicates to you will be your bishop.'

"They were very glad and agreed. Then they appointed me as the first candidate, Theophanes, who served in the French factory, as the second, and since no third monastic could be found they also appointed Michael Panchenko, who was married. They said: if the lot falls to him, they will both be tonsured, and have already agreed about this. I also agreed and wrote down the three lots. On the day of the feast of the Holy Trinity we asked the Lord to indicate a Bishop for us. At the end of the service, the Liturgy and the Vespers, I took the three lots from the altar, put them in the tabernacle, and then shook them. They decided that the lot should be drawn by the leader of the group of

missionaries Chemetov. The lot fell on me. Everybody was joyful, but I wept bitterly, knowing that I was going to sufferings. But I submitted to the will of God. On the second day of Trinity I again celebrated the Liturgy, and immediately after they accompanied me with the missionary Chemetov to Archbishop Andrew, who was in Ten-Zhen in Asia [Tadzhikstan]. On the train travelling with us were Archimandrite Anthony Milovidov and Hieromonk Rufinus Brekhov, who were also due to be consecrated to the episcopate.

"We were consecrated by Archbishop Andrew of Ufa and Bishop Lev [Cherepanov] of Nizhne-Tagilsk. [According to one source, Patriarch Tikhon had sent a letter to Archbishop Andrew telling him to consecrate Fr. Pitirim.] On June 6th Anthony was consecrated Bishop of Ustkovsk [Ust-Katavsk, in other sources]. On June 7 Rufinus was consecrated Bishop of Ustkovsk [this is probably an error in the title of Bishop Rufinus, who is in other places called Bishop of Satkinsk]. And on June 8 [1925] I, Pitirim, was consecrated Bishop of Nizhegorod [and Urzhuma].

"From Ten-Zhen I went straight to Odessa to pick up the things I had left there. From Odessa I went to Sophinevskoye, where I stayed with relatives. I arrived at Uteryak station, and from Sophronov I had to go four kilometres out of my way on horseback. They found for me a Bashkiri driver and he arrived at the station on exactly the same carriage which I had seen in a dream in 1923 on the 2nd of January, in which I had been consecrated to the episcopate. I had been consecrated to the episcopate and a Bashkir drove me to the village of Sophronovka.

"While I was on my way to Ten-Zhen, I received a registered parcel from Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa, in which he described in detail how before the death of Patriarch Tikhon he had been confirmed [as patriarchal locum tenens] by the Patriarch until the return from exile of Metropolitan Agathangelus or Metropolitan Cyril, whichever of them should be released first. In Moscow 67 bishops had confirmed him at an assembly. The bishops were all mentioned by name, while the third candidate, Metropolitan Anthony [Khrapovitsky] had by this time already gone abroad.

"In 1925 Metropolitan Peter took upon himself the administration of the Church. Then, in September, Metropolitan Sergius convened a Council, at which they decreed that all should unite into one: the renovationists, the [Ukrainian] self-consecrators and the Church of Metropolitan Peter. Metropolitan Peter did not agree to this, nor could he according to the apostolic and conciliar decrees. The renovationists had already been excommunicated and anathematized, while the self-consecrators had also uncanonically consecrated themselves, which has never been known in our Orthodox Church. But Metropolitan Peter was immediately arrested for his disagreement with the impious council. He spent two days in prison and handed over the administration of the Church to some unknown person. A group of eight bishops was with Metropolitan Peter, forming a Synod. The head of this group, and the oldest, was Archbishop Gregory of Sverdlovsk. They were waiting for

Metropolitan Peter to announce to whom he was handing over the administration. But at this point Metropolitan Peter was visited by Tuchkov, who been put in charge of Church affairs by the authorities. Tuchkov was with some bishop or other, I don't know who. Tuchkov ordered Metropolitan Peter to hand over the administration to Metropolitan Sergius. Peter said that he could not do that since Metropolitan Sergius had been in a member of the [renovationist] Higher Church Administration, and because in December, 1924 there had been published an epistle of Patriarch Tikhon to the whole Russian flock in which it was said that whoever had been in the HCA could not be part of the administration of the Orthodox Church. Then Tuchkov said that Metropolitan Peter should hand over the administration to this group of eight bishops. Sergius would join this group, but would not do any administration. Metropolitan Peter agreed to Tuchkov's demand to write this and hand over the administration to the group of bishops. But it was not handed over to the bishops, but to Sergius. Sergius was at that time in Gorky [Nizhni-Novgorod], and he did not join this group of hierarchs, but collected several bishops of his own there. Two weeks passed. Gregory in Moscow knew nothing, and he sent a second time to Metropolitan Peter. The latter replied that already two weeks before he handed the administration over to him, and that 'the group must rule, and Metropolitan Sergius must join this group'.

"When Archbishop Gregory received this information from Metropolitan Peter, he sent two bishops of his group from Moscow to Metropolitan Sergius in Gorky. They had a letter in which he wrote:

"Why do you not come to us in Moscow and give us no information?"

"Sergius replied: 'I don't recognize any of you and will not come to Moscow.'"

"The two bishops returned from Sergius and explained to Sergius' reply to Gregory and his group. Then Gregory and his group informed Metropolitan Peter that Sergius would not come to Moscow and declared that he recognized none of them and had already registered his council [with the authorities]. Then Metropolitan Peter handed over the whole administration to Archbishop Gregory of Sverdlovsk and his group. When Archbishop Gregory received this communication from Metropolitan Peter, he registered his group. That was how three Synods came to be formed with us in Russia: the Renovationist, the Sergianist and the Gregorian. But no one in the whole of Russia knows this. Then they began to divide the Church into Gregorians, Sergianists, Renovationist and self-consecrators... When Metropolitan Sergius head that Gregory and his group had been registered, he excommunicated his Synod and forbade them all to serve. Gregory, of course, did not recognize these bans. I learned these details and was terrified by all that had happened. I decided to go into retirement, take the schema and not be responsible for my flock before the Lord."

On April 21, 1927, Bishop Pitirim took the schema with the name of Peter. According to another source, he was tonsured on January 20, 1928 in the village

of Chetverto-Petrovskoye by Bishop Job (Afanasyev), who took over his Nizhegorod diocese with the blessing of Archbishop Andrew of Ufa. "After my tonsure," he writes, "I resigned from the administration of the Church and in Voznesensk, near Chetveropetrovsk, they made me a cell in which I prayed, without leaving or going anywhere. On feasts and Sundays I would go to Chetveropetrovsk and sometimes I served. Many people came, and they also brought the sick. Bishop John, seeing this, began to complain and petition that I be arrested or removed.

"In 1926 Metropolitan Agathangelus finished his term of exile and returned to Yaroslavl since he was considered the metropolitan of Yaroslavl. Everyone began to come to him. Then Tuchkov with some archimandrite came to Agathangelus and began to demand from him that he hand over his administration to [Metropolitan] Sergius. Metropolitan Agathangelus did not agree to this. Then Tuchkov told him that he would now go back into exile. Then Agathangelus, because of his health and since he had already been three years in exile, resigned from the administration [the post of patriarchal locum tenens] and left it to Peter of Krutitsa as the lawful [locum tenens] until the second candidate, Metropolitan Cyril, should return from exile. I heard about this when I personally went to him in Yaroslavl and he himself explained his situation to me. And he said that the canonical administration was now really in the hands of Cyril, and temporarily, until the return of Cyril, with Metropolitan Peter. He did not recognize Sergius or Gregory.

"'How should we act in the future,' I asked him, 'if neither Cyril nor Peter are around? Who must we commemorate?'

"He said: 'There is still the canonical Metropolitan Joseph, formerly of Uglich, who at the moment is in Leningrad. He was appointed by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon as a candidate in the event of the death of the Patriarch, myself, Cyril and Anthony [Khrapovitsky, metropolitan of Kiev and first President of the Russian Church Abroad?].'

"Joseph was sent by the Patriarch to Leningrad, but when Sergius took over the administration, he sent Alexis there, the one who is now metropolitan in Leningrad. But Joseph was imprisoned and sent into exile, while Alexis ruled in Leningrad until he was appointed Patriarch. A year after Agathangel, Cyril also completed his term in exile and arrived in Kazan. Then Tuchkov arrived in Kazan from Metropolitan Sergius and asked Cyril to withdraw his candidature. He did not agree and was immediately sent for another ten years in exile."

According to one (dubious) source, Vladyka Peter took part in the so-called "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church, which took place in various places between March and August, 1928. He signed the decisions of the Council through the priest John (Lysenko?). However, he did not accept its eleventh canon, which decreed that the "worshippers of the Name of God" had been

unjustly excluded from the Church and should be received "with honour, as confessors of the Faith".

In December, 1928, Bishop Peter fell ill with an unknown disease, and in the same month, as he writes, "I was arrested [in connection with the Ufa branch of the True Orthodox Church] and taken to the GPU in Ufa." According to Nina Ivanovna Pashko, he was accused of reading prayers over sick people in church, and they demanded money from him. "I could not go up the stairs, and the GPU carried me on their arms. 7 people were arrested with me: **Priest John Lysenko**, who served in Chetveropetrovsk, **Cosmas Panchenko**, who served in Kuznetsovskaya, **Michael Panchenko**, who served in Ryazanovskaya; four nuns: **Maria Smolnikova**, **Aleutina Mikhailovna**, **Vera Salnikova** and **Christine Pashko**. We were in prison from December, 1928. In April, 1929, a show trial was carried out on us; it began on the Monday of Holy Week and continued every day for the whole week. On Holy Saturday at 6 p.m. they read out the sentence: for Maria Smolnikova and myself - two [three] years imprisonment followed by five years free exile outside Bashkiria; for John Lysenko - one year; for Cosmas and Michael Panchenko - one year and five months; for Aleutina Mikhailovna and Christine Panko - six months. The priest John Lysenko and the Panchenkos completed their terms and were freed, while Maria and I were freed after one year and nine months in prison.

"270 of us were put into one barracks. They read out a list of the sentences and declared:

"Go to whatever town you want and feed yourselves at your own expense. And look for flats yourselves."

"We left the barracks in June, 1930.

"The village soviet had five bishops and 450 priests and deacons living in exile in flats. We all came together to pray in one church. At this time they published in a Russian newspaper Metropolitan Sergius' declaration to the effect that Orthodoxy was triumphing in our country, that no one was exiled or arrested for church activity, and that those who had been exiled were enemies of Soviet power. When we read this newspaper, there was great weeping in the church. Everyone wept, and when we began to sing "O fervent protectress", the whole church was sobbing.

"On July 10, 1930, I was released from exile because we had made a petition to Moscow to the chief administration of the GPU that we had been wrongly sent to exile in Archangelsk. I wrote that the court had condemned me to two years in prison and five years of free exile, but they had sent us into exile. A paper arrived from Moscow saying that we should be freed, and on July 11 they let us out. We were allowed to go anywhere except to five cities. We chose the city of Asha, and moved there on July 20. Since we had no flat, we settled in citizen Kholodilina's apiary in the wood. There we lived for five months. When

they arrested us, they took us to Chelyabinsk. There they interrogated me several times:

"Why do you not recognize Metropolitan Sergius and open a church illegally?"

"I replied: 'I cannot recognize Metropolitan Sergius because he was a renovationist and according to our holy canons he has illegally taken the place of the locum tenens of the patriarch.'

"Then I was sent from Chelyabinsk to Sverdlovsk. After my departure Alexandra Kryshkova arrived in Chelyabinsk and asked about me:

"Where have you taken Vladyka Ladygin?"

"They replied: 'Do you want to see him?'"

"She said: 'Yes.'"

"They gave her a paper and pencil and told her to sign. She signed, and they immediately arrested her and took her to Chelyabinsk prison, where Olga Kryshkova, Maria Smolnikov and Christine Pashkova already were. They were all amazed and both rejoiced and wept. They were all in Chelyabinsk prison about a year and then were all given three years in the camps, while I was kept in a cellar in Sverdlovsk for six months before being transferred to a general block. At the end of 1931 I was taken to Moscow, where I was kept in Butyrki prison for one and a half months. From Moscow I was sent to Yaroslavl, where I remained for two years. When I had completed my term, I was freed."

Priest John Proklovich Lisenko was born in 1880. On July 20, 1931 he was arrested in a group case with Bishop Peter. He was sentenced to three years in the camps. On November 28, 1937 he was arrested and sentenced to death. On December 17 he was shot.

Last Years

In 1933 Bishop Peter was given a passport in Ufa, and went to his homeland of Glazov, where he remained in hiding for two and a half years. According to one source, Bishop Peter recovered from his illness in January, 1934, and lived in retirement in his see, serving the early Liturgy on feastsdays. Neither the ruling bishop, Rufinus, nor the people recognized Metropolitan Sergius; they formed an autocephalous church. We have a letter from Bishop Peter and Bishop Rufinus to Bishop Gabriel [Chepura?] of Akkerman asking for a litre or half a litre of holy chrism because they had neither pure oil nor anything to boil the chrism in.

After two-and-a-half years, writes Bishop Peter, "I was again summoned to Ufa, where Bishop Rufinus wanted to arrest me. In May, 1936 I left Ufa for my

homeland, while all the above-mentioned citizens carried out their sentences in the camps. While they were in the camps they were forbidden to wear crosses. **Maria Smolnikova** and **Olga and Alexandra Kryshkova** did not agree, and were given three more years' free exile and were sent to Vologda. My relatives and I went to visit them twice. I remained in my homeland until 1937, in which year I went to Kaluga and remained there until 1940. In July we were moved to Beloretsk [in Bashkiria], where we lived until 1945. We lived quietly, cultivating the soil and praying in the house. This was displeasing to the enemy, and he found some people who betrayed us to new sufferings. So let the believers know how the pastors suffer for the purity of the Church..."

Nun Eudocia, in the world Olga Vasilyevna Kryshkova, was born in 1903 in Ufa province. She was a nanny in a kindergarten. She was a reader for Bishop Peter. On December 5, 1945 she was arrested and sentenced to ten years in the camps, and sent to Dubravlag. After being released she returned to her homeland. Nothing more is known about her.

Alexandra Vasilyevna Kryshkova was born in 1890 in Ufa province. On December 5, 1945 she was arrested and sentenced to ten years in the camps, and sent to Dubravlag. After being released she returned to her homeland. Nothing more is known about her.

During the war, according to Nina Ivanovna Pashko, Vladyka Peter lived with an agronomist and was their cook during the Fast.

In 1945 Bishop Peter was arrested in Ufa and sentenced to five years' exile in Central Asia for belonging to the True Orthodox Church. At the time of his arrest, he appears to have been serving in Saratov (his predecessors Bishop Job and Bishop Dositheus had already been sent to the camps). At the railway station a large number of people appeared and tried to abduct him, and the soldier who was accompanying him and the station guard had to shoot. The local newspaper reported: "Wretched and hysterical women tried to free their 'idol' and shamefully disturbed public order..."

When in exile, Bishop Peter hid there in the mountains. In 1948, according to one source, he took part in the Catacomb Council of Chirchuk, near Tashkent. From 1949 to 1951 he went into hiding in Belorussia and the Kuban.

According to another source, however, in 1944 Vladyka Peter and twenty-five of his spiritual children decided to move to Central Asia. Having been refused permission to live in any of the cities of Uzbekistan, they decided to set off for the Tyan-Shan mountains of Kirgizia. There, in a very remote area near the Chinese border, they built a skete with twelve cells and a church. However, on November 22, 1951 they were spotted from the air, and all the monks were arrested.

In 1951, according to Nina Ivanovna Pashko, Vladyka Peter was living with her parents in Chelyabinsk, where she obtained for him an operation on the eyes in the local hospital. After the hospital he went to the city of Glazov.

He was a tall man with an erect stance and long, white hair.

Bishop Peter united various groups of Catacomb Christians on the territory of Soviet Russia. In his time he ordained many secret priests.

Vladyka Peter was blind for five years before his death. He reposed in complete isolation on February 6/19 (or June 2), 1957, at 3 o'clock in the morning, in the town of Glazov. He died sitting in a chair with his arms raised and his fingers in a blessing position. He decreed in his will that he should be buried without a coffin, according to Athosite custom. He was buried in the city cemetery. On the grave is a short inscription: "Here lies the servant of God Peter". Catacomb believers who look after his grave witness that there have been cases of healing from illness after prayers at his grave.

*

One of Bishop Peter's disciples was **Schema-Archimandrite Seraphim**, in the world Michael Konstantinovich Tomin, was born on November 16, 1923 in the village of Barakovo, Orenburg province into a poor peasant family. He was baptised and communed on the morning of his birth because they feared that he would not survive. When he was three years old, it turned out that his legs were severely crippled and he could not walk. His parents took him from the village to an exiled professor, Alexander Afanasyevich Barabin. Barabin, a deeply believing person, examined him and said: "This child does not have a physical illness. Go to Schema-Monk Zosimia." This great clairvoyant eldress healed the child and foretold that he would be a monk. Immediately Misha began to walk and read, he began to pray a great deal, and he did this with love.

At the age of five, Misha began to read in church. They made a little sticharion for him. Once, at the Small Entrance, he went through the Royal Doors ahead of the priest. "Minushnya will be a priest," said Fr. Gregory. From the age of six the child was chanting in the choir. And standing on a little stool, he would read the Apostle and the Hours. Fr. John loved him very much, and often, on a cold and snowy winter's day, he would wrap him in a sheepskin coat and carry him into the church. His father did not allow him to pray at home, and so he prayed at nights until the morning in front of a cross on the common grave of those who had died during the famine of 1921. And there he went to sleep. During the winter he would pray in the basement on the potatoes until he fell asleep. He was at school for only one complete year. Then they began to exclude him because of his faith. But the Lord preserved the youth. When the regional inspector tore the crosses off all the pupils, they did not touch Misha's cross, but only threw him out of the class.

On the feast of the Annunciation, 1934, since almost all the churches in the district were closed, the believers from twenty villages came together in the church in Barakovo. The church could not accommodate all the people. They began to ring the bells at four in the morning, and the service continued until one in the afternoon. As Misha was entering the church in his sticharion, he saw two NKVD officers dragging Fr. John out of the altar. They also arrested the warden, two nuns and the ten-year-old Misha. All the arrestees were locked into a hut for three days. Misha's hat was in the altar, but he had put on a little fur coat under his sticharion. Fr. John put his own skufya on Misha, while he himself froze without anything on his head. Three days later **Fr. John** was shot, while the others were sentenced to three years in prison. Misha was released because of his youth. That night, he walked home for seven kilometres through the frost. Then his father took a whip and thrashed him so hard that his sticharion was cut to pieces. For three months Misha lay without moving on the stove...

In 1937 all the churches began to be closed, and the priests arrested. Michael's father expelled him from his house. The youth built a cell for himself in the courtyard, earning his living by repairing pails and tables, building stoves and working as a smith. Then he decided secretly to dig out a cave for himself. At night he would carry the earth in a sack to the river. Finally, the cave was ready. Only his father's mother knew about it. She came there to pray with her grandson. More than once she said to Michael: "Dear one, he [your father] is going to kill you!..." "Let him kill me. I will be a martyr," Michael replied. In the cave Michael put a cross, made a coffin and began to sleep in it after the manner of Eldress Zosimia. The cave was in a kitchen-garden, and potatoes grew on top of it. More than once the Chekists came from Sharlyk, broke the windows in the cell and took Michael to the regional centre. But they had to release him because he was still so young. However, when he was fourteen, they imposed income tax on him as though he were an adult.

Michael's father was not accepted into the communist party because of the faith of his son. Once, on May 1, which coincided that year with the second day of Holy Pascha, his father came home late at night and heard Michael and his grandmother chanting: "Christ is risen!" The father said: "Are you going to live the monastic life for long?" Unable to restrain himself, Michael replied: "Forever, dad!" His father kicked him as hard as he could in the pit of the stomach. Michael fell, and turned black. Then his father rushed out of the house to drown himself in the river, but at the bank he saw a beautiful old man in white garments walking towards him in the air and saying: "Constantine, go back. Pull yourself together!" He turned back, and never again beat Michael. Michael's father told about this vision much later, when he went to the front and thought he was not going to come back alive.

At the beginning of the war, in 1941, Michael was called up to the military commissariat in Sharlyk. Michael, being a ryasophor monk, came in his ryasa, skufya and bast shoes. In his satchel were some service books. The commissar cursed and said: "Where did you come from looking like that?" Immediately

he was sent to a prison cell. The next day they tried to take from him his ryasa and skufya, but he said that he would go to the front in his ryasa. At that time Michael's hair grew below his waist, but his beard had not yet grown. He was sent on foot to Orenburg with a letter sealed with sealing-wax. For three days Michael walked across the steppe chanting psalms, weeping and praying. The regional authorities were also amazed seeing him in a ryasa. Michael handed over the packet from Commissar Zaitsev to the Military Commissar. On reading it, he said: "What, is he mad? He's written about you: 'Line him up against the wall and shoot him!' For what? We have a military code: if a priest or monk does not wear his uniform, but remains in his ryasa, and with a beard, then we have the right to send him to the front as a sapper, a medical orderly, a cook or a carpenter. After all, you're a carpenter and stove-mender, aren't you?" "Yes." "We shall send you to Buzuluk, to the building section."

And so Michael spent the first year of the war in the building battalion. The frosts reached 40 degrees, and he walked around in his summer skufya. From the wind and the frost his right eye went red. He was sent to the military hospital in Orenburg, but the doctors there decided that they could not save his eye. After an operation he remained with one eye. He was classified as an invalid, second class, and decommissioned.

In 1942 Michael became the spiritual son of Bishop Peter (Ladygin), who was in hiding. The spiritual children of Vladyka Peter, about twenty-five people in all, decided to set off with him to Central Asia. They dressed Vladyka as an "Uzbek" and put him on a train to Tashkent. However, they were not able to obtain permission to live in any of the cities of Central Asia. And so they decided to go into the mountains of Tyan-Shan. They stayed in Zhelal-Abad with a spiritual son of Matushka Zosimia, **Ivan Elyanovich Yeremenko** from Orenburg, a participant in the Local Council of Moscow in 1917-18, who had miraculously escaped from the Bolsheviks. Here they prepared themselves to flee into the mountains: they bought seeds, and collected icons and service books. At night they set out for the Chinese border, and for eight days travelled through deserted places. They struck camp on a high plateau in the Tyan-Shan mountains of Kirgizia and built a skete with twelve cells and a church. They lived according to the strictest rule of the skete of St. Andrew on Mount Athos (Vladyka was an Athonite monk), and slept only three hours in the twenty-four, praying without ceasing. There, in 1944, Schema-Bishop Peter tonsured Michael into monasticism and then ordained him to the diaconate and priesthood with the name Misael. Fr. Misael was responsible for the economy of the skete.

Seven years passed, during which nobody disturbed their isolation. But then Fr. Misael suggested to Vladyka that they should go further into the mountains. Vladyka replied: "No, I have to finish my life, but you must pass through the school of suffering." The monks were expecting arrest every day.

On November 22, 1951, the feast of the Mother of God "The Quick-Hearer", the liturgy was served and all the monks received Holy Communion. Then they

all saw an airplane in the sky. It spotted them. Vladyka Peter was the first to be taken away. He was sent under house arrest to Vyatka province, where he died in 1957. The rest, including Fr. Misael, were arrested. Soon the brothers were given an amnesty and passports. However, Fr. Misael was given a "wolf's ticket" – he was allowed to live in any populated place for no more than three weeks in a row. He wandered throughout Central Asia. Then, exhausted from his endless moves, he decided to run away. An All-Union search warrant was issued.

Secretly he went to Orenburg, to the flat of his sister. His appearance in the church caused much joy. The next day, half the city knew of his arrival. A search was begun. Sitting in the flat of his sister, he saw that police had surrounded the whole block. He left his sister's flat, having put a woman's coat and fluffy dress over his ryasa, and went into hiding with his uncle. Then, in spite of a snow-storm, he left the city. Getting lost on the way, he came to a village and knocked on the door of the last house. Under an icon of St. Nicholas, an old man, the father of the mistress of the house was lying on the point of death. He turned to Fr. Misael and implored him: "Give me Communion!" Fr. Misael had nothing with him. The old man made his confession to Fr. Misael and then died. It turned out that these people had lived a strict Orthodox life at home, and had not entered the collective farm.

Fr. Michael set off for Nemetskaya Sloboda, where he lived with German sectarians. They knew that he was an Orthodox priest. Once Fr. Michael blessed some water and began to drink it. They also wanted to drink it, but he did not allow them, saying: "You mustn't, you are of a different faith." Soon the masters of the house were baptized by Fr. Michael. Then he hid for nine months in the only house in the sloboda where Russians were living. More than once NKVD officers came out to interrogate the owners. When an officer came in, he would usually sit on a cot while Fr. Michael was under the cot. "That accursed one-eyed priest!" complained the NKVD officer. "An All-Union search warrant has been issued for him, but we can't catch him!" Once he had to sit in a well, and another time – in a ravine.

In 1955 Fr. Michael returned to Central Asia. There he was arrested and sent into exile in Przhivalsk, Kirgizia. Nothing more is known about him except that he became a schema-archimandrite in Orenburg.

*

Another disciple of Bishop Peter was **Hieromonk Timothy** (Nesgovorov). He was born in 1894 in the city of Asha, Chelyabinsk province. In 1922-23 he fell into renovationism, and was received back into the True Church through repentance by Vladyka Peter, who in 1925 ordained him as a "reserve priest" (that is, a priest ordained because of the extreme necessity in times of persecution, whose ordination remained a secret until it became necessary to reveal it) on the instructions of Archbishop Andrew of Ufa. In 1926 Archbishop Andrew blessed the "reserve priests" to go to the parishes. He served in a

prayer house. But thanks to his fine sermons and close links with the people, Fr. Timothy acquired great authority, to the extent that a renovationist priest was forced to leave his parish while Fr. Timothy was invited to take his place in the church. Bishop Benjamin (Troitsky) awarded him with a nabadrennik. In 1930 Fr. Timothy was arrested, but ran away from prison four times. He was 19 years in prison. His family became very poor, his matushka was not given work anywhere, but she had five children, so she had to live by begging. Fr. Timothy was released in 1948, and received monasticism together with his matushka. Vladyka Peter blessed him to serve the large Tashkent community of the Catacomb Church. In 1951 all the members of the community were arrested. He was sentenced to 25 years, but was released after six years, in 1956... He went to Asha, and with the blessing of Vladyka Peter went round the villages and towns of Russia, serving the Catacomb Church. After the death of Vladyka Peter, his flock was served by Fr. Timothy. He lived in the Caucasus for six years. He was in communion with the catacomb **Hieromonk Gerasimus** (Zamesin) in Abkhazia (end of 1950s, beginning of 1960s). Through the future Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) he petitioned Archbishop Leontius of Chile to be received under his omophorion. He tonsured two of his sisters into the mantia, and soon after this, in 1975, died of asthma. He was 82 years old.

**88. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR BARNABAS, BISHOP OF
PECHERSK (+1963)**
and those with him

Bishop Barnabas, in the world Nicholas Nicanorovich Belyaev, was born on May 12, 1887 old style (according to another source, May 5, 1881) in the parish of the Holy Protection in the village of Ramenskoye, Bronnitsky uyezd, Moscow region, from simple and pious parents - the factory worker Nicanor Belyaev and Claudia Smirnova, the daughter of the deacon of the country church of Dorka. In spite of the ardent desire of both parents, they had no children. For 18 years they prayed to God and St. Nicholas to give them a child - a boy. The mother went frequently to a chapel near Sukharevaya tower in Moscow and prayed with tears in front of the icon of St. Nicholas. She vowed that if the Lord heard her she would lead him to be spiritual person, devoted to the Church and not to the world, and that she would name him after St. Nicholas. During one of the mother's serious illnesses, a council of doctors declared that she would never have children. A little more than a year later, in the week after the spring feast of St. Nicholas, and after 17 years of barrenness, a boy was born and called Nicholas. Only the priest proposed that he be named, not after the hierarch Nicholas, but after Blessed Nicholas, the fool-for-Christ and wonderworker.

Nicholas was the only child of his parents, and they reared him in faith and piety. As he wrote in his biography: "The atmosphere created by the prayerful disposition of my mother had a good, sweet, grace-filled influence on my soul." She died on the feast of the Annunciation, 1903 or 1904. The young Nicholas acquired strong religious feelings from his mother. Once he went to venerate an icon of the Mother of God which was 12 versts away. After the all-night vigil, he decided not to stay the night, although it was about to rain, but to go home, thinking: "I must suffer something for the sake of my love for the Mother of God. Knights freeze in front of the windows of their beauties in spite of the bad weather. All the more should I do this for the 'Bride Unwedded'!" On the way back it poured, and he was soaked to the skin. In the morning he went to the Liturgy. But suddenly an inner voice said to him:

"Go home now, otherwise it will be bad for you."

After some hesitation he went home. Hardly had he arrived when he felt so weak that he could move neither hands nor legs. He had a terrible rheumatism of the joints. But although he was suffering greatly, he did not allow the doctor to be called, but relied rather on prayer to the Mother of God. His prayer was immediately answered. His pain went, he got up and went down to his relatives, completely healthy.

Once when he was between ten and twelve years old, his mother and his aunt went in fulfilment of a promise to the relics of St. Sergius in Sergiev Posad, taking Nicholas and his cousin with them. When they came up to the shrine, a

monk standing at the feet of the saint turned to Nicholas. Taking some coins that were lying on the broad shelf of the coffin as if from the hand of the saint himself, he gave them to Nicholas and told him to buy two books with them - one for himself, and the other for his cousin; for himself - the famous Indication of the Way into the Kingdom of Heaven by St. Innocent, metropolitan of Moscow, and for his cousin - the well-known speech of Professor Klyuchevsky on the occasion of the 600th anniversary of the day of the repose of St. Sergius.

The monk's action seemed strange and significant. The way in which he specially turned to him and insisted on his buying the book, his mother's acquiescence and the blessing as if from the saint itself - all this struck Nicholas. He bought the book and forgot about it.

"Not because I was disobedient," he recalled later, "but simply because the time had not yet come for God's will to be fulfilled and for my soul to respond to the voice of God Who was calling me. Later the monk's action seemed to me to be prophetic."

While he was preparing for a competitive examination, he was rummaging among his books and came upon the above-mentioned brochure by Metropolitan Innocent, which had lain there for almost 10 years. He began to read it, and everything he read there was completely contrary to the path in life he was intending to take. He was intending to build material houses, but there it was written that "people were not created to live only here, on the earth, like animals which disappear after their death, but exclusively in order to live with God and in God, and to live not 100 or 1000 years, but eternally." The words of the ascetic hierarch promised that "if a person who seeks with all his heart to go along the path to the Kingdom of Heaven, for every piece of work, and every sorrow, and every victory over himself and every restraint of himself, for every deed and even every good intention and desire, he will be rewarded seventy times seven in this life; while it is impossible to speak about or imagine what awaits him there. And so, brethren, follow Him, hurry and do not delay; go while the doors of the Kingdom of Heaven are not yet closed for you."

The grace of God did its work, and immediately after the examination, in the summer of 1909, he made his way first to Sarov and then to Optina desert. In Optina he met the great elder Barsanuphius. Two Nicholas Belyaevs came to the elder at about this time. The one, the future elder and hieromartyr Nikon had already been taken on as the elder's secretary. To the other's request the elder thought a little and then said:

"Well, where shall we take you? You can't do the general obediences, your health is too weak, while the post of secretary is already taken."

And he blessed him to study.

On parting Elder Barsanuphius blessed Nicholas with an icon of the Nativity of Christ, on the back of which he wrote: "A blessing for a new spiritual life.

The commemoration of St. Abraham of Smolensk. Read his life. August 21st, 1909." St. Abraham was born in response to the prayer of pious parents, upon whose death he received the tonsure and assumed the exploit of foolishness for Christ. On becoming a priest and an experienced spiritual father, St. Abraham acquired many spiritual children in the city. Two main thoughts were imprinted in his heart: the memory of the Terrible Judgement and of the toll-houses. Many came to him from the city, repented and changed their lives. Then the devil raised a persecution against Abraham. They accused him of being a heretic and a fornicator. A council was convened, and the saint was condemned. Abraham had two devoted disciples. All these events were later repeated in the life of Bishop Barnabas.

In 1910, Nicholas left high school with a gold medal. That summer he met **Elder Alexis (Sobolev)** of the Zosima Hermitage and became his spiritual son and novice in the hermitage. Having already some idea of eldership, he began immediately to write down the elder's replies, knowing that they were to be carried out.

"All the replies that I have given you so far," said the elder to him later, "are in force and true, and if you do not carry them out, then you are guilty and not I. You must ask forgiveness and repent... As regards your soul - I take everything onto myself..."

The young novice was interested in everything. What prostrations should he do on entering the church? Should he clean his teeth or eat sweet things? What language was he to study - French or German? Should he reply to the blasphemous works of the atheists which he had to read in the Academy, or not? Should he read foreign authors? Should he ask his friends for books? Could he add some prostrations to the number Fr. Barsanuphius had prescribed? Should he look in the eyes of the person he was talking with, or not? How was he to struggle with his flesh? What should he do if someone comes into the church and greets him? Could he go for walks? Could he read secular literature? Was he allowed to abuse heretics? How was he to read the Holy Scriptures? etc. The elder replied to all these questions.

In April, 1911 Nicholas petitioned the rector of the Moscow Academy, Bishop Theodore (Pozeyevsky), the future hieromartyr, that he ask Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky) for permission to receive the monastic tonsure. Permission was granted, and on November 7 (according to another source, June 11), in Zosima Hermitage, Nicholas was tonsured by Bishop Theodore with the name Barnabas in honour of the Apostle Barnabas and Elder Barnabas (+1905) of Gethsemane skete.

Before his tonsure Elder Alexis gave him the following advice: "Let your motto and prayer for the whole of your life be these words: Receive me, O Lord, into Thy paternal embrace and do not release me whatever happens to me throughout my life. May I always be Thine."

Two or three years after this tonsure, Bishop Theodore was visited by the famous Elder Schema-Archimandrite Gabriel. Vladyka called all those whom he had tonsured, about 15 to 20 people, into his room. When they were all sitting at the table and Vladyka began to recommend several of those who were newly tonsured, the elder at the name of Barnabas said, without talking to anyone in particular:

"When they tonsured him and I heard about it, I thought: a new Fr. Barnabas has been born."

And his eyes became bright and smiling.

This was the beginning of Fr. Barnabas' acquaintance with the great elder Fr. Gabriel (Zyryanov). "Batyushka would talk," Vladyka Barnabas remembered later, "and I listened attentively, not lowering my eyes from him. It's hard to believe that it really was all like that. Batyushka was sitting all white, like the moon, peaceful, joyful, while through the window it was a quiet evening and a strong, sickly sweet smell of jasmine came up from the garden..."

"It was good to sit with the elder Fr. Gabriel those quiet warm summer evenings... I was going through a particularly difficult period in my life: the transition from the noetic Egypt through "the Red Sea deep"... And to meet such a Moses on the way was exceptionally sweet and, as I see now, absolutely necessary."

In 1911 Fr. Barnabas entered the Moscow Theological Academy, and in the summer he was ordained to the diaconate, and in 1913 - to the priesthood. While he was studying in the Academy, Fr. Barnabas got to know the very strict life of the monasteries and sketes which were around the Trinity - St. Sergius Lavra, which made a great impression on him.

In 1913 Fr. Barnabas was ordained to the priesthood, and during the last year of his course, he went on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and returned in the summer of 1914 because of the beginning of the world war. In 1915 he graduated from the Moscow Theological Academy and on September 11 was sent as a teacher to the Nizhegorod theological seminary, where he taught homiletics until the summer of 1918. At one point he was the abbot of the Staro-Golutvinsky monastery in the Moscow diocese. In 1919 he became the secretary of Archbishop Eudocimus (Meshcherksy) of Nizhni-Novgorod.

On February 29, 1920, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, he was consecrated bishop of Vasilsursk, a vicariate of the diocese of Nizhni-Novgorod, by Archbishop Eudocimus and Bishop Michael of Arzamas in the church of the Ascension, Nizhni-Novgorod. He had been blessed to accept this consecration by three holy elders: Schema-Archimandrite Barsanuphius of Optina, Schema-Archimandrite Gabriel of Spaso-Eleazar Monastery and Elder Alexis of the Zosima hermitage.

At the beginning of August, 1920, Bishop Barnabas was transferred to the Pechersk monastery, becoming Bishop of Pechersk, the senior vicariate of the diocese of Nizhni-Novgorod. From October 20 to March, 1921 he was in retreat in the Zosima hermitage. In March he returned to Nizhni-Novgorod. He often served and took confessions. When he confessed people, he asked the penitent in detail about all the details and circumstances of his sins, even the most secret. And he did this until he was convinced that everything had been said and that no hidden, dark corners remained where the devil could weave his nest and again start to lay his snares, drawing the soul down towards destruction. Vladyka would give a sermon at almost every one of his services, calling on the people to repent and make a correct, sincere confession:

"This is the second day on which you have heard the canon of St. Andrew of Crete, in which sins are called by their own names, as they are in life, without any kind of concealment. You know from yourselves that it is hardest of all to repent of sexual sins, saying everything in detail, as it was in reality. The whole difficulty lies in the fact that few people call things by their names in confession. It is necessary to say everything to the smallest details, describing its whole essence. There are plenty of good examples for us in the Bible, where sins are named directly by their own names, where the falls into sin are described in every detail..."

For this he was besieged by demons. Sometimes they would take him by the throat, physically preventing him from serving. Sometimes he came from the church to his cell exhausted and tormented. They visited him also at home, sometimes even in broad daylight in their own form. Once they took hold of his right hand so that he could not cross himself or move his hand, and felt a very strong pain. He called on the name of God: at first it did not help, and the bishop was puzzled. Perhaps he had sinned in some way that he could not remember and so had angered God. Then he turned for help to the Mother of God and immediately received it.

After his return from Zosima Hermitage, Bishop Barnabas was appointed to the consistory to deal with divorce matters.

At this time he was close to the blessed Eldress Maria Ivanovna of Diveyevo, who, already in 1919, some three years before the event, had prophesied that he would take upon himself the feat of foolishness for Christ's sake and be put in a psychiatric hospital for three days and then live with private citizens.

Once Vladyka sent a message to Maria Ivanovna asking her whether he could write books.

"Let him write," she replied.

It was the baking summer of 1922, when the renovationist schism, supported by the Bolsheviks, threatened to destroy the ship of the Russian Church. On June 20, Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky), Archbishop Seraphim

(Alexandrov) and Archbishop Eudocimus (Meshcheryakov) signed a declaration uniting themselves to the renovationists.

On July 19, 1922 there was a meeting of the clergy of Nizhni-Novgorod in the Diveyevo podvorye, at which it was resolved to recognize the renovationist church administration. The resolution was signed by Archbishop Eudocimus and Seraphim, and by Bishops Michael, Barnabas and Macarius. Or rather, that was what they said in the newspapers, but in reality it was not quite like that - Bishop Barnabas did not sign all the points of the declaration. That is why the patriarch did not demand his repentance or a petition that his episcopate be returned to him, as he demanded of Metropolitan Sergius and several others.

"Now he must be patient," said Blessed Maria Ivanovna. "He must hold onto the old, nothing new, everything in the old style. He must spit on the ukazes, let him not go anywhere, there is nowhere for him to go. He mustn't listen, they won't drive him anywhere. That would be the same as taking off one's cross and becoming a Jew, wouldn't it?... He must be a bishop and reject sin. The people need him, he cannot be an ordinary person."

It became impossible for Bishop Barnabas to rule his diocese while the ruling hierarch, Eudocimus, was a renovationist. (Already for a long time Maria Ivanovna had called him a red candle, a red hierarch.) So he left Nizhni-Novgorod in order to offer his repentance to Archbishop Theodore at the Danilov monastery. But Archbishop Theodore refused to accept him. So he went to Zosima Hermitage, where Elder Alexis laid his epitrachelion on him and gave him a penance.

On the evening of September 29, 1922 all his problems received a fitting resolution. "The elders," wrote Vladyka, "easily and freely blessed me to take on the feat of foolishness for Christ's sake as the only way out of my present situation, which threatened grave dangers for the whole of my spiritual life."

Fr. Alexis said: "Well, we [that is, he and Fr. Metrophanes] are locking you up [that is, away from people, although not completely, not as a recluse]."

When Vladyka asked whether he could serve at home, Fr. Alexis said:

"God gives His blessing, that is a good work."

At the clinic he obtained a certificate that on October 16 he had been seen by Doctor Lebedev because of "hysterical neurasthenia". This was in order that it should not seem as if he had suddenly gone out of his mind, but that his illness had been developing gradually, in accordance with the psychiatric textbooks.

And so, on October 19, 1922, he was admitted to a psychiatric hospital.

Later, on October 22, the feast of the Kazan icon, he was released at the petition of believers and settled in the private house of his spiritual children

Raphael Andreyevich Karelin and Elizabeth Germanovna Karelina. Raphael Alexandrovich was a former satanist with great power in the demonic world, who had been saved from destruction by Vladyka Barnabas, for which Vladyka had to pay by suffering many attacks from the dark powers. After Karelin's conversion, the demons appeared to the bishop and personally confirmed the great authority he had had among them.

It was in this house that, with the blessing of Elder Alexis, he began writing "The Foundations of the Art of Holiness". He wrote it in such a way that anyone, and especially young people, could understand and profit from it. During this period of his life he had no communications with anyone. Here he was visited by Fr. Metrophanes, who had been sent by Elder Alexis; and after a long conversation Fr. Metrophanes emerged to say that by the command of Vladyka his spiritual children were to refer for the time being for spiritual nourishment to Fr. Peter Topolev.

Vladyka Barnabas was several times arrested by the authorities and put in prison. But he was soon freed because they could not prove that he was healthy. They told his novice Valentina to take him away.

Once Vladyka was sitting and writing. There was a knock on the front door. Realizing that this was the GPU, he got up, put the pages he had written into a book and placed it on the shelf. The chekist came in and, without a moment's hesitation, as if he were a real magician, stretched out his hand and took precisely that book from the shelf.

At the beginning of 1928 he went with his spiritual son Hieromonk Cyprian and some other spiritual children of his to Kzyl-Ordu, where he tried to found a secret monastery. There, according to one source, he met Archbishop Andrew of Ufa, who persuaded him to reject the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and stop commemorating him.

According to one (dubious) source, he participated in the "Nomadic Council" of the Catacomb Church through Monk Cornelius. He agreed with the Canons but refused to sign them. Later, however, according to this source, he affixed his signature.

Circumstances forced Bishop Barnabas to leave Kzyl-Ordu. Before leaving, he fell ill with typhoid, but refused all medical help and recovered with the help of God. It was in Kzyl-Ordu that Vladyka had a vision of the sign of the Cross in the heavens.

They left Kzyl-Ordu on the feast of the Vladimir icon, August 26 / September 8, 1931. On arriving in Moscow Vladyka settled secretly in Ostankino, in the house of the brother of Valentina Dolganova, Vitaly, who was the chief architect of Moscow in charge of the planting of trees and shrubs. However, in March, 1933, Fr. Cyprian was arrested, and then they came to arrest Vladyka Barnabas and his women novices **Valentina and Faina**

(Ivanovna Dolganova). Vladyka was at that time lying ill, so they left him. When he had recovered a little, he himself went to the Lubyanka prison. He said that his novices had been arrested and he had remained, so he had come to find out what it was all about. The authorities told him to sit down and wait. Then they arrested him.

The authorities tried to elicit a confession from his novices that he was healthy, offering them freedom in exchange. But they stood firm and refused to sign any testimonies. They were convicted of "creating a secret monastery", and were sentenced to three years' exile in the north in accordance with article 58-11. Faina was killed in exile in 1936, while Valentina died at some time after 1985.

Bishop Barnabas and Fr. Cyprian were sentenced to three years in the camps. Vladyka was convicted of "creating a secret monastery" and sentenced in accordance with article 58-10. He served the beginning of his imprisonment in the Biisk camps in the Altai. On the road to the camp, the Lord revealed to him everything that was to happen to him in the first year and even the detailed structure of the camp. And on the eve of every transfer the Lord would reveal to him what was in store for him.

Once he prophesied to Tatyana Shurakova, later the nun Magdalene, that she would be freed on St. Elijah's day, after completing only two-and-a-half years of her ten-year sentence. To the astonishment of all, she was freed on that day. On another occasion, he called the camp hospital's doctor, Maria Kuzminichna, by her secret monastic name of Michaela, although this was known to nobody. And when she was freed, he prophesied to her that they would meet again in Kiev, which came to pass.

The camp was occupied with the building of the Chuisk highway, which stretched 626 kilometres from the city of Biisk to the border with Manchuria. The bishop refused to work and received punishment rations. He was put in the worst barracks, amidst the most inveterate villains. So as not to hear their foul language, the bishop left the barracks and walked the whole day in his long, yellow satin shirt along the outer wall. He spoke with nobody, and if he said anything it was incomprehensible.

So the camp doctors certified him insane and he was sent to the prison psychiatric hospital in the town of Tomsk, where he was visited by his cell-attendant Vera Vasilyevna Lobzanskaya. Two months later, in the savage winter of 1936, he was transferred to the Mariinsk camps. In March the "mad" bishop was freed. On leaving the camp he changed his patronymic from Nikanorovich to Nikolayevich, and his date of birth to 1883, and lived secretly in a tiny room in Tomsk with Vera Vasilyevna. There they stayed in hunger and cold, supporting themselves mainly from a kitchen garden, until the beginning of the war in 1941. He was known as "Uncle Kolya".

In the Biisk camps Vladyka got to know **Zinaida**, the daughter of **Protopriest Sabbas Mikhailovich Petrunovich**. Fr. Sabbas had been a teacher of the Law of God until the revolution of 1917. He maintained friendly relations with Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), and accompanied him on his way into emigration. However, when Vladyka invited him to come with him, he refused. At the beginning of the 1920s he became the rector of the church of St. Olga in Kiev and the centre around which all the faithful Orthodox Christians of the city gathered, becoming for them what Bishop Theodore (Pozdeyevsky) was for the Christians of Moscow. When the Kiev Caves Lavra was occupied by the renovationists, he invited the brotherhood to go to his church. For this he was arrested and spent ten years in the Aleisky camps in the Altai. Before the end of his sentence he was given another ten years, and then another ten years. He died in camp.

Zinaida was a doctor who had been imprisoned for helping a bishop who later betrayed her. She became Vladyka's spiritual daughter, and after leaving prison he kept up correspondence with the people close to him through her.

Vladyka's major works were completed by the time of his arrest in 1933 and were kept in the earth until 1948, when it was revealed to him that there would be an emigration out of Russia and it would be possible to fulfil the blessing of the elders and publish his works. For this reason in the autumn of 1948 he moved to Kiev and his works were transferred there from Nizhni-Novgorod. Some of them had become corrupted through their long stay in the earth, and he had to put in a great deal more work to restore his works to something like their former state. During the last years of his life in Kiev Vladyka worked on his earlier work "The Foundations of the Art of Holiness" and on other works. These included lives of Schema-Archimandrite Gabriel of Seven Lakes monastery, St. Seraphim of Sarov, several ascetics of the nineteenth century, St. Synklitiki and St. Gregory of Agrigentum, a book on Orthodox asceticism entitled "The Blue Ship", 16 notebooks and other books.

Vladyka was intolerant towards every kind of spiritual deception. Once a nun brought him a book on Catholic spirituality and the stigmata, which she greatly admired. Vladyka said:

"I will not touch this book, and you must not only not read it, but if you give it to others, you will answer for it at the Terrible Judgement."

Once a secret nun whom he had known in the Altai came to him. She exhibited certain signs of spiritual deception - feelings of great exaltation during services, seeing the faces of some people for whom she was praying as brighter than others, hearing sweet music, etc. She told the bishop that at the command of an elder she prayed one thousand Jesus prayers at a time, and asked whether she should add some more. But he told her to pray only ten - but in such a way that her concentration was not interrupted while she prayed. She thought this was trivial, but soon came back confessing with contrition that she had been quite unable to pray ten Jesus prayers without distraction. Then

the bishop explained that God gives spiritual gifts not for mechanical effort as such, but for humility - and humility comes only as a result of pure prayer, while pure prayer is received only through humility.

While he was living in Kiev, he was offered the possibility of becoming a bishop in the Moscow Patriarchate. But he refused, preferring to continue his struggles, remaining in reclusion and obscurity, known to the world as "Uncle Kolya" and to his spiritual children as their spiritual instructor and educator. Contrary to the assertions of some writers, he did not bless his children to take communion in the official church, which he called an "office".

Thus his cell-attendant, **Nun Seraphima** (Vera Vasilyevna Lobzanskaya) writes: "Vladyka constantly, all the time sorrowed over the state of the [official] Church and the loss by its hierarchy and clergy of the spirit of repentance. He did not serve in contemporary churches, and recognized neither Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) nor Patriarch Alexis (Simansky), considering that the contemporary hierarchy substituted its own ideas in the place of the teaching of Christ. He considered that 'now is a time of great sorrow for the Church', and did not even allow a lampada to be lit in front of an icon, considered it to be a spiritual consolation which should not exist at times of great sorrow."

Vladyka commemorated "every persecuted Orthodox episcopate" at the Liturgy.

Among the sayings of Vladyka are the following: "The communists fight against religion. Stalin himself has declared this for all to hear. For decades they have preached this by pen and sword, and the fact that several churches have now been repaired for the carrying out of Divine services by hirelings who have broken their vows is simply a political trick and a temporary 'campaign'."

"One must force and constrict oneself at all times. One must not love the conditions of salvation, even if they are paradise for prayer and piety."

"One must always consider oneself guilty, even if a clear lie has been made against you. One must know that this has happened because of some sin which was perhaps committed several years ago. Always reproach yourself, humble yourself in such a way as to say to all that they say against you: 'Forgive me.' This is the quickest path to receiving grace, while others are very long. On this path one does not need direction, while direction is necessary on other paths."

"It is impossible to live on earth without a cross. God sends sufferings for some sin you have committed."

"I demand nothing from you," Vladyka said to his spiritual children, "neither non-eating, nor sleeping on bare boards, nor long prayers. Only reproach yourselves for everything, at all times, in every place. This is my advice to you and my most sincere desire."

For the sake of the publication of his works in the West, he got to know a series of people who were far from the Church and Orthodoxy, about whom it was revealed to him that they would in time leave for the West. Afterwards, in 1972, this happened, but already after the death of Vladyka. He said: "I must live by faith, write by faith, hide by faith, and preserve what is written by faith, preparing for the publication of my works by faith..."

According to one source, he corresponded with Bishop John of Zaraisk, and in about 1960 Bishop Vladimir (Stromberg) send him a letter through intermediaries. According to the same source, F.I. Zhurbenko, the future Archbishop Lazarus, tried to contact him, but Bishop Barnabas refused.

Towards the end of 1961 he began to feel weaker. Forty days before his repose, on March 25, 1963, he blessed the sewing for him of some hierarchical vestments. Then, on April 17, he summoned his spiritual daughters and said:

"It's time to go home, home, I hear a voice... I don't want to. I'm held back by my affairs. There is much I have to complete... There will be no better time to do it... It is terrible to die, one must prepare oneself for it..."

In the forty days before his death he often repeated to his cell-attendant:

"I ask you only one thing: do not place your hope on men, hope only in God."

On April 17 he summoned his spiritual children for a parting discourse. From April 28, Vladyka could no longer lie down, but only sat in a chair. A doctor examined him and said that he had an infarction or sclerosis. On April 30, he stopped eating and drinking. On May 3, Vladyka continued sitting in his chair with closed eyes. From May 4, he no longer spoke. Vladyka continued sitting in this chair with his head bent until his death.

Just before his death, on April 23 / May 6, the feast of St. George, two tears rolled down his cheeks. Then he quietly reposed. After his repose, his face lost its shadow of sadness and looked younger and lighter.

At the request of Zina Petrunevich, Fr. Alexis Glagolev vested him in his hierarchical vestments and celebrated his funeral service. He was buried in the Baykov cemetery by the western wall of the church of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God.

*

A close disciple of Bishop Barnabas was **Hieromonk Cyprian**, in the world Constantine Alexeyevich Nyelidov, was born on January 14, 1902 in Kazan (or Nizhni-Novgorod) in the family of an oculist. His mother was from a family of Georgian princes; she left her husband, and his father married again and moved to Nizhni-Novgorod. Constantine was brought up by his grandfather and grandmother on his stepmother's side, and studied at the Nizhegorod

nobleman's institute. He was a subdeacon, first with Bishop Barnabas, and then with Metropolitan Sergius. In 1925 he was tonsured into the mantia and ordained to the priesthood by Metropolitan Sergius. In 1928 Metropolitan Sergius sent him from Nizhni to be with Bishop Barnabas in Kzyl-Orde. After a time Fr. Cyprian was transferred to the little town of Aralskoye More. From there, in 1931, Metropolitan Sergius invited him back to Moscow. Arriving in August, 1932, he moved in with the brother of Valentina Dolganova, Vitaly Ivanovich in Ostankino. After a time the retired Bishop Barnabas and his spiritual children arrived there. Fr. Cyprian spent most of his time in the chancellery of the Synod and in the church of St. John the Apostle on Tver boulevard, of which he was the rector. In 1933 he moved to Pushkino. On March 15, 1933 he was arrested in Moscow and cast into Butyrki isolator. On May 5, in "The Case of Bishop Barnabas, 1933", he was indicted of "creating a secret monastery" and of "conducting anti-Soviet agitation and counter-revolutionary activity", and was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 to three years in the Sibltag camps in the Altai, where he joined Bishop Barnabas. In the camps he was given work on the soil, but was then made a storeman. For his honesty he was slandered and sent on a punishment battalion to inveterate criminals, who constantly abused him. But he was always patient, calm and radiant. Fr. Cyprian died of tuberculosis in the camp hospital on June 16, 1934, "in the flower of his strength", as Bishop Barnabas had prophesied. He was buried in Korkuchi cleft, where Nun Catherine later laid a cross made out of stones.

**89. HOLY HIEROMARTYR MICHAEL, SCHEMA-BISHOP OF
CHISTOPOL (+1974)**
and those with him

Schema-Bishop Michael (Yershov) was born on September 17 (or October 12), 1911, in the village of Mamykovo in Kazan province, in a peasant family. According to another source, he was born in the village of Barskoye, Yenaruskino, Aksubayevo volost, Chistopol canon, Tataria. His father, whose name was Basil, had taken part in the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War and the Civil War. From 1920 he had become a cobbler and president of the committee of poverty in the village. There were five children in the family, four daughters and a son. Michael's mother was called Daria.

Michael finished two classes at elementary school, and at the age of ten began to help his father, working as a cobbler. He went to church services and sang in the choir. When he was twelve years old, as he was receiving communion a church in Chistopol, an elder saw him and said: "This lad will take upon himself the sins of the whole people." According to one source, he was tonsured into the mantia in 1927, and in 1928 was ordained to the diaconate. However, from 1929 the church was closed and his father became president of the village soviet and began to persecute his son for reading service books and constantly praying at home. As a result of this he went blind. Afterwards, when he repented, he recovered his sight.

In November, 1930 Fr. Michael left his father's home because he did not agree with the family's joining the collective farm. At some time during that year. He arrived in Chistopol, where he fell seriously ill. On recovering, he got to know Elder Plato, who told him: "You will suffer very much for the name of God and for the people. Only don't seek anything from anyone, rely only on Almighty God. By the mercy of God I knew about you before." Together they went round the villages taking part in joint prayer-services.

According to one source, Fr. Michael was ordained to the priesthood in 1930 by the Catacomb Archbishop and future Hieromartyr Nectarius (Trezvinsky) in Kazan. According to another source, however, his ordination took place in September, 1933 at the hands of Hieromonk Peter (?). He was a fervent opponent of the Moscow Patriarchate, and believed that it was wrong to have any contact with it.

Fr. Michael and Elder Plato were arrested on March 3, 1931 in Chistopol, but he was released on May 1. A few days later, he was arrested again in Kazan, but was released after twelve days. He then went underground, wandering round the villages and earning his bread as a cobbler. He walked in chains, carried out joint prayer services and healed the sick and the demon-possessed.

In April, 1933 he was arrested in the village of Aksubayevo, but was released in July. On June 7, 1934 he was arrested in Bilyarsk, taken by convoy to

Chistopol, then to Kazan and on July 10 condemned to eight years in the camps for anti-Soviet agitation. He served his term in the Mariinsk and Baikal-Amur camps, and then in Ulan-Ude and near Murmansk, doing general work. In 1940 he was transferred to Kandalaksha, where they were building a railway. He worked in the refectory. In May, 1942 he was sent to Tataria to work on the Ulyanovsk-Sviyazhsk railway. There he worked in the field hospital. On September 25 he was sent for defensive works in the village of Stepanovka, Buinsk region, from where he escaped to Chistopol, then to Aksubayevo region. On October 16 (17), 1942 he was arrested and cast into Chistopol prison. On January 23, 1943 he was sentenced "for desertion from defensive works" to seven (eight) years in prison. On February 16, 1943, according to one source, he was released, but according to another he was sent to call-up, but, not wishing to serve in the army, escaped. After this he served secretly in the village of Yelantovo, Sheremetyevo region. He celebrated Pascha on April 12, 1943 in a tent on a hill not far from Yelantovo with a group of twelve women. Later those attending the services in the tent rose to sixty. In September, during a service on the hill, the police arrived and drove away the believers; some were arrested and sent to the camps. On December 12 (or 15 or 26), 1943 he was arrested again for church preaching and cast into Chistopol prison. He was accused of being "a leader of the anti-Soviet activity of the underground of the True Orthodox Church of Tikhonite tendency in Tataria", and on August 18, 1944 was sentenced to death by shooting. He spent 81 days in the death cell; they starved him the whole time. On October 25, 1944, they commuted the death sentence to fifteen years' hard labour, of which he was informed on November 9. He was sent to Vorkutlag, where he worked in the mines, and later - in the cobblers' workshop. In 1945 he appealed for clemency to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, but his request was declined.

In October, 1946 he got to know Basil Kalinin, healing him from an illness of the spine which had paralyzed him completely for three years. He came up to him, took him by the hand and said:

"Get up and walk."

He also healed the withered hand of John Kokarev and the leprous face of Gregory Rusakov (the future Hieromonk Philaret), which was already stinking. He took the whole crust from his face.

Fr. Michael passed through almost all the prisons of the Soviet Gulag: Kazan, Arzamas, Vorkuta, Olga, Bannino, Sakhalin, Nagayeva, Magadan, Suman, Kolyma, Khabarovsk, Blagoveshchensk, Bratsk, Taipet...

On August 3, 1950 he was transferred to Sevvostoklag (Kolyma, North-East Siberia), where he worked in the gold-fields. On November 15, 1954 he was recorded in his personal file as having worked only 54 days, while there was a series of decrees casting him into the isolator for between three and ten days for refusing to work. On July 14, 1954 his sentenced was reduced by one-third. In December, 1954 he was transferred from Kolyma to the camp section

Sovietskaya Gavan, Khabarovsk district. On May 29, 1956 he was transferred to a prison regime for one year, and was sent to prison in Blagoveschensk. On July 4, 1958 the follow report was written about him: "During his stay in prison he behaved satisfactorily, and did not violate the prison regime, was a cleaner in the corridors of the prison, and carried out his work. A religious fanatic, he did not work on days that were, in his opinion, festal."

It is said that in the 1950s Fr. Michael was secretly consecrated Bishop of Chistopol in the camps, and in this capacity took part, according to one source, in the Nikolsky Council of the Catacomb Church in 1961 through Monk John. However, the real existence of this Council is doubted by many.

On April 11, he was transferred to the inner prison of the KGB in Kazan for investigation in connection with a church case. On July 18 he was indicted for being "the leader of the anti-Soviet underground of the True Orthodox Church in Tataria. By means of written and personal links with those who think like him, he gave instructions on preaching the ideas of the True Orthodox Church, called on people to refuse to participate in political enterprises and decline from service in the Soviet Army, in collective farms, in state institutions and undertakings. He gave instructions on preparing new secret priests, and on acquiring houses and equipment for an illegal church." On August 11-14, 1958 he was sentenced to twenty-five years in the camps with five years disenfranchisement, and was sent to Dubravlag, Potma, Mordovia. "At eight in the morning they brought Vladyka Michael (Yershov) in a 'black raven'... He raised his hand like this, crossed himself and bowed to the earth. 'Pray and fear not. The victory will be with the True Orthodox Christians!' Then they took him away. After him they brought in Basil Vladimirovich, and he also said: 'All of you pray for us, pray. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Then they brought in Fr. Philaret, and after him Ivan, and the last was Nadezhda Vasilyevna. They brought them through, and they all shouted: 'Pray! The victory will be with the True Orthodox Christians!'... They gave them twenty-five years' strict regime."

Fr. Michael spent fifteen years in irons. According to the accounts of prisoners, he spent whole nights standing in prayer. He healed many criminals, possessed, lame, blind and sick people, and gave them instructions on how to live well. He also had the gift of prophecy.

On August 13, 1973 he declared a hunger strike in the camp. In October he was transferred to the seventeenth section of the Temnikov camp (Potma). In the spring of 1974 they pulled out all his hair and all the hairs of his beard one by one with manacles, after which he was paralyzed. A.S. Dubina reported that he died in camp on June 4, 1977. According to another report, however, he died in a special prison hospital in Kazan on June 4, 1974.

Bishop Michael's closest collaborator, Bishop Vasily, was born **Basil Vladimirovich Kalinin** in 1917 at Kubansky khutor, Belorechensky uyezd, Krasnodar region into a peasant family. He finished one class of elementary

school. In 1929 his family was dekulakized and he was exiled to Stavropol, later to Sverdlovsk. In 1932 his family fled from exile, and his father began preaching in the villages of the Kuban about the coming of the last time and of the Antichrist. In 1933, together with his father, **Vladimir Markovich**, he was arrested, but soon released, while his father was sent to a camp. He married, and in 1938 a daughter Tatyana was born to him, and in 1940 - a son Michael. In 1940 he was called up into the army and was sent to the northern fleet. At the beginning of the war he operated a machine-gun. In 1943 he was preparing to go over to the Germans, but then he received a letter from his brother and understood that "I'm doing something very stupid. If I betray the Homeland, then because of me my whole family will perish, and I am particularly sorry for my children." In 1943 he was arrested in Polyarny and was accused that, "while on military service in the period 1942-43, he systematically made anti-Soviet statements and, besides, recruited like-minded people from the other soldiers with the aim of going over to the Germans and organizing on their side an armed struggle against Soviet power. At the same time he aimed to hand over spy material to the Germans and carry out diversionary and terrorist acts at the moment of passing over to the enemy." On January 5, 1944 he was sentenced to death, but in March his sentence was commuted to twenty years' hard labour. He was sent to a camp, where he got to know Fr. Michael Yershov. On October 6, 1956 he was pardoned and released from camp, and on the instructions of Fr. Michael went to Yelantovo in Tataria, where he established links with the underground True Orthodox Church. In March, 1957 he went, on the instructions of Fr. Michael, to Krasnodar district, where, on March 25, 1958 he was arrested. He was accused of "joining the anti-Soviet underground of the True Orthodox Church of Tikhonite orientation and taking an active part in carrying out counter-revolutionary agitation among the population, calling people to boycott political state enterprises and decline from socially useful work. Also he drew new people into the underground." On August 11-14 he was sentenced to twenty-five years in the camps with disenfranchisement for five years with confiscation of property. On October 5 he arrived in Dubravlag, and on October 20, 1960 he was transferred to Temnikov camp. On March 30, 1961 he was recognized to be "an especially dangerous recidivist", and in February, 1974 he was sent for twelve days to a penal isolator "for absence from physical exercise" (at that time he was praying in the barracks). On August 30, 1974 the head of the camp gave him a negative report and said that he had not started on the path of correction. On March 25, 1983 he was released and returned to Yelantovo, where, on February 18, 1995, he died.

**90. HOLY HIEROCONFESSORS SERAPHIM (+1943),
SERAPHIM (+1955) AND NAZARIUS (+1975) OF KHARKOV**
and those with them

Schema-Archimandrite Seraphim, in the world Nicholas Mikhailovich Sangushko-Zagorovsky, was born on July 27, 1872 in Akhtyrka, Kharkov province into an ancient princely family which had moved into the priestly caste. His father, Deacon Michael Feoktistovich, died young, leaving his three children to be brought up by their mother, Paraskeva Andreyevna, a clever and energetic woman. His brother Michael became a priest, but died young. Kolya Zagorovsky was a happy, boisterous, talented boy. From childhood he loved his native Ukrainian language and popular songs. He demonstrated an exceptional talent as a comedian; every appearance of his on the stage elicited a storm of laughter. Nicholas' fame as a comic actor spread far beyond the bounds of the Kharkov theological seminary, where he completed his studies in 1894. He was invited to join a celebrated Ukrainian troupe, but Paraskeva Andreyevna wouldn't hear of it.

"I want to see you in golden rizas, otherwise I'll curse you," she declared to her son.

He had to submit. Nicholas married Catherine Ivanovna, an educated woman who had graduated from the diocesan school for daughters of the clergy. The couple had two children. Then, in 1894 he was ordained to the priesthood. The village where Fr. Nicholas was sent as pastor was called Malyzhino, in Bogodukhovsky uyezd, Kharkov province. It was in the back of beyond. This was difficult for Fr. Nicholas, because he had nowhere to demonstrate his richly endowed nature. The icon of the Mother of God which he had in his cell was the witness of his bitter tears. He called on the Mother of God to help him in his spiritual struggle. And then a miracle took place: his brilliant natural talents were transformed into spiritual ones: the artist-comedian became the famous preacher and people's pastor. Although the icon before which he prayed was painted in the Italian style and was not a copy of the ancient icon "Search of the Lost", Fr. Nicholas called it "The Malyzhino Search of the Lost". He adorned it with precious stones and venerated it as wonder-working. How many times thereafter did he sing the akathist in front of it: "Rejoice, grace-filled Virgin Birth-giver of God, the saviour of all the lost"! And the Mother of God came to help, healing and driving out demons.

The people loved Fr. Nicholas and surrounded him tightly, not leaving him even when he moved to Kharkov to give his children education. In 1908 Fr. Nicholas became the rector of the city's hospital church of St. Seraphim. In 1909 he was transferred to the church of St. Theodore the Studite attached to the Alexandrovskaya hospital. Here he continued to serve akathists in front of the icon and give sermons. Soon his reputation as a new Chrysostom spread throughout Kharkov, and the people began to come to him from all directions.

A women's monastery began to form around him. With the sisters he would make pilgrimages to Belgorod and other holy places. In the 1910s Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov gave his blessing to the opening of a women's monastery in the name of the Mother of God "The Search of the Lost", and blessed Fr. Nicholas to be the nuns' spiritual leader. A three-storeyed building was set aside for it, and all the necessary preparations had already been made when the revolution broke out. But the monastery continued to exist in secret.

One of the novices was Ulyasha Nozdrina, later Mother Magdalina of Lesna monastery. When Fr. Nicholas was forced to leave Kharkov, he chose her as one of those who were to accompany him. She remembers: "Vladyka John Maximovich was a student then, and he used to visit Metropolitan Anthony [Khrapovitsky, at that time archbishop of Kharkov]. The relics of St. Meletius were there, and Metropolitan Anthony blessed our batyushka to look after them. Batyushka would come there every day, as would Vladyka John, who was then known as Misha and who would always ask batyushka's blessing to go to his studies. Once Fr. Nicholas said to him laughingly:

"Misha, you never miss the batyushka. You will probably become a bishop or a saint.'

"It's you, Fr. Nicholas, who will become a saint,' replied Misha.

"And look, you see, Vladyka John became both a bishop and a saint, he is soon going to be glorified [he was glorified by the Russian Church Abroad in 1994]. And my batyushka is also a saint..

"Batyushka was a holy man. He did so many miracles! I remember once there was a terrible drought, and batyushka organized a pilgrimage to go to Svyatogorsk monastery to pray for rain. So many people gathered, several thousands. They walked in groups with icons and gonfalons. Everyone was singing. When they arrived, they began to serve an all-night vigil in a wood near the monastery, for none of the churches could accommodate everyone. And the vigil went on all night, and the hieromonks were confessing the people all night. And in the morning practically everyone received Communion. And when Communion was finished, batyushka said:

"And now we are going to pray God for rain. Everyone fall face down and pray God until heavenly tears begin to drop on the earth.'

"Everyone fell on their knees. But the sky was completely clear. And suddenly clouds began to gather, and drops of rain began to fall like tears. Of course, everyone jumped up ran for cover - it was a real downpour. After the meal, they asked batyushka:

"Are you going to ring for the people to gather?'

"But it was pouring cats and dogs at the time. Batyushka thought for a little, dropped his head, and then said:

"Ring!"

"And suddenly the rain stopped. So we returned home so joyful, so happy. Everybody looked at us out of the windows, they didn't understand what had happened. But we waved at them with branches and sang:

"Christ is risen!"

"And how many people he healed! They often used to call him to the village of Pokrovskoye, he often went there to visit the sick - there were many demon-possessed people there. Batyushka had only to come within a few versts of the village, and all the demon-possessed people were shouting:

"He's coming, he's coming to torment us, the whining bald-head is coming to torment us!"

"And several people were already holding these possessed people down - they were so strong and furious. Batyushka came with the icon, served a moleben, then everyone came up to kiss the icon. And then, my God, what shouting, what a noise! And then they gradually quieted down, batyushka read a prayer over them, and while he was there the demon-possessed came peacefully up to receive Communion, and while this was taking place there was no shouting or cries. And how they loved batyushka! When there was a famine, this village of Pokrovskoye brought food in on carts. Batyushka took nothing for himself, but handed it out. My sister and brother were in a home - we were orphans, you know - and he sent provisions to the orphanages: one cart to one home, another to another, a third to the prison. It was all distributed. And when they arrested him, they brought so much food that the whole prison was fed.

"They later sent batyushka to Petrograd [in 1923]. And there, too, he healed very many people. In Petersburg there was a widow who was dying. She had two small children and a sister, and someone told them that there was this batyushka, call him if she's dying, and he'll help you. Batyushka and I went there. She was lying in bed, almost dead. She couldn't open her eyes any longer. Batyushka began to serve a moleben in front of this icon, then an akathist, while the children said:

"Batyushka, mamochka is almost dead, you have to serve the service for the dying."

"Don't worry, leave her, let her lie peacefully. The Mother of God will grant it - she'll get better."

"And then, on the second day, she suddenly came to. It turned out that she had felt that someone was praying for her. Of course, they immediately called batyushka, and he came with the Holy Gifts to communicate her. We arrived there, and she opened her eyes and said:

"Who's come to us? Call him, quickly!"

"He confessed her, gave her Communion, and the next day the children came and said:

"Batyushka, mama is feeling better!"

"And then she recovered. So the children sewed a Russian belt with flowers which priests used to wear and brought it to batyushka. They were so grateful! And she recovered and became his faithful spiritual daughter."

Another spiritual daughter of batyushka's, Mother Ierusalima, recounts:

"Fr. Nicholas Zagorovsky served in the hospital church. What joy he gave to the sick people at Pascha! He would exchange kisses with all of them, and would go round giving them all pascha and eggs. He was so welcoming and tender, his only words were: "my joy", "my little one", "my sister" - that was how he addressed his flock. And every Sunday with him was like Pascha. The services were long, until three in the afternoon, and the Liturgy always ended with an akathist to the Mother of God "Search of the lost". During the akathist the whole church was on their knees, everyone was weeping, and he was weeping. His sermons were also very long, two hours long, and during the sermon he was weeping all the time, and everyone was weeping, so that even the walls were weeping, because so many people were packed in that they became wet from the people's breath. And after the service everyone would be invited to a meal, to drink tea and sing psalms and spiritual songs. Batyushka himself set many psalms to music."

In June, 1918 Fr. Nicholas was arrested in Kharkov, but was soon released. In July, 1922 he was transferred to the Nativity church in Kharkov. On March 17, 1923 he was arrested for resisting the renovationists.

Mother Ierusalima continues: "I remember him declaring to the people that today would be his last Liturgy, he had to prepare for his arrest because they had said to him:

"Don't commemorate Patriarch Tikhon."

"I couldn't reconcile myself with this. And when he said this, there was such an outburst of weeping that it could be heard a kilometre away on the street. He wept and sobbed, and everyone accompanied him, and in the evening they came to his house and arrested him. They put him in [the Kholodnogorskaya] prison. Now he had a very large flock around Kharkov, and when they learned

that he had been arrested, in the morning the head of the prison got a fright: the whole of the square round the prison was covered with peasant carts which were full of food with which they fed all the prisoners. And when the head of the prison saw that neither that day, nor the next, nor the day after did the carts leave, and so much food that they didn't know what to do with it, he decided to send him to Petrograd. And he took with him one nun, the most energetic one, Ulyasha..."

On May 15, 1923 Fr. Nicholas was convicted of "preaching of a counter-revolutionary content" and sentenced to three years' exile beyond the bounds of Kharkov. This was part of "The Case of Bishop Paul (Kratirov) and others, Kharkov, 1923".

They went to Petrograd, and Fr. Nicholas constructed a house church for himself, continuing to direct his nuns in Kharkov. In the middle of 1926, after his release from exile, he returned to Kharkov. However, in 1928 he went to Petrograd, joined the Catacomb Church and commemorated only Metropolitan Peter in services. His health worsened...

He wrote to his "children-orphans": "I don't serve anywhere... Such is the will of God! I have been alone in my little cell. I'm getting used to reclusion and silence and quiet, private prayer. Here is my service, and prayer, and the Mysteries of Holy Communion... Here I experience both all my joys and my sorrow... Ulyasha bows down to you all in heart and soul... How often she remembers you all and asks for your holy prayers..." "With you and amongst you my heart has taught me and has learned to experience the fullness of that grace-filled heavenly spiritual mystical union with Christ and in Christ, about which one can only judge from the words of the holy Apostle Paul: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man, what God has prepared for those who love Him'... Remain patient, my little ones, and pray to God! And live in God like the wise Virgins of the Gospel. Do not weaken in your exploits of piety and purity of life, do not become cold towards prayer, but the more apply yourselves to the Jesus prayer and the '500s' [Optina prayer rule]. Commune of the Holy Mysteries of Christ more often. Be vigilant! Stand on guard, for the world is trying to catch you from all sides... It remains for us only to follow Him obediently. In this is the whole meaning of the blessed condition of man when he has given himself to Christ: not looking worriedly ahead, nor being frightened over the next step, not choosing his path himself, not laying upon himself in advance the burdens of coming woes, without fear, with firm faith, peacefully to follow after the Shepherd, step by step, rejoicing and always remembering that 'He goes before you...' Go then, my children, after Christ!... It is for this reason that I joyfully suffer and bear the cross of exile... Alone I go to pray at the Athonite podvorye. Alone I weep there, tucking myself into a corner. Alone I return again to my little cell. And my only joy is that every day I have the happiness of communing of the Holy Mysteries of Christ in my cell!... So, my children, I live in hope of the coming Pascha that has no leave-taking..."

On January 7 (17), 1930 Fr. Nicholas was arrested in connection with the Petrograd branch of the True Orthodox Church and cast into prison. On August 3 he was sentenced by the OGPU to five years in the camps, and on August 18 he was sent under convoy to Solovki. Matushka Ekaterina Ivanovna and Ulyasha Nozdrina undertook the distant journey to visit batyushka.

During his time in Solovki (1930-35) Fr. Nicholas was widowed, and he was secretly tonsured into monasticism with the name Seraphim.

In 1935 Fr. Nicholas and some other prisoners were sent to a settlement in the far north. Exhausted and tormented, they walked across the tundra. Once they stopped for the night in a deserted chapel. Fr. Nicholas woke up and saw that he was sleeping under an icon of the Mother of God "Search of the lost". This encouraged him enormously, and he felt that he was under the protection of the Mother of God. He was the only one to reach the destination: the others all died en route.

Ulyasha, self-sacrificing as ever, did not abandon batyushka. She came to him on a cart, bringing a basket full of provisions. She had to go across thousands of versts of taiga, but the Lord preserved her, and she arrived safely. Batyushka was being guarded by sentries, but Ulyasha did not lose her presence of mind. She called the soldiers Petka or Vanka.

"This is my uncle," she told them. "He took me in when I was orphaned and brought me up. You also have a mother - remember her! Let my uncle eat with me!"

Permission was given, and batyushka went to eat with Ulyasha.

When Fr. Nicholas had served his term of punishment, in January, 1935, he was released to live wherever he liked except Kharkov province. He chose the town of Oboyan in Kursk province, which was the nearest to Kharkov. As they were travelling towards Oboyan by train, Fr. Nicholas and Ulyasha were talking about the fact that they knew no-one there and there was nowhere for them to go. By chance the wife of an exiled priest heard their conversation. She informed them that there was a secret women's monastery in Oboyan, and gave them its address. They set off there, but the mother-doorkeeper categorically refused to let them in since she feared that the authorities' attention would be drawn to the monastery.

"Still, please tell the abbess about us," asked Fr. Nicholas. Mother abbess soon came out and welcomed them in. It turned out that during the night St. Seraphim had appeared to her in her sleep and said:

"Seraphim from Kharkov is coming to you. Receive him."

Batyushka Nicholas, in monasticism Seraphim, began to weep...

In Oboyan they lived very quietly. Fr. Nicholas never came out onto the street by day. Sometimes his Kharkov nuns came to him by night, and in this way he directed their secret monastery. Ulyasha lived in complete obedience to batyushka; she was tonsured by him with the name Seraphima.

Mother Magdalina liked to tell the story of how she became a nurse in Oboyan with Fr. Nicholas' help. The story was as follows. When they went to live in exile in Oboyan, Ulyasha worked in the hospital as a junior nurse. However, an unexpected order arrived: all those with little education had to take an exam in accordance with the ten-year plan. Ulyasha was not very good at studying. So Fr. Nicholas began to give her lessons. Before the exam batyushka wrote a composition entitled: 'Morning in the settlement', and ordered Ulyasha to take it with her and write it out when they declared the subject of the essay. And in fact they gave the subject: 'Morning in the settlement'. For the oral exam Fr. Nicholas told Ulyasha to learn a poem. When they asked in class who knew this poem, it turned out that Ulyasha was the only one who knew it. So she passed her exam and became a nurse.

During the war Oboyan was occupied by the Germans. However, they were very respectful to Fr. Nicholas. He was soon driven home to Kharkov by ambulance, where celebrated services in his house in the presence of a large congregation.

Mother Ierusalima: "When batyushka returned to Kharkov, he did not serve in a church, but in his own home, in the semi-basement. What Liturgies they were, such a triumph! My mother, sister and I always went. The whole room was full of people, it was a big room, it was always full of people. The chanting was beautiful, the nuns always did the singing, everyone received Communion, everyone was so joyful, as if the old times had returned. But then the reds began to attack. They would have arrested him, of course. His daughter, Lydochka, had already left with her husband. And he said to matushka:

"I can't wait for the reds here, I even get frightened when I think they're approaching."

However, Mother Magdalina said: "Batyushka did not want to leave, but his family wanted him to leave. Now batyushka's son-in-law, Lydochka's husband, worked in the theatre as an opera director. And when the opera left, he and Lydia with their little son Seryozha also left. They wanted to take batyushka with them, but he wouldn't in any circumstances. At this point the people came, they all came.

"Batyushka, if you stay, they'll take you, you'll be exiled, or rather they'll kill you, and we don't know where your grave is.'

"No,' he said, 'I'm not going anywhere, I'm staying come what may.'

"But his daughter and son-in-law arranged it so that the Germans sent a car for batyushka. They simply arrived and said without any discussion:

"Batyushka, you must go!"

"But his matushka could not leave the house, because her daughter had gone, everyone had gone, and she needed to look after the house. So she, Mother Meletia and Dunya remained at home and told me:

"Ulyasha, you have to go with batyushka."

"Batyushka was already old and ill. Of course, I was a little frightened of going, and I asked one other sister, Xenia, about it. But at this point the wanderer, Petro, also decided to go with us. And I felt a little better, because I was at any rate not alone, there were the three of us. They immediately took us to the train. I left in the clothes I was standing in, but then the sisters ran up to the train and brought some things for batyushka, a coat for me and something else. But batyushka was ill, he often had heart-attacks. We arrived at Peremysl in Poland, and there batyushka became really ill, so we had to stop in Peremysl. Batyushka was put in hospital, he was feeling very ill. I didn't leave him, but nursed him and did everything. Then they called his daughter and son-in-law, they all arrived. He was lying quietly in bed. Tears were flowing out of his eyes. He opened his eyes, looked at everyone and said:

"I don't see Ulyasha."

"Then he stretched out his hand and I held him, and he took my hand and kissed it, and I felt that he was thanking me for not leaving him. And his tears again began to flow. His daughter took a clean handkerchief and began to wipe his face, and in this way he quietly, peacefully died. Almost the whole hospital came to look - he was lying so radiant and smiling! There was a church there, and on Orthodox feasts a Russian priest would serve. Batyushka died on the eve of the Feast of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God [September 30 / October 13, 1943], and on the feast there was a Liturgy. We read the Psalter for batyushka, and there were pannikhidas, and he was buried in Peremysl. And it turns out that in the place in Peremysl where he died, his grandparents and great-grandparents had all died. You know, batyushka was from an ancient family. And there was even a monastery of the Zagorovskys somewhere there."

*

Hieromonk Seraphim, in the world Daniel Ivanovich Shevtsov, was born in 1875 in one of the villages of Voronezh province (according to another version - in Kharkov). In his youth he entered the Sviatogorsk Dormition desert in Kharkov province, one of the oldest monasteries in the south of Russia, which had 600 brothers by 1917. Daniel Shevtsov was tonsured with the name Seraphim in honour of St. Seraphim of Sarov. Later he was transferred, for his good moral life, to the Pokrov men's monastery in Kharkov, where the

diocesan administration was. He was ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov.

In 1922, in view of the closure of the monastery by the Bolsheviks, Fr. Seraphim went to live with a poor widow. He was very ill at that time, and the widow looked after him until he recovered. From this time he lived in flats in Kharkov and the surrounding district. In 1937 he was sentenced to three years in prison for "unlawful activity". After his release he continued to live illegally in Kharkov. From 1941, after the Germans occupied Kharkov, Fr. Seraphim came out to serve openly and began to look after people over a wide territory. Other catacomb priests serving in the area at this time were **Fr. Anthony Kranokutsy and Protopriest Nicholas Butkevich**, who were serving in the city of Bogodukhov in 1944. During the war **Matushka Pelagia** came to Voronezh province and founded a community of True Orthodox Christians. After her departure to Kharkov district, the leader of the group became **Matushka Thecla** (Trofimovna Nesterenko), who was sent by Fr. Seraphim from Kharkov to Voronezh region in autumn, 1944. Contributions, or tithes, were sent from the members of the community to Kharkov.

In 1946 batyushka was condemned for a second time, to seven years' imprisonment. At the trial in Kiev, in the presence of more than ten clergy, Fr. Seraphim was offered a parish on condition that he was registered and conducted services together with the other priests, who had signed the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius. He refused, and was sent to prison.

On his release in 1953, he continued to lead a catacomb community. "When it became extremely dangerous to pray in private homes because of the persecutions by the authorities, batyushka decided to dig out a cave. Not far from Kharkov there was the village of Tishki. In this village there was a street going up a tall hill. In the courtyard of the house where Fr. Seraphim was living temporarily, almost halfway up the hill, thick bushes were growing. And in was in this unnoticed place that they decided to dig a hole underground. They dug carefully, for a long time, under the direction of batyushka. When they had dug it out, there was a big basement the size of a spacious room, Air had to be pumped into the room artificially... [because] there was no normal ventilation. But there were icons in the catacomb, lampadas and candles were burning, and the Liturgy was celebrated. This continued for a certain time. Then once a new woman came with a group of Christians. When batyushka saw her, he said to his children: "Whom have you brought? Quickly get ready, let us leave this place." Early in the morning, before dawn, all the believers who were there, with icons in their hands, left the cave with Fr. Seraphim leading them. They went through the kitchen gardens (at that time the sunflowers were flowering, and the maize was as tall as a man) and through the woods to escape the organs of the KGB, who at that time had surrounded the house. Fortunately, they did not find any of those escaping. The woman who had brought them to batyushka was the wife of a priest who served the sergianists. She shared information with him, and he informed the organs.

“Eyewitnesses who knew Fr. Seraphim affirm that he had the gift of clairvoyance. Once while batyushka was sitting and chatting with his spiritual children, he said: ‘You, Nazarius, will be imprisoned for the faith. You, Maria, will also be taken. But you, Melania, will remain in freedom, they will not take you.’ He who writes these lines is a witness of the truth of these words of Fr. Seraphim, although the people have already departed into Eternity. Batyushka did not reply to difficult questions immediately. He would go into reclusion, pray to God, and only on the second day would he give a precise reply. Before his death he gave instructions to his spiritual children on how to live after him. And he said: ‘If in future you meet a true priest, I bless you all to go under his spiritual direction.’”

He died in 1955, and was buried secretly. Not knowing that he had died, the “organs of internal affairs” searched for him. When his grave was finally discovered, an army detachment was summoned to lift his coffin. When they had dug down to the coffin, its corner had rotted away, and through the opening there wafted a wonderful aroma. The bosses who were standing by said: “The believers poured so much perfume into the coffin that the aroma is spreading to this day.” When they opened the coffin, the body lay in the same condition as if it had been buried the day before. When they told the boss that the body had been lying in the grave for a year and a half, he was disturbed and said: “It’s impossible.” But when he was finally convinced of the truth of what was said, he was very perplexed. Soon the coffin with the body was taken away. Many citizens of the city of Chugev, which is 45 kilometres from Kharkov, watched as it passed by. Nobody knows where the grave of Fr. Seraphim is now. The boss only said: “We shall arrange it so that crowds of people do not go to his grave.” While he was still alive, batyushka used to say to his spiritual children: “When I die, they will not give my body peace in the grave...”

Before his death batyushka said: “I cannot appoint you a priest, but I give you instructions on how to live in order to be saved. I entrust you to the Mother of God, and if you follow my instructions, you will be saved.” After the death of Fr. Seraphim, some of the believers went to another Kharkov catacomb priest, **Fr. Nicetas Lekhan**, but most continued to live without a priest. And today in Kharkov and Kharkov district his faithful children still live and pray. They are called “Seraphimovites”, and they hope only on God, pray to God and commune of the crumbs of the prosphoras remaining from Batyushka Seraphim... Save them, O Lord, through the intercession of the Mother of God!

*

Hieromonk Nazarius, in the world Nestor Stefanovich Konyukhov, was born in 1890 (or 1888) in the village of Lugovka, Bogodukhovsky uyezd, Kharkov province (now Sumy province) into a peasant family. His father was called Stefan, and his mother – Melania. His grandfather was called Efim.

Once Efim went to Pisarevka to have a case made for an icon of the Saviour. Having received the icon and its case from the craftsman, he went with some friends into the local bar. There they drank vodka, and it turned out that they did not have enough money to pay for the drinks. Without thinking, Efim gave the icon in lieu of his debt. Immediately a demon entered into him; he lost consciousness and foamed at the mouth. His terrified friends carried him to a cart and took him to the village. His son Stefan immediately went to Pisarevka, paid the debt and took the icon back. Efim immediately came to himself, fell down before a large icon of the Holy Trinity and began to beg forgiveness for his great sin before the Lord. He wept so much that a pool of his tears was formed around him. And he wept for three days without getting up. Later he used to say: "I would get up, turn round and want to leave, but then the demons would shout: 'You're ours, you're ours!'" So for three days they did not let him leave the icon. Without sleeping or eating, he stood and wept. Finally he thought of leaving the world and going to Kiev to worship at the holy places and enter a monastery. For a whole year he could not make up his mind whether to go to Kiev.

At that time there was a clairvoyant elder in Kiev, Fr. Jonah of the Holy Trinity monastery in Zverinitsa (later Schema-Archimandrite Peter, who died on January 9, 1909 at the age of 107). When Efim finally came round to going to Kiev he was shown the way to the hermit Fr. Jonah. He went up to the door and said: "Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us!" "Amen, child Efim," replied the hermit, "come in! I've been waiting for you for a whole year. Come in and tell me what happened to you." Efim told him everything, and when he had finished, he asked: "Batyushka, bless me to go into a monastery, so as to save my soul." But Fr. Jonah did not agree: "You have no blessing to go into a monastery. Go home, and put your whole family on the path of salvation. And see that there are no spirits in your family!"

Efim returned, began to lead a pious life and set his children and grandchildren on the right path. When he would go through the village, people would whisper after him: "A saint, a saint is passing by!"

There were many icons and holy things in the house. Once, before the revolution, the house burned down and they did not succeed in getting the holy things out. Everybody saw a many-coloured, rainbow-like pillar ascending from the burning house. The whole village burned down, but nothing similar had ever taken place before, so everyone decided that this was grace from the holy things ascending to heaven in the fiery pillar.

This was the kind of house in which Nestor was born...

Batyushka used to tell how he was born dead, but his mother tearfully prayed that he come to life, promising to give the child to the service of God. In his early childhood he had a vision or dream: he saw people of the earlier ages of Christianity who were grave and pious. Then he saw people from the

Middle Ages, who were more lively. And then people of recent times – they shouted in a dreadful way and rushed around like madmen. Batyushka said that these scenes appeared before him as in a cinema. He was frightened and began to call Mama. She ran up and calmed him.

Another incident took place when batyushka was between ten and twelve years old. There was little river behind their kitchen garden, and he went there to catch fish. “I was sitting there,” he said, “with my rod, and suddenly a dragon came up out of the water. Water simply poured off him! I was frightened, cast away my rod and ran home shouting: ‘Oy, Mama, Mama! A terrible beast has appeared to me!’ Mama calmed me down: ‘It’s nothing, child, nothing. It was a terrible demon. How could a beast get into the small river?’ Then some adults went to the river to have a look. The rod was lying on the earth, and there was nothing around.”

When Nestor began to grow up, he began to be drawn to street dancing. At first he felt out of place there, he didn’t dance or sing, but then, the third time, it began to interest him. Someone was playing the harmonica, and girls and boys were dancing and singing. It happened to be the eve of the Dormition, the patronal feast of the village church, and he was going with his brother to fish in the lake. They cast their net and were delayed at the lake. So when they came back Nestor noticed with disappointment that the young dancers had already dispersed to their homes. His brother was driving the horse while Nestor was sitting with his back to the horse, sorrowing that the street was already empty. Suddenly he heard a voice from above: ‘Why, lawless one, are you directing your steps on the path of lawlessness? Remember that today the Heavenly Queen is rising from earth to heaven! Remember Whom you promised to serve from your childhood!’ And then in front of his very eyes on the dark sky his sins began to be written in fiery letters: ‘Street pleasures, laughing, singing...’

“I was so frightened,” he recounted, “that my hair stood on end and my hat rose up. And then I felt something sweet on my lips, as if something sweet had been put in my mouth. I immediately began to ask my brother: ‘Faster! Drive faster!’ We came to the village as midnight was sounding. I ran up to my father and began to pester him: ‘Papa, papasha, let’s go quickly to the church!’ My father said: ‘It’s still early!’ But I persuaded him and we went. But the nightwatchman didn’t want to open up... From that time I stopped going to the street parties and began to pray more to God. My only desire was to enter a monastery as quickly as possible.”

At this time Elder Stefan was living in the Spaso-Yefimovsky monastery in Suzdal. He had been exiled there from Kharkov province because of a slanderous accusation. Archbishop Arseny of Kharkov had not thoroughly investigated the case. The matter was as follows. Elder Stefan was struggling on Mount Athos, but then was sent to the city of Bogodukhov in Kharkov province to build a women’s monastery. The superior of the monastery was a baptized German. A prostitute was bribed to bring a child into the monastery and declared that the father was Elder Stefan. He did not justify himself, but

said: "I have sinned, forgive me!" There was a trial, and Fr. Stefan was exiled to Suzdal, to the Spaso-Yefimovsky monastery. They took him there in an open waggon, and one pious woman saw a radiance over his head and said: "Whom have you condemned?" In the monastery he lived in a single cell with a condemned priest, and, as was reported to the Synod, there they did nothing but pray. At this time (in 1913) Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II visited the monastery, but was not admitted to the cell of the elder – they said that he was some kind of heretic. The elder later said: "It's a pity that the Sovereign did not come to me." For his great patience the Lord had granted the elder the gift of clairvoyance – he could have told the Tsar something important.

Many people came to visit Elder Stefan. Batyushka's father, Stefan Yefimovich, also came to him for advice. The elder asked him three times: "Who is your middle son?" (Batyushka had two brothers, one older than him and the other younger.) His father was silent, not knowing what to reply. And then the elder said: "That's Monk Nestor! But first he must serve the earthly King, and then the Heavenly."

By this time Nestor was already eighteen, and he began to ask his father and mother to bless him to go into a monastery. But the Lord decreed that first he had to go to Suzdal. He was walking along a path to the Spaso-Yefimovsky monastery and was dreaming about asking the elder for his blessing to enter a monastery. At that moment the elder was coming towards him along another path. "On coming up to me," recounted batyushka, "he said three times: 'God blesses! God blesses! God blesses!' Later, on entering the ante-chamber to the elder's cell, he saw the man who had met him on the path and asked those who were with him: "Who is this?" They said to him: "Elder Stefan." "Now I no longer need to ask, he has already blessed me," thought batyushka. He went up to the elder and put various questions to him on other matters, spiritual and material. He didn't ask him about monasticism – he had already received a blessing...

He could no longer wait, and finally, after praying at night, his parents gave their blessing. Immediately, at three in the morning he left his parents' house. He left the village as the sun was rising...

He met three old people who were going to Kiev and decided to accompany them. They walked for twelve days. Once they came to a chapel. There two monks were inscribing the names of living and reposed for those who wanted their relatives commemorated. The three old people and Nestor went up and gave a list of names. Then the monks said: "Give three roubles!" "I was frightened and said: 'Forgive me, brothers, but I have no money!' They got angry with me, began to shout at me and took away my bag. My fellow-travellers were frightened and ran out of the chapel. I began to cry. Well, I was a village lad and was frightened by monks attacking me! I told them: 'Well, write fewer names!' Then I understood that this was a temptation of the enemy, who wanted to turn me against monasticism, so that my striving for the monastery would subside. One shouted at the other: 'Hit him, the barefooted

one!' They threw away my bag. I took up my bag, left the chapel and caught up with my fellow-travellers...

"We came to the Kiev Caves Lavra, and now I began to approach everyone with caution. There were many people around. I went up to one of them and asked: 'Batyushka, how do you put down people's names for commemoration? How much money do you need?' The monk replied: 'Child, we have thousands of people here, and some don't even have a kopeck. Let people give what they can. A general prayer for everybody is being read. Let him who wants, put his name down.' I was straightaway encouraged."

Nestor didn't like the crowds and the noise in the Lavra. The fuss wasn't to his taste, he wanted to go to some desert community. He found a friend in the Lavra, and together they went to the guest-house and got a place to sleep. There were two- and three-layered bunks in the dormitory. They lay down opposite each other and began to talk. Then batyushka saw that there was some woman in black walking between the bunks. When she came up to them, batyushka for some reason immediately sat on the edge of his bed: he noticed that she wanted to say something to him. She turned to him and said: 'Child! You want to enter a desert monastery. Tomorrow attend the Divine service, I will come to you and direct you where to go.' He listened to this and looked at his friend. It was as if he hadn't noticed – he paid no attention and continued their interrupted conversation.

In the morning they attended the service, and after the liturgy went out of the church into the courtyard of the Lavra. This woman - in monastic attire and with a noble appearance - again came up to batyushka and said: 'Let's go, I will show you where you have to go'. She led them beyond the city, told them which villages they had to pass through and said: 'In twelve versts you will see monastery gates. Go through them and into the community. You will be met by an elder with a staff in his hand – that is the igumen. Go up to him, make a prostration and say: "Father, bless and receive me into your community!" You are needed there, they will take you.'

"After these words batyushka asked the woman who she was and where she was from. 'My name is Pelagia, I'm from a community in the East.' Batyushka thanked her and wanted to ask her something else, but she disappeared, and he didn't see where she had gone. It seemed strange to him that his companion again seemed to notice nothing, as if he had not seen or heard anything.

"Nestor and his friend walked for about twelve versts and came to the community, which was called "Tserkovschina skete". They had recently built a church in honour of the Nativity of the Most Holy Mother of God, and internal works were continuing – they had to build an iconostasis. Batyushka was a carpenter. When they came to the gates, his friend, Ivan, immediately went off to the builders while batyushka continued down the path. There he saw an elder with a staff, went up to him, bowed to his feet as St. Pelagia had

told him, and said: 'Batyushka, bless me and receive me into your community!' 'And what is your occupation?' 'I'm a carpenter'. 'We need people like you,' replied the igumen. 'Have a rest from your journey, and tomorrow start on your obedience.'

"Batyushka went to the guest-house, where they gave him food and a cell for rest. The next day he began work on the iconostasis.

"Batyushka bore this obedience until he was called into the army at the age of twenty. He served in Moscow, in the Grenadiers regiment. He served two years there, and then the First World War began. He had to fight at the front. When the Manifesto on the Abdication of Tsar Nicholas was read to the soldiers, batyushka saw that the sun was eclipsed, and he thought: 'That's it, Russia has fallen!'"

The soldiers were soon disbanded. Nestor went for a short time to his homeland, but then returned to his community, "Tserkovschina". There he received the ryasophor, and then monasticism with the name Nestor. According to another account, however, he received the mantia with the name Nazarius from Elder Alexis (Goloseyevsky) of Kiev (+1916), his spiritual father, and with his blessing struggled in the Goloseyevskaya desert of the Kiev Caves Lavra.

In his community there were two hundred brothers. Once many people came to the community's patronal feast. There was not enough porridge, and the cook was worried. But as he gave out the porridge, he noticed that the porridge in the pot was increasing: "I gather it, and it grows like dough!" So he was able to feed all the worshippers.

The monastery used to send vegetables from its gardens to Moscow. Once before the Dormition they got ready an empty railway truck for tomatoes at the railway station. The superior did not want to pay for an empty railway truck and sent brothers to the station with carts full of tomatoes. The vigil service was going on while some of the brothers loaded the cart with tomatoes. When the cart arrived in Moscow and they opened it, the whole load was found to have rotted. Besides the loss in produce, they had to pay to clean up the cart. The monastery suffered other losses: horses died, and then oxen. Then the superior came to himself and ordered a thanksgiving service to the Mother of God - he thanked her that she had punished them only with the deaths of their animals, while the brothers themselves had not suffered.

When the Bolsheviks began to destroy the churches and monasteries, the brothers thought of constructing an agricultural artel in the monastery in the hope of preserving it from destruction. The superior gathered everyone to a meeting to decide whether to make this concession to the authorities, which would involve registration of the artel. However, Fr. Nazarius protested. He got up and said: "We cannot allow this!" The superior went up to him, took him by the shoulders, let him to the door and said: "Go and do not disturb the

brothers." Fr. Nazarius was offended. He turned and said to the superior: "You are now driving me out, but there will come a time when they will drive you out!"

According to another source, Fr. Nazarius left the monastery and returned to his homeland in 1926, after the closure of the community by the Bolsheviks. He did not recognize the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, which came out in 1927. But someone in the village spread the rumour that he was a "signer". People then began to look at him with suspicion, believing the accusation.

At the end of the 1920s Fr. Nazarius was living in his native village. On June 23 / July 6, 1930, he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Sergius of Narva in the cathedral of the Saviour on the Blood in Petrograd. After his ordination he looked after catacomb communities in Sumy, Kharkov and other regions of the Ukraine.

Once the believers gathered in a certain house to celebrate a feast. Among them were Fr. Nazarius and Blessed Basil Krasnokutsky, from the city of Krasny Kut. When Fr. Nazarius came in, Blessed Basil began to go round the rooms looking in all the corners and saying: "Where has he gone? Look for him! Look for him! Go there! Come here!" Fr. Nazarius thought: "That's me, probably, they're looking for me in the monastery." During lunch Blessed Basil smashed an onion into the salt and gave it to Fr. Nazarius: "Go on, eat it!" Fr. Nazarius obeyed, although it was bitter and salty. Then, when they were drinking tea, the blessed one took his cup of tea, hurled pieces of sugar into it - so many that the cup overflowed, - and gave it to Fr. Nazarius: "Drink!" Fr. Nazarius drank it. He saw this as a prophecy that his earthly life would be very bitter, and that sweetness awaited him in the life to come...

Those in the house who had entertained doubts about Fr. Nazarius did not want to go up to him for a blessing. But Blessed Basil pointed at him and said: "First go to the priest for a blessing, then to me."

After living for a while with his relatives, Fr. Nazarius went to the monastery for his books and other things that he had left in the community. The brothers told him that they had been looking for him in all the monasteries. Batyushka took his things and went to his relatives in Vinnitsa province.

There, during the celebration of Pascha, the chekists came and arrested Fr. Nazarius. The investigation lasted for a long time, and usually took place at night. When it was over, the investigator asked him:

"What do you think of Soviet power?"

"I'll tell you what it is - violent, atheist and traitorous."

"I'll pack you off to the taiga, and you'll rot there!"

Batyushka crossed himself and replied:

“I am with the Lord and will not rot in the taiga. But without God you will rot even in the towns.”

According to one source, on January 17, 1931 Fr. Nazarius was arrested in the village of Lugovka for being “a participant in the Kharkov branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and on December 14 was sentenced in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11 to three years in the camps and sent to a camp.

According to another source, however, he was sentenced to six years logging in the Kola peninsula of Murmansk province, beyond the Arctic circle. They took groups of prisoners into the taiga, threw them out of the railway trucks and ordered them: “Build yourselves barracks and work!” The prisoners were from many walks of life, and many were clergy and monastics. But everybody had their hair and beards forcibly shaved.

Some immediately refused to work for Soviet power. They stopped giving them rations, as a result of which they began to die from hunger. Batyushka went to work, and kept up the spirits of the others.

The logs cut by the prisoners were sent abroad via Murmansk. One of them wrote on a log: “These building materials have been obtained by blood.” The signature was written in blood. Some time later, a commission came from the West to check the condition of prisoners in Soviet labour camps. After this, conditions improved somewhat.

Many prisoners became weak and could not fulfil their labour norm, for which they were deprived of their rations. Fr. Nazarius, on becoming brigade leader, ascribed fulfilment of the norms to all the “weaklings” in his brigade. Inspectors came to see whether the norms had really been fulfilled as Fr. Nazarius indicated. He prayed that the Lord would cover his “guilt”. And He did: the inspectors found that the quantity of wood logged was well over the norm...

Fr. Nazarius did not have a calendar in the camp, and so did not always know when it was a feastday. Once the brigade went out to work, but no progress at all was made. They began to count the days, and it turned out that it was the feast of the Annunciation...

Batyushka’s sentence was six years, but thanks to his good work he was released after only three years. This was in 1936. He returned to his homeland, where his brother Gregory was living. There were six people in the family, and Gregory himself worked as an accountant in a collective farm.

A widow from a nearby village also lived in the house, helping with the housework. When Fr. Nazarius settled in with his brother, there were rumours

about his relationship with this woman. Because of these rumours, Gregory wanted to have a separate household in another place while leaving his brother his father's property. But Fr. Nazarius decided otherwise – he settled in the western part of the village, taking with him the widow, Christina Mironova, and his blind virgin sister, Marina. Soon they were joined by Maria Fyodorovna, who came from the same village as Christina and was a former church chanter.

Fr. Nazarius could not serve in church because he continued to reject Metropolitan Sergius. So in order to earn his living he organized a brigade of carpenters who went around working on hire.

When the Second World War began, and the territory where Fr. Nazarius lived was occupied by the Germans, he built a church in the village of V-Pisarevka, in a building that had formerly been a pharmacy, and there he began to serve. But the Germans retreated, and Fr. Nazarius decided to go with them, fearing the Soviets would again cast him into prison. Together with him went some of his spiritual children, including Maria Fyodorovna. The end of the war found them in East Germany, whence they were forcibly repatriated and thrown into the camps. Fr. Nazarius was accused of “betraying the Fatherland” and carrying out services during the German occupation. Striving to escape arrest, he began to hide with relatives, and this underground existence continued until 1967, when the police finally caught him.

At the beginning of his wanderings, from 1945 to 1950, he could not serve because he was constantly forced to move from place to place. But in 1953 he formed a little community, a “skitok”, as he liked to call it, in his native village. He used to serve at nights in the little house on the eves of Sundays and great feasts.

At the beginning of the 1950s **Archimandrite Anthony**, the last True Orthodox superior of the Kiev Caves Lavra, died and many of his spiritual children began to come to Fr. Nazarius in accordance with Fr. Anthony's blessing before he died. Then many other Catacomb Christians began to visit him at night. Denunciations were made against him, but when the police came to look for the “pope” they could not find him.

Once he was linked with **Archbishop Anthony (Galynsky-Mikhailovksy)**, who tonsured him into the schema with the name Nicodemus. However, he later came to doubt in him and left him, commemorating instead the First Hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad. He was in communion with **Fr. Nicetas Lekhan**.

However, at the beginning of 1967 the police found him in the house, sick with flu. Fr. Nazarius was so shocked by their unexpected arrival that he went completely blind. But good people looked after him, and he lived for another eight years at home, dying on night of February 4-5 (according to another source, February 13), 1975 (ns). His sister Marina (in monasticism **Martha**) had

died shortly after the arrival of the police, Maria Fyodorovna (in monasticism **Melania**) died on January 4, 1975 (ns), and a year later, on January 22, 1976 there died Christina Mironova (in monasticism **Chionia**).

One of Fr. Nazarius' disciples was **Hieromonk Pachomius**, in the world Peter Konstantinovich Petin. He was born in 1898 in the village of Pavlovka, Lebedin uyezd, Kharkov province into the family of a priest. He went to a theological seminary, and was a student on the second course of Kharkov University. In 1920 he was arrested, sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to a camp. In 1923 he was released, returned to Kharkov and served as an illegal priest, conducting secret services in the village of Bogodukhovo near Kharkov. After the death of his wife, Matushka Apollinaria, he was tonsured by Fr. Nazarius and went to Volgograd. On April 8, 1931 he was arrested for being "a participant in the Kharkov branch of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church", and on December 14 was sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to a camp. He met **Metropolitan Joseph** of Petrograd in Kazakhstan in the 1930s, and was awarded a mitre by him. On his release, Fr. Pachomius served the True Orthodox Church in Poltava. He spent the last years of his life on the outskirts of Tsaritsyn in the village of Sarepta. He died on January 10, 1985 (or 1989), and was buried in Kharkov.

*

The sisters of a catacomb community in Kharkov relate:

"Our parents belonged to the Catacomb Church for the whole of their life. Our father was condemned for the faith in 1937 and was given a sentence of 10 years, which he served in Sverdlovsk. Mama was also condemned and given 10 years, but, through the prayers of the elders, she was in prison for only 11 months. Our brother Procopius was given three years for reading the "Apostle" in church.

"Our parents went to church in the village of Veliko-Vechnoye, Krasnodar region, where **Priest Basil Paradin** served. He did not sign up to renovationism, for which big fines were imposed on him, and then he was imprisoned for 10 years. We ourselves lived in the village of Bely in Krasnodar region, and when Fr. Basil returned from the camp, all of us "Bely dwellers" wanted him to serve in our church because we all loved him.

"Seeing the desire of the people, Fr. Basil and my sister went to the bishop in the city of Krasnodar to seek permission. When they came to the bishop and asked for permission to serve in our village, the bishop looked at Fr. Basil and the young girl and said: 'If you will serve, then it will be as we tell you, we will give you a place.' But Fr. Basil replied to this: "I will serve as the Apostolic Canons says, not as you say'. To this the hierarch and the commissar shouted: 'Get out of here! They didn't give you much, you should have had 10 more years'

“When Fr. Basil returned without obtaining success, he settled in an old woman’s cow-shed, whose walls were plastered with wet clay. There he lived for more than two years. The mistress did not allow people to go to him, fearing that batyushka be betrayed, and she herself was frightened of being arrested. I was 16 years old, I often went during the day and brought him things to eat, while the older people could go only at night. That is how he lived, but in the third year his daughter took him to live with her in Riga and there was no more news of him. That was after the war.” (Reminiscences of P.M.)

“My nephew on my husband’s side, Nina Gerasimovna Gladkaya, married Michael Dmitrievich Gladky, and they lived in Otrubny farm, Krasnoarmejsky district, Krasnodar region. Misha died in 1990, he was a very believing and hospitable man. Once a wandering woman came to him and asked for alms. Misha took her and let her live in his own house. This wanderer Pelagia knew Fr. Pimen. Misha was sorry for him, and he invited Fr. Pimen to live in his house. Before that he had lived with Mama Martha Efremovna, a very believing and God-fearing woman.

“**Fr. Pimen Leontievich Zavada** was from the Kuban Cossacks, he served in the church as a deacon. After 1927 he was arrested and condemned to prison for 10 years. There he was secretly ordained together with Fr. Alexis. They said to them: ‘Go into the world and serve in hidden places, continue the Orthodox faith. But we will be shot tonight.’ I don’t know who ordained him. After being released, he lived ‘on a wolf’s ticket’, without documents. When he returned from prison, he learned that his wife had married, he had nowhere to live and he went around the world. His family rejected him, saying: ‘Don’t spoil our careers’.

“When Fr. Pimen was living with Misha, he gave him food, shoes and clothing, and when Misha married, Fr. Pimen left them and went to the cemetery. There he dug out a dug-out for himself, made an altar and prayed. Believers came to him to pray. I also was in his cell. It had no bed, no reserve of food; there was only a stove and a narrow ledge. I said to him: ‘Fr. Pimen, it’s a very narrow ledge!’ He replied: ‘That’s good, when I turn and fall down, I get up to pray to God. If I made it more comfortable, I would sleep through my time of prayer’.

“Batyushka went round the hamlet where the poor widows lived. He cut wood for them, repaired their roofs, and took no payment for it. When they asked him: ‘How can we thank you?’ he replied: ‘Bring me something to eat’. He ate once a day. He used to tell me: ‘Sometimes two or three women come at once, and sometimes nobody brings anything for two or three days. If I feel weak, I go to Misha and ask him for food. Lord save him, he has never refused, he always gives me food.’

“Fr. Pimen always went around in a cassock and wearing a cross on his chest. Once he had to go the town, and a policeman was walking on the street.

He took hold of his cross and shouted: 'This is already out of fashion, take it off!' But Fr. Pimen took hold of his epaulettes and said: 'You've put on epaulettes, but this is also out of fashion!' The street was full of people, and the policeman out of shame hid in the crowd, while batyushka went about his own business.

"He was very strict and fulfilled the whole Law of God. He taught the same to others, and demanded justice. He told people to bury him in the dug-out where he lived. He fell ill and was tormented by a hernia. Misha suggested that he go to hospital. But he said: 'I will not go and ask help from the Godless, I will accept what God gives!' He died from appendicitis, saying: 'It is not necessary to do an operation. I am a priest, a layman should not touch me. Let Fr. Alexis reclothe me when I die.'

Fr. Pimen died in Misha's house, and Misha buried him, according to his will, in his cell and put a cross on the grave. Batyushka died in 1962, and Fr. Alexis Kozyaev celebrated the funeral service. All the widows wept for him, all those whom he had helped, and they venerated him as a good pastor. Misha and Mama always lit a lamp on his grave. I do not know Fr. Pimen's surname, nor where he lived, and I don't know his homeland - for some reason it didn't interest me, and I was too shy to ask.

"Then many people said that they saw burning lights at night on batyushka's grave, and heard singing, although there was nobody there." (Reminiscences of Nun A. (M.))

"**Fr. Alexis Kozyaev** lived in the stanitsa Staro-Nizhe-Steblyevskaya, Krasnodar region. The niece of my sister A. married in that region, and her husband prayed with Fr. Alexis and introduced us to him in 1953. We were often at batyushka's, although he lived 60 kilometres from us. He was married, had a matushka and daughters, but did not live with them, since matushka went to the open church. But he built a little hut in the courtyard and served there. Fr. Alexis was a great man of prayer, a faster, but he was also strict. He had the gift of clairvoyance.

"There were times when you would be leaving Fr. Alexis and some drunkard would pass by and shout: 'She's coming from the priest, she's stinking of the priest, she's bringing stinking water from the priest'.

"My brother Demetrius had an operation, and the wound wouldn't heal. I tearfully went to him to serve a moleben, and he said: 'Don't cry, your brother will get better'. I brought some water from him and gave it to my brother. His wound quickly began to heal and he got better.

"In the 1930s Fr. Alexis had been condemned for 25 years, and then was sentenced to be shot. [He was arrested several times for belonging to the True Orthodox Church.] When they were taking him to the place of execution, he heard a voice: 'Run!' And he ran into the wood, with the soldiers after him. He

hadn't run very far, when he sat under a tree and began to pray to the Mother of God. He saw four soldiers coming next to him, looking for him. One passed a metre away from him but did not see him. He was hidden from them, invisible, and he saw them leaving without finding him. Fr. Alexis hid for a long time, I write this from his words.

"Batyushka had the gift of clairvoyance. One young woman came to him and said: "Tell me in all strictness about your sin, you've brought such an evil smell into my cell that I cannot breathe.' She fell at his feet, sobbed and asked him to pray for her...

"Once he came to the village, and we had a little shop on the street near the yard, where the neighbours came together with us on Soviet feastdays to chatter and judge others. There was no way he could have known about this. But he looked at us and said strictly: 'Is this your shop?' ... How he looked right through my sister and me! We escorted Fr. Alexis and immediately broke down the shop, so as no longer to bring a sin upon our souls.

"Once my brother Demetrius had an operation, but the wound would not heal. I tearfully went to serve a moleben, but batyushka said: 'Don't cry, your brother will get better.' I brought some holy water from batyushka and gave it to my brother, and his wound quickly healed and he got better.

"I want to tell you about the miracles of God of which I was a witness. We had a church in the village which they closed and made into a club. Once they said that they were going to show films in it, this was the first opening of the 'club'. Everything was still as it always had been in the church, even the iconostasis and the icons were still there. They installed benches, hung up a screen and the film-show began. About half an hour had passed, when suddenly people began to shout that there was somebody behind - they jumped up and hurled themselves towards the exit, the ones in front fell on the floor or crawled under the benches. What happened? As many people said later, the holy Great Martyr George the Victory-bearer came out of his icon on the iconostasis on a horse. He put his spear in a horizontal position and galloped towards the people, who began to run away out of fear. But that was not the end of it. They got together some of the people, if not all, and continued the showing of the film. It was being shown by a mechanic and his assistant. And suddenly in the choir above they began to sing the Cherubic hymn, and so loudly that the film was barely audible. They all immediately decided that it was believers who had crept in and wanted to interrupt the showing of the film. So about seven members of the komsomol climbed the stairs to catch them all and bring them down. Then, as they themselves recounted, when they had gone up the stairs into the choir, they saw that there was nobody there. They stood in bewilderment and could not understand how the singers could have run away. Suddenly right in the middle of them invisible singers began singing the Cherubic hymn. Haunted by an unknown fear, they rushed down, but, not knowing the way, they pushed and trampled on each other. And the assistant of the mechanic, who was running in front, suddenly fell, and all the others ran

over him since there was no other way out because of the confined space. Having run down, they rushed out into the street. Now the showing of the film was finally stopped. The assistant of the mechanic was ill for a month and then died. The mechanic left, and nobody could be induced to work as a mechanic in the club for any money. So from that time they stopped showing films in it."

"Batyushka died on December 16, 1968 and was buried in the stanitsa. His daughter V. is living in the city of Krasnodar, and we are still corresponding."
(Reminiscences of P.M.)

91. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR THEODORE OF BELARUS' **(+1975)**

And those with him

Archimandrite Theodore, in the world Theodore Andreyevich Rafanovich, was born in Belorussia in the village of Khanichi in Mogilev region.

Once as a child he wandered into the rye and came across a wolf. Thinking that it was a dog, he began to beat and shoo it away. Then some adults came up, and recognizing the "dog" to be a wolf, drove it away.

His father used to sing on the cliros in the local church. And the boy was sent to study in Mogilev seminary, where he was the only non-smoker among the students. But Theodore was orphaned when quite young, and it was left to his sister, Anna Andreyevna, to care for his education. Since he was not a quick learner, she wrote to Fr. John of Kronstadt asking him to pray for him. Soon she received a reply from Fr. John:

"I have prayed for your brother".

Immediately Theodore showed a dramatic improvement in his performance.

On leaving the seminary, Fr. Theodore married, was ordained to the priesthood and was sent to a parish 30 miles from Gomel in the village of Sherstin. His wife was called Sophia, and they had five children - George, Nicholas, Andrew, Natalia and Zinaida. Nicholas and George perished during the war.

Fr. Theodore was a very zealous priest, and many people came to his services and to seek his advice from the surrounding districts. In 1922, when renovationism began, he and his friend Fr. Paul (Levashov) were among the few priests who stood firmly for Orthodoxy, for which he was awarded a pectoral cross by Patriarch Tikhon on April 1/14, 1924. People came to him from many regions, abandoning their renovationist pastors, as a result of which he acquired a large parish.

Patriarch Tikhon sent a bishop to the Gomel region in order to receive penitent renovationist clergy back into the Church. At that time many repented and returned to the Orthodox Faith. But on his return journey this bishop was arrested by the authorities and sent to a camp. Fr. Theodore was under constant observation by the authorities during this period.

Once in their ignorance the servant of God Anna and her brother put their signatures to a document "on behalf of the Living Church". When they told Fr. Theodore about this, he clutched his head and said:

"What have you done! Have you got any golden coins? Take them to those who collected your signatures and ask them to blot out your signatures."

Anna and her brother did as they were told. Their signatures were blotted out.

Later, Fr. Theodore was forced to leave his Sherstin parish and serve in the Chernigov district. There he was arrested and sent to the Kotlas camp. According to some sources, he was for a time in Gomel prison.

When Fr. Theodore was in prison he was sentenced to be shot. The sentence was appointed for the following day. That evening Fr. Theodore was praying in his solitary underground cell. Suddenly he heard chanting beside him:

"Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy..."

He turned round and saw a vision - a multitude of reposed souls were standing behind him with burning candles in their hands. They were chanting these words of prayer and beseeching God to deliver Fr. Theodore from death. The next morning the decree concerning Fr. Theodore's execution was repealed.

While he was in prison, Fr. Theodore refused to take some milk because it was a fasting period. The Mother of God appeared to him and said:

"Servant of God, drink the milk."

After this he accepted it with gratitude and drank it.

He once had another vision of the Mother of God. She was walking over the earth so weightlessly that the grass and flowers did not even sway under her feet.

Once during winter in the camp he was carrying water, and the water splashed over him. His hands began to freeze, and he called on the Mother of God:

"Queen of heaven, warm me!"

Immediately his hands became hot, and even the water became hot.

"But the people around me were freezing," recalled Fr. Theodore.

When Fr. Theodore returned from prison his wife had died. He remained alone in the rank of a protopriest. And since he had no flock, he used to wander round the marshes praying:

"Mother of God, gather together my children for me."

And she brought them to him from all over Belorussia.

"I gathered you all through the Mother of God," he later said, "and I entrust you all to her."

Therefore he would grieve deeply and weep when one of them left him.

In 1927 Fr. Theodore refused to recognize the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, which placed the Church in submission to the atheists, and had to serve in house churches. The authorities searched for him, but Fr. Theodore constantly changed his domicile and escaped from his persecutors. Knowing of his loyalty to the true faith, many people came to him for spiritual support from the renovationists and sergianists.

Fr. Theodore was well hidden by reliable people. New people who wanted to come to him would have to spend a great deal of time and effort to persuade those close to him to let them meet batyushka.

In about 1939, Fr. Theodore was again arrested. It was winter. In the village of Strelki some people were waiting to receive communion from him. Batyushka was brought to them in a cart covered with straw. But then he was arrested and taken by train under convoy from Rogachev to Gomel. All his things were taken, and he was left only with his passport and his comb. As the train came into Saltanovka station, his guards fell asleep, and Fr. Theodore, remembering that he knew a Xenia there, quickly jumped off the train. It was snowing. Fr. Theodore lost his way, and sat down to die. Suddenly he heard some voices urging on a horse. They came up to him:

"Where are you going?" they asked.

"I'm going to Claudia Alexeyevna in Selevanikha - she's my daughter-in-law," he replied.

Claudia Alexeyevna was a teacher and lived with Xenia in the house of Matushka Matveyevna. Having reached Matushka's house, Fr. Theodore knocked on the window. The mistress of the house was aghast. He was frozen, wet and exhausted. They warmed him and gave him some fresh clothes.

In the morning Stepanida ran into the hut, and, learning that Fr. Theodore was there, called Tatiana. Since a stranger, a teacher, was living in the house, Fr. Theodore had to move immediately to another place. He went with Tatiana to the village of Ugly. On their way they saw a man in a black overcoat running towards them.

"That's it! A policemen's after us!" went through their heads.

But it was a false alarm: the man, who worked on the railways, passed by them without touching them.

That day was the feast of the Forty Martyrs (March 9 according to the Church calendar), and Fr. Theodore served a service to them with the master of the house John, his wife and daughter and Tatiana helping him. After this rumours circulated to the effect that Fr. Theodore had been arrested, but that he had managed to run away and was again at liberty. Those to whom he had been going for a service just before his arrest were delighted at the news.

During the war, when Belorussia was occupied by the Germans, Fr. Theodore came out of the catacombs and began to serve openly. He served in the church in the village of Obidovichi in Rogachev district, and also in a church in Gorodtsy. In his sermons he angrily denounced Soviet power.

"He gives such sermons about the communists," said some Sovietized people, "that if the Russians were here they would tear him to pieces."

He would angrily denounce Soviet power, the communists and their Moscow Patriarchate. For this he was persecuted by the authorities not only as a secret priest, but also as a zealous opponent of the whole Soviet regime.

When the Germans retreated, the church in Obidovichi burned to the ground. The Soviet armies arrived. By this time Fr. Theodore was no longer serving openly, but at home. He was summoned to the village soviet and warned:

"If you want to serve, go to a parish, old man!"

The clairvoyant Matushka Paulina from Gomel told him to hide, and he, following her advice, began to live secretly with his spiritual children in Belorussia.

"At night people would come to him, but during the day - never," remembers the servant of God T.

70 people would gather round batyushka by night. When there was a danger, noone would come. Sometimes his spiritual children would crawl up to the house on hands and knees. Some parishioners who are still alive remember the unexpected joy they had:

"What joy it was going to him. It was wonderful - through the rye and the oats!" remembers Abbess M.

Once Fr. Theodore was recognized by the GPU at a station. He was arrested. Then they took him through the villages under arrest, until some believers in Osipovichi ransomed him for 500 rubles.

Once, when Fr. Theodore was being hunted by the GPU, the president of the local soviet, who was a Jew, came to the hut where he was living. At that moment Fr. Theodore was praying with his prayer-rope. The man asked him who he was. Fr. Theodore said that he was a wanderer - they did not touch him.

In 1946 some people from the KGB went to the elder Peter Razumovsky (who by many accounts was a secret bishop) and began to demand that he reveal to them where Fr. Theodor was living. The elder only replied:

"I don't know where he is, but I will tell you one thing: the Holy Spirit is upon him! Fear him - he will strike you!"

Fr. Theodore was clairvoyant. If a person came to him with an offering but was secretly begrudging it, Fr. Theodore would be able to read his thoughts and would meet him with the words:

"To give or not to give?"

From others, however, he would accept offerings with gratitude.

Once Fr. Theodore was serving the Liturgy in a wooden cabin. After the service, he refused the food that was offered him, sat down and began to weep like a child.

"Take me away from here - out of this farmstead," he repeated insistently.

Now there was some rye growing on this farmstead. They took him there, and immediately after the police descended upon the house. They were looking for Fr. Theodore and turned the whole house upside down, sticking their rifle butts into everything possible. By that time Fr. Theodore had managed to go from the farmstead rye into the collective farm rye, which began just at that point, and to hide there.

It was in about 1956-57, at the feast of the Protecting Veil in October. A KGB agent came to the house of Fr. Theodore's reader at just the time that Fr. Theodore was in the house. The reader did not let the KGB agent beyond the door of her house, and he, after looking round on both sides, went away. In this village there worked another KGB agent, and the first agent, going to him, said that in the house of the reader there was a priest whom they were just about to arrest. This second agent had a believing mother who also went to Fr. Theodore. Her son warned her that she should not go to the house where the secret priest was serving - otherwise they would arrest her, too. She passed what she had heard on to her daughter-in-law, who ran and told everything to another woman from Fr. Theodore's flock.

"Don't worry - there's no one there", said this woman soothingly.

But immediately the first woman had gone she ran to Fr. Theodore and warned him. At that moment Fr. Theodore was doing the proskomedia, and the house was full of people who had assembled for the feast of the Protecting Veil. On hearing about the coming raid, the people became very anxious. Fr. Theodore turned to them and said:

"Don't go anywhere! Everyone make 36 signs of the cross on the doors and all round."

All the adults and children carried out this obedience fervently with their prayer-ropes.

"Let noone leave the Liturgy!" warned Fr. Theodore again.

And the master of the house added: "May the power and will of God be done!"

Everyone stood up to pray and the service began. They prayed very fervently, expecting that they would be arrested the next day. Everyone wept as they read the akathist to the Mother of God. Fr. Theodore calmed them all and said in his sermon:

"If God does not wish it, they can do nothing to us. Then even if hell were let loose, the Lord would not allow it!"

That is what happened this time - the service ended and everyone dispersed without trouble to their homes.

One of the places where Fr. Theodore lived was the village of Khymy. People would come to him there from distant places, passing points in which there were the houses of his parishioners. A kind of "post office" operated in these houses, and in them people could learn about any danger that was threatening.

The village of Khymy consisted of three parallel streets, on the last of which lived Fr. Theodore. The neighbours knew that in this house there lived a priest. 60-70 used to come to Fr. Theodore at this time. So as to be next to their batyushka, the members of his flock would sometimes organize their work on the spot. So the future Metropolitan E. pastured cows there for three years, while Abbess M. lived in Khymy for three months, having got work there preparing peat. She had to go to work in the morning, and for her sake Fr. Theodore began the service at 4 in the morning. Usually he began the service at 5 or 6 o'clock and served until 5 or 6 in the evening. Confessions would take a long time with him. He usually served alone, in a white podryasnik.

A woman who belonged to Fr. Theodore's flock worked in the nearby Beletsky peat factory. She learned in the factory that a raid on Fr. Theodore was being planned, and soon a message went out through the "post office" that people should not go to Fr. Theodore any more. They say that at this time some

people were returning from Fr. Theodore carrying holy water and prosphoras. On the road they noticed a parked "Kozlik" car. It was dark, and the car followed them keeping them always in its headlights. Realizing that they were being followed, the Christians waited until they came to some thickets. Then they turned sharply off the road and managed to hide.

Another woman in Fr. Theodore's flock got to know a secret detective who was pretending to be a believer. In her ignorance she gave him all the addresses where Fr. Theodore usually served. Soon the KGB summoned her and gave her an exact account of her conversation with the detective "Christian". The police went to all the addresses on the list. They did not find Fr. Theodore because the woman had not told the detective about the house in Khymy, where Fr. Theodore happened to be at that moment.

The police would take three houses of Fr. Theodore's parishioners and search them from top to bottom. But he was not there - he had managed to hide. Once the police came to a house where he was staying, and he again managed to hide. However, the mistress of the house, Pimenikha, was so frightened that she died from fear. It was particularly difficult for people to gather at Fr. Theodore's houses when Khrushchev came to power.

In the course of 20 years Fr. Theodore managed to gather a flock of about 1000 people. People would come to him from Mogilev, Minsk and Bryansk districts.

In the course of 20 years Fr. Theodore managed to gather a flock of about 1000 people. People would come to him from Mogilev, Minsk and Bryansk districts.

Fr. Theodore was a strict priest, but at the same time he was very attentive and loving. For example, there is the following incident from the childhood of Metropolitan E. He was tending the cows, and fell ill. It was a fasting period. Fr. Theodore came to him and said:

"Eat fish."

E. began to refuse: "How can I eat fish during a fast? I won't!"

"You're ill, eat fish," insisted batyushka.

The sick boy stubbornly refused. But Fr. Theodore did not go away until he had fed him.

One woman told him that she had such-and-such a job and lived in such-and-such conditions, which made it impossible for her to eat only fasting food during the fast, however much she wanted to.

"Well, what can you do, eat what you're eating, that's the kind of work you have," replied Fr. Theodore.

Fr. Theodore was against his spiritual children going to the collective farms, which he could not stand.

His parishioners asked him how they were to behave when they found themselves beside ruined churches or churches in which the Moscow Patriarchate served. He said that in such cases the church buildings had once served Orthodoxy, and should be treated with respect. On going up to one such church, they should stop, look up to heaven and say:

"O Lord, Thy grace has departed to the heavens."

After this they should cross themselves and stand for a little.

Fr. Theodore strictly forbade his spiritual children to go the churches of the Moscow Patriarchate, and that it was not right even to socialize with those who went to those churches. He would be particularly strict about this with those who were somewhat negligent in this respect. He said that one could go into the churches of the Moscow Patriarchate only for one reason - to venerate the holy things - the wonderworking icons, the holy relics and the cross. Relics and the cross, he said, retain their grace-filled power until the end of the world.

"In the Soviet churches they won't baptize your children, they'll 'red-star-ize' them," he said. (This is a play on words in Russian: "Nye okrestyat, a ozvvezdyat".)

He strictly forbade people to baptize or be married in the churches of the Moscow Patriarchate, and gave a penance to anybody who ignored this command.

This is what he told his spiritual children:

"If you go into a church of the Moscow Patriarchate and you decide to stand a little and see how their service goes, remember that you are not allowed to pray even one prayer with them. So don't get carried away by their chanting in case you begin to pray with them. Let's say they are singing 'Holy God', and then they cross themselves. Don't cross yourselves at the same time, but wait until they've done it, then you can cross yourselves."

As a rule, the "Theodorites" went into the churches of the patriarchate only in order to venerate the holy things before or after the service.

Fr. Theodore used to tell his spiritual children the following:

"The communists have been hurled at the Church like a crazy dog. Their Soviet emblem - the hammer and sickle - corresponds to their mission. With

the hammer they beat people over the head, and with the sickle they mow down the churches. But then the Masons will remove the communists and take control of Russia. Priests will come from the West who will both go to hell themselves and will drag you down with them."

Fr. Theodore would carry with him everything he needed for serving. He had only one great need - a bishop. Fr. Theodore was very sad because he could not find a true bishop of the Catacomb Church. However, some of his spiritual children who lived in the south of Russia informed him that in their region there lived a Catacomb bishop, Anthony (Galynsky-Mikhailovsky), who had just been freed from prison. In 1956 or a little later, Archbishop Anthony was planning to visit Kiev, and he invited Fr. Theodore to visit him. It was a touching meeting, and Fr. Theodore, recognizing a true hierarch, placed himself under his omophorion.

"He is not an earthly man," he said. "Although I am sick and weak I stood through the whole service"

When Fr. Theodore was living in Khymy, someone betrayed his whereabouts and the authorities burst it looking for him. However, the local president helped him - although he knew that Fr. Theodore was there, he told the searchers:

"He hasn't lived with us for a long time."

This averted the danger for a certain time, but the person who really saved Fr. Theodore then was a certain Alexander who put Fr. Theodore onto his motorcycle and drove him to his home in Gomel. So Fr. Theodore settled secretly in Gomel with Alexander and his wife Anfisa. Their home was just opposite the police-station!

Some time later, however, Alexander died through electrocution and Fr. Theodore left his flat and returned to Khymy. Fr. Theodore performed Alexander's funeral service in the following fashion. The coffin with the body lay on the first floor of the house, while he read the service standing on the second floor.. On the ninth day after Alexander's repose a fiery pillar was seen over his grave. As a result Fr. Theodore asked to be buried in the cemetery next to him.

In the town of Svetlogorsk there lives Fr. Theodore's daughter, Natalya. During his life the police often visited her, looking for him. They tried to force her by threats and violence to reveal the whereabouts of her father. When she refused they beat her and even threatened to rape her. Her husband ran away since they threatened him with shooting for hiding Fr. Theodore.

Once when two policemen were searching the house, a miracle took place. Before they arrived Natalya succeeded in lying down stock-still on a trunk. But

the Lord turned away their eyes so that they did not see her. One of them even began to lift the lid of the trunk, but, without noticing her, said:

"How heavy this is!"

The other policeman told him to leave the trunk in peace. So they left without seeing or touching her.

Abess M. says that in the last four years of his life Fr. Theodore was very poorly. He could hardly move and his mind became somewhat clouded and a childlike quality began to appear in him. All the same he continued to serve and feed the people, helped by a novice nun.

Fr. Theodore died in the village of Khymy on Palm Sunday, the feast of the Vilnius martyrs - April 14/27, 1975. This coincided with Radonitsa that year. When he died his daughter and her husband came to Hieromonk E. at three o'clock in the morning and handed him a letter from Archbishop Anthony with the command to perform the funeral service for Fr. Theodore. E. sat in the car with them and on arriving carried out the funeral service. (Archbishop Anthony had been informed that Fr. Theodore was dying by a nun who came to tell him.)

Metropolitan E. says that Archbishop Anthony had ordered that Fr. Theodore be buried in the cemetery. But when he died, the lady of the house in which he was living secretly was frightened to bury him in a cemetery, fearing that through this the authorities would find out that a catacomb priest had been hiding with her. She insisted that Fr. Theodore be buried next to her house. Fr. Theodore's daughter agreed with this.

And so he was buried at night under the wall of her house, wearing the golden cross which his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon had given him during the years of struggle with renovationism. The owners of this house were also frightened about the sacred vessels in which Fr. Theodore had served, as well as his other things. So some time later Nun A. came and handed them over to Hieromonk E.

Perhaps because of this disobedience with regard to Archbishop Anthony's command, this house burned down at the beginning of the 1980s, and Fr. Theodore's coffin was covered with logs.

In the second week of Pascha, 1992, members of Fr. Theodore's flock who had recently left the Catacomb Church and joined the Russian Church Abroad prepared a place in a cemetery for his burial, together with everything that was necessary, and with the participation of his daughter, grandsons and spiritual children, Fr. Theodore's remains were transferred there.

After Fr. Theodore's death several members of his flock went to no other person for spiritual sustenance. They had the impression that Fr. Theodore was the only true pastor.

*

Michael Yakovlevich Rusalenko was born and lived in the village of Otruby in the Gomel region of Belorussia. His wife was called Irina. He had five children - three sons and two daughters. The eldest of the sons was called Basil, the middle one - Andrew and the youngest - John. Only Andrew is still alive. The Rusalenkos were a believing family, and suffered misfortunes with Christian patience. Thus once their house burned down and they had to move into another one.

Until 1927 the Rusalenkos went to worship in the church in Markovichi. However, when the confessing priest Fr. Theodore (Rafanovich) appeared in the region, they went to him, although he served some distance away, on the other side of Gomel.

Many people would come to the Rusalenkos' house to pray. They came in the winter and in the summer and stayed for a long time, for weeks on end. Michael had many service books. He was illiterate, but was teaching himself to read. When they prayed, he would read from the books as well as he could, or one of the visitors would read.

The Rusalenkos knew that the Soviet authorities would not forgive their way of life and would probably arrest them. The three brothers could be arrested because although they were adult they refused to serve in the army. Knowing that, they hid in the woods. There they cut brushwood for baskets which they sold to the state. They also lived on the produce of their kitchen garden. Meanwhile, Irina did the housework.

The first to be arrested was Michael himself. They came for him at night and took him away. At that moment the sons were not at home but were cutting brushwood in the woods. Michael had no time to say goodbye to anyone or take any of his things. This took place in the 1930s, when very large numbers of believers were being arrested.

After a time they also arrested the sons. It happened as follows. Andrew had gone out fishing, and the others heard news that he had been arrested on the road and accused of evading military service in the Red Army. His family then began to sing the akathist to St. Nicholas. As they were chanting, Andrew came in!

"Quiet," he said. "I've slipped out of prison."

What had happened was that when the authorities had let the prisoners out to have a walk, Andrew had looked around to see where he could hide and had

hidden behind a pile of branches tied up in bundles. The authorities then went out with a dog to look for him. But although the dog passed just next to the branches, he did not detect Andrew - God saved him. Then, after waiting until evening, he got out through the fence and returned home.

After this he was in constant hiding. Sometimes he would come home at night and go off with his brothers to a distant village where they did not know him in order to earn some money. At that time none of the three brothers yet had families.

Around the beginning of the war, Basil was arrested. Then they took Andrew and John. They were caught when their cousin, who was going into the army, came to say goodbye to them. But he was being followed. Andrew was taken immediately. John managed to hide in the hen-house, but a local woman discovered him there, and he was dragged out and arrested.

Only the women remained at home. At that time, if a prisoner was going to be released, they usually came to his relatives and got a coat for him. But no-one came to get a coat for the Rusalenkos. And there were no letters from the brothers, either. People told the family that the brothers had been shot. But then, after the war, all three brothers unexpectedly returned home from the camps. Basil was five years in the camps. John was there longest - eight years.

The brothers married and had children. They were not arrested again. However, they and their mother continued to go to the catacomb priest Fr. Theodore, and had no communion with the Moscow Patriarchate.

However, Michael never returned home, and no news was heard of him. He disappeared without a trace. Only much later did his family hear that he had been unjustly killed.

*

Micah Afanasievich Logvin was born between 1895 and 1897 in a Belorussian peasant family. He lived in Mogilev district in the village of Topilo. He was married and had six children - three sons and three daughters.

Under Soviet power his family was dekulakized. The barn and sheds were taken away, and the village soviet moved into the farmhouse. Micah's family began to live in the courtyard of the collective farm, where they kept the cabbage and potatoes, etc. They were believers. Before, when Micah went to church, before the Orthodox priests were expelled from it, he had taught people to stand quietly without moving during the services. He did not go to the red church. Many came to his home to pray from other villages. He had books for this purpose, and his brother was able to read a little from them.

The local council was informed of the fact that people were gathering in Micah's house to pray. A "troika" condemned him to ten years in prison. It was 1936.

Micah Afanasievich's son, Michael Mikheyevich, was born in 1920. He was a believer. Like his parents, he did not go to the red church. And in accordance with the advice of the old men, Michael refused to serve in the God-fighting Red Army. In 1940 he was tried, and during the trial his friends whispered to him to take up arms and join the army. But the old men told him not to do that, and Micah followed their advice, which was more pleasing to God. He was sentenced to a term of exile, which he carried out in Chimkent in Kazakhstan. He used to write letters home from there.

During the war Micah Afanasievich had served out his term of imprisonment in the Far East. Then they told them to choose for themselves a place of exile - excluding home, of course. In the end Micah landed up in Kazakhstan because his son Michael was there.

While in Chimkent, Micah became friendly with the exiled priest Fr. Andrew. Fr. Andrew wanted Michael to marry his daughter Lyuba. But he married someone else.

During his exile Micah Afanasievich worked at a mill. It is generally hot in Kazakhstan, and particularly so in a mill. His heart was already in a bad way, and it now gave out. According to one source he died in 1950. Fr. Andrew carried out the funeral service and sent photographs of Micah in his coffin and himself and daughter to Micah's relatives in Belorussia.

Michael lived with his wife for eight years and had a child from her. When the child was seven years old, his gall-bladder burst and he died. His relatives in Byelorussia asked the Tikhonite priest Fr. Theodore Rafanovich to serve pannikhidas for him (on the fortieth day and so on). Fr. Theodore did not know Michael before his arrest, although he had heard about him.

After the arrest of her husband, Micah's wife and Michael's grandmother looked after the education of their children, and all of them, except one, were brought up in the faith. Her priest until her death was Fr. Theodore, and before her death she received the monastic tonsure.

92. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR ANTHONY (GALYSNKY- MIKHAILOVSKY), ARCHBISHOP, OF KIEV (+1976)

and those with him

Although there are many witnesses to the life and work of this outstanding hierarch, the sources give confused and often contradictory information about his biography, probably because of a systematic confusion with another confessor, Tikhon Ivanovich Galynsky, a peasant whose name he took for reasons that will become clear below.

Archbishop Anthony, in the world Ivan Ilyich Mikhailovich, was born, according to one source, in 1887, and according to another, on August 10, 1889. According to the one source, he was born in Jerusalem while his mother was on a pilgrimage there, but according to the other - in the village of Semenovka, Bezhitsky uyezd, Bryansk district.

"I was born in Jerusalem and baptized in the Jordan," he used to say with a flourish.

According to the FSB, from the age of sixteen he (or, more likely, Tikhon Ivanovich) worked for the landowners Zemtsov and Ivanov, and then as a miner in the "Olga" mine, in the Yuzovka factory, in the factory hospital and as a teacher. In Yuzovka he was called by the communist Kalitsyn to distribute proclamations and literature of a revolutionary character. In 1910 he was called into the army. In 1912 he passed an exam to enter the Tbilisi military school of Great Prince Michael Nikolayevich. In 1915, after finishing an accelerated four-month course in Tbilisi for ensigns, he became an ensign in August, commanding a company of the 154th Derbent regiment. In March, 1916, since he had been recommended for a George cross fourth class, he was appointed to take the captured standards of the enemy to the Tsar in Stavka. However, he did not go because he was wounded on April 27, in the village of Barnakoval. He was treated in the field hospital of Princess Baryatinskaya in Yalta, and then in a military hospital in Kiev. Here he met Hieromonk Paul Florensky of the Kiev Mikhailovsky monastery, who persuaded him to devote the rest of his life to church-religious activity.

It is known that the future Archbishop Anthony went to a seminary and graduated from a Theological Academy. He knew six languages. They say that he was made a member of an Orthodox mission that was sent to preach in some foreign country (according to some sources, this was Turkey). There were fifty people altogether in this mission. An armed band of horsemen with sabres fell on them in the desert. The missionaries were all killed except for Anthony, who managed to hide in a hollow or (according to another source) under a ledge overhanging the sea.

On January 30, 1913, Metropolitan Vladimir ordained him to the rank of hieromonk in the Moscow cathedral of the Theophany. (According to another

source, he was ordained in 1916.) According to one source, on June 29, 1922 he was consecrated to the episcopate with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon in the Moscow cathedral of St. Tryphon in which Fr. Anthony was serving. His episcopal consecration was carried out by Metropolitans Boris and Arsenius, Archbishops Ambrose (Smirnov) and Seraphim (Ostroumov) and others.

However, according to Schema-Nun Leokadia and another source, he was consecrated Bishop of Orel, a vicariate of the Bryansk diocese, with the blessing of Patriarch Tikhon, in 1923. His consecrators were: Bishops Juvenal (Maslovsky), Bassian (Piatnitsky) and Agathangel (Sadkovsky). There may be a link between these two versions of the consecration insofar as Archbishop Seraphim (Ostroumov), who was one of the consecrators according to the first version, functioned in the 1920s as Bishop of Orel, which is the see to which Bishop Anthony was appointed according to the second version.

It appears that Bishop Anthony wanted to leave the Soviet Union together with the clergy that were accompanying the White Army into emigration. But Patriarch Tikhon said to him:

"Stay here - you will suffer together with your people."

This patriarchal blessing defined the whole future life of Vladyka.

Vladyka Anthony's duties as a bishop included going round the dioceses of the Russian Church and checking on the canonical purity of their life.

According to one source, Vladyka Anthony fell into renovationism, but repented in about 1925 and was exiled to Vyatka. According to the same source, however, in December, 1927 he was received into communion - perhaps when they were both exiled to the Vyatka region - by Hieromartyr Victor (Ostrovidov), one of the strictest anti-sergianists. Therefore the report is very likely accurate that when Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) issued his notorious declaration in 1927, which put the Russian Church into subjection to the God-hating Bolsheviks, Bishop Anthony refused to recognize it.

He also rejected all the other renovationist declarations that the Soviet authorities gave him to sign. They tried to bribe him by offering him various privileges (they say these included a car with a chauffeur), but he remained unbending. Among other things they demanded that he recognize the canonicity of a renovationist clause to the effect that baptism of babies by pouring was permissible. Vladyka declared that this was not permissible according to the apostolic canons, which prescribe that baptism must be performed by threefold full immersion. In 1927 or 1928 he was imprisoned for refusing to sign this.

When he was still serving openly a man came and confessed to him that he had been about to shoot him during a service, but had been unable to.

Apparently the crime had been averted by the power of the cross - Vladyka had just made the sign of the cross over the whole people and the church.

According to another source, however, he fell away into sergianism in 1928, was exiled to Krasnoyarsk, and there was received into communion by the Catacomb Bishop Amphilochius of Krasnoyarsk, about which Vladyka preserved a document. Then, in 1932, according to this version of events, he fell into Gregorianism, a schism similar to sergianism, renounced the priesthood in 1933, and was arrested in 1938.

According to another source, Vladyka was arrested in about 1933 and sent to Ukhtizhlag, from where he was freed in about 1946. He spent 20 years in all in the prisons and camps. They say that he was arrested three times, and his last arrest took place in 1946, but his parishioner Tatyana says that he was arrested about 10 times.

While in prison, Vladyka strengthened the believing prisoners, telling them that as long as Metropolitan Peter (Polyansky) was Patriarchal locum tenens they could pray for him as for the first hierarch of the Church. According to one nun who had been with him in prison, he used to tell prisoners who were being brought for interrogation when such-and-such a feast was, because many of them had forgotten the exact dates of the feasts while in exile.

According to the same source, while in exile in Komi ASSR, on July 29, 1937, Vladyka Anthony was raised to the rank of archbishop by three other exiled hierarchs - Metropolitan Anatolius, rector of the Kiev Theological Academy, Archbishop Bassian (Pyatnitsky) and Archbishop Juvenal (Maslovsky or, according to another source, Moshkovsky). The ordination took place in the Knyazhesky churchyard of Knyazhesky chapel.

Since, as we have seen, two of these bishops figure among the consecrators of Bishop Anthony to the episcopate in 1923, it is likely that there has been a confusion of dates here. Moreover, there is another problem with the date 1937 insofar as Archbishop Juvenal (Maslovsky) is known to have been in the Siberian city of Tomsk (according to another source, Mariinsk in Kemerovo oblast') in July, 1937, and Metropolitan Anatolius was under convoy and in very serious health.

Although the Catacomb Church in Belorussia and Vyatka province accepted him, many others distrusted him. One Catacomb bishop, Romanus of Ingermannland, once investigated all the accusations against him and found him innocent. Moreover, four letters of his dating from the mid 1940s are completely Orthodox in content.

Vladyka Anthony was sentenced to be shot three times. But the Lord preserved his life, and there were even found people who went to the firing-squad instead of him.

As a result of one such incident, Vladyka acquired a second passport with the name Galynsky in addition to his first surname of Mikhailovsky. They say that when Vladyka was still at liberty, a Baptist preacher by the name of Tikhon Galynsky went with his books to the house of Vladyka with the intention of converting him to his faith. When he came to the door he heard Vladyka telling his novice nun to go and meet "the servant of God Tikhon" - although he could not know who was coming to the door at that moment. In the end, instead of his planned sermon, the Baptist repented before Vladyka and after a discussion put away his books and accepted the Orthodox Faith. In prison they met again. Tikhon declared that he would go to the firing-squad instead of Vladyka because the life of a bishop was more important than his own. Such a swap was possible at that time because people's identities were checked according to their passports, in which there was no photograph. So when Vladyka's name was called out, Tikhon went in his place, and received the crown of martyrdom.

Before his death, however, he secured a promise from Vladyka that on leaving prison he would take care of his wife and two daughters. Later, Archbishop Anthony carried out this promise. He told the wife about the martyric death of her husband, and she sheltered him in her house. He helped her and inscribed her children's names in his passport, which is how he acquired his second surname "Galynsky".

We have some more information about the holy Martyr Tikhon, but since it comes from a source which, whether deliberately or not, confuses him with Archbishop Anthony, we recount it with reservations. According to this source, a nun from Bryansk province who spoke to Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov), **Tikhon Ivanovich Galynsky** graduated from a modern school in Bryansk. Then he began a teaching career, in which he showed talent and reached the rank of inspector. During the First World War he was called up and became an officer. He was wounded in the leg on the Turkish front, and was for some time in hospital in Moscow. After the revolution - or perhaps even before - he became a Bolshevik. And he became a secretary of Lenin himself, working with him in the Kremlin until 1921. In that year, with the agreement of Lenin, he left the party and became a Baptist preacher and "presbyter". He was very successful in public disputes with atheists, and women showered him with flowers. But in the same year of 1921 he understood that the Baptists did not have the true faith, and in 1922 he converted to Orthodoxy, taking his wife with him...

Another source states that Tikhon Ivanovich Galynsky-Mikhailovsky was born in 1889 in the village of Semenovka, Karachevsky uyezd, Orel province. Before his arrest he was in an illegal situation in the city of Balashov, Saratov district. On February 10, 1950 he was arrested on a charge of "participation in the anti-Soviet Church organization 'The True Orthodox Church', and on January 13, 1951 was condemned by the MGB to 25 years deprivation of liberty. In this account he is called a priest.

Once, when he was in the camps, Vladyka Anthony was being driven to work in a brigade of workers. But he was so weak that the guard wanted to shoot him. At that moment, however, a huge man suddenly appeared out of the bushes and said to the convoy:

"If you touch him, I'll break all your bones!"

Then, taking hold of Vladyka, he brought him to the brigade. No-one ever discovered who this man was.

Vladyka Anthony's parishioner Tatyana relates a similar incident. Once he weakened so much on a march that the convoy wanted to shoot him. But the other prisoners stood up for him and said:

"If you do that, we'll kill you."

One of Vladyka's hieromonks, now Metropolitan E., says that he and Hieromonk Michael heard Archbishop Anthony say that during the war he was called to see Stalin. Stalin asked him what would be the outcome of the war. Vladyka replied that the Germans would lose the war.

"But don't you rejoice," he added.

The same bishop explains these last words of Vladyka Anthony's as a prophecy to the effect that Stalin would be poisoned shortly after the war, which in his opinion took place at the hands of a Jewish doctor.

About Vladyka's experiences in prisons and the camps, Metropolitan E. writes: "He was terribly tortured in the prisons and camps. They broke his arms, knocked out his teeth, pulled the hair out of his beard, dragged him by the legs over concrete steps with his head banging against each of them. He was kept in a room full of criminals who drove him under the plank bed, where he lost consciousness and was on the point of death. But thanks to God, a foreign commission was sent to inspect the prisoners. During inspection of the barracks in which Archbishop Anthony was, one of the prisoners ironically remarked that there was an archbishop under the bed. The commission checked and found out that it really was so. In accordance with their petition, the dying Archbishop Anthony was sent to hospital. By the providence of God the doctor was a believer. She treated him and fed him with a spoon until he came to himself. Then he was advised to petition some acquaintances to take him out on bail. He wrote to his spiritual children in Sochi, who took him out on bail (in 1946).

"In Sochi he had to go to the police once a month and show that he was not going anywhere. His spiritual children used to bribe the police so that he could go round visiting the believers."

Vladyka was arrested again in 1950 in the city of Balashov together with the future Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko). He was released from this, his last term of imprisonment in 1954 (although according to one source he was arrested again in the 1960s). There is a photograph taken in Sochi in 1957 which shows him sitting in an armchair against a background of cypresses.

To the end of his life Vladyka Anthony had no communion with the Moscow Patriarchate and continued to serve in secret in accordance with the traditions of the Catacomb Church.

In about 1958 he arrived in Kiev. There he had invited the Byelorussian Protopriest Theodore (Rafanovich) to meet him. They had not met before. Fr. Theodore had no bishop and asked Archbishop Anthony to take him under his omophorion.

Metropolitan E. writes: "I accompanied Fr. Theodore on this visit to Kiev as his closest disciple. The meeting was touching. When Fr. Theodore saw Vladyka, he fell on his knees and went up to Vladyka in tears, sobbing before him like a child. Fr. Theodore was ill, and he could perform the services only sitting down. But when he served together with Vladyka Anthony, he stood throughout the whole service. Vladyka tonsured him and made him a hegumen, then an archimandrite. When we returned home, Fr. Theodore was in such spiritual rapture that said:

"This is no earthly man. I am weak and sick and I stood throughout the whole service."

"That was how the meeting between our Fr. Theodore and Vladyka Anthony took place. During it he recognized Vladyka by the Grace of God."

Fr. Theodore's large Byelorussian flock also came under Archbishop Anthony's omophorion. Vladyka lived most of the time in Kiev, but he visited his flock in Belorussia about four times.

Vladyka Anthony ordained about 25 priests for the Catacomb Church. He carefully examined and tested all the candidates. Thus before raising Metropolitan E. to the rank of hieromonk he tested him for about five years. Once, not long before his ordination, he invited him to come to him to prepare for Communion at the end of the week. On the appointed Saturday, Fr. E. arrived in Kiev after a long journey. At the door he was met by an abbess, who put a strange question to him:

"E., why have you come here?"

Out of humility he did not begin to explain that he had come at the invitation of Vladyka, but said:

"Matushka, bless me to go to Vladyka and take his blessing."

At that moment the archbishop himself came out and asked in amazement:

"E., why have you come here?"

"Bless me, Vladyka, I'm going back," replied E. And, receiving Vladyka's blessing, he went back.

Soon after this incident Archbishop Anthony ordained E. as a hieromonk, who writes:

"From Fr. Theodore I received the noviciate and great grace from God. Earthly life became foreign for me. From Vladyka Anthony I received monasticism and then the priesthood. When Vladyka Anthony decided to make me, the sinner, a hieromonk, he took me to himself for two years to learn how to serve as a priest and learn everything that a hieromonk needs to know...

"I was twenty years under the guidance of Archbishop Anthony. I the sinner consider myself unworthy to have been led by an elder of such high life. He spent all his nights in prayer, and I watched in reverence, recognizing my unworthiness."

Archbishop Anthony blessed his clergy to receive people from the Moscow Patriarchate into the Catacomb Church through repentance. He also ordered that those who had been baptized in the Moscow Patriarchate in an incorrect manner - through pouring - should be baptized again by full threefold immersion. He did not bless the other sacraments performed in the Moscow Patriarchate to be repeated, explaining that their external form had not been distorted and they had been performed in accordance with the Orthodox rite.

Metropolitan E. relates that when Archbishop Anthony arrived in Kiev in about 1958, he was sought out by a novice nun of a certain Bishop Sergius whom Vladyka had never met. **Bishop Sergius** served in secret. For this he was persecuted by the authorities. When they learned of his arrival in a certain town, they planned to arrest him. At this time he was accompanied by this novice-nun. She advised him to shave off his beard so as to put off his pursuers. For some time he wavered, because he would have to abstain from serving the Liturgy until his beard grew again, so as not to scandalize the believers. In the end, however, he shaved off his beard, took a staff in his hand and put on a hat. Meanwhile, matushka put on some lipstick and high-heeled shoes. Then, arm in arm, they went onto the street, down the road and left the town without being hindered.

Several years later, the novice was arrested by the KGB.

"You deceived us then," they said, referring, it would seem, to the above incident.

After five years in prison, Bishop Sergius felt the approach of death. The day of his death was revealed to him. He summoned the camp commandant and said to him:

"At Pascha (on such-and-such a day) I am going to the Lord. Do not stop my spiritual children from burying me and chanting my funeral service."

He gave his novice a command concerning his mitre: "Give this mitre to Archbishop Anthony. Seek him out in Kiev and go under his spiritual direction. He is a real, truly Orthodox pastor."

On the day indicated by him he died. After his death, the nun was released and found Archbishop Anthony. She gave him the mitre which Bishop Sergius had entrusted to her. Archbishop Anthony smiled, shook his head and received it from her in silence. This nun stayed with Vladyka until his death. He bought her a house in Armavir, in which she lived from that time. After the death of Archbishop Anthony, she was served by his hieromonks.

Vladyka is known to have cast out demons. Once he was casting unclean spirits out of a sick nun. After his prayer there suddenly rang out groans and weeping.

The second incident took place at the Great Vespers for Palm Sunday. When they were singing the verses for "Lord, I have cried," the demon-possessed Anna, who was present at the service, cried out:

"Where am I? Oh, so much holiness... They're singing and singing... They're singing 'Christ is risen!' I'll free the servant of God Anna, I'll free her and I'll smother Martha. Why have they sent me where they're praying - they must send me where they're not praying!"

(Martha was a fortune-teller who sent unclean spirits into people.)

During this noise Archbishop Anthony came out of the altar and laid his cross upon her. At 11.45 Anna became so bad they had to lay her on a bed and tie her arms up.

"Go, go," she said. Finally, she said to her child's godfather, who was holding her by the hand: "Let go my hand - I'll come out by myself!"

Then he said: "Come out, demon!"

And he came out...

Archbishop Anthony had the gift of prophecy. Those who knew him say that everything he foretold was fulfilled in time.

He was often in dangerous situations. Protopriest I. remembers that Vladyka had the custom, before a service, of putting several small pieces of paper under the altar covering. One of them was blank, but on the others, which were divided by the sign of the cross into four parts, he wrote where he needed to go after the service on that day. After the service, without looking, he would take out the first piece of paper that came to hand and, if it was blank, he would go nowhere that day. Acting in this way he often escaped danger.

Deaconess A. and Schema-nun M. tell the story of how Vladyka Anthony became invisible. He was once walking with two believers along a street. The police came up to them and arrested his two companions, but in some incomprehensible way did not notice Vladyka himself. The arrested people had his things - his cross, Gospel and hierarchical vestments.

"Where did you get these?" - they were asked during the search.

"I'm taking them to the monastery. I've made a vow that if my son gets better, I'll give them to the people there," - explained one of them.

They were let go. On coming to the place where they had been walking with Vladyka, and not finding him there, they began to weep. That evening Archbishop Anthony unexpectedly came to them. To their amazed questions:

"Where did you get to? Where were you?"

- he replied: "Oh, now where was I? Where was I?!..."

The same nuns recounted another story from his life. Once, having gone to a certain town and hired a taxi at the station, he sensed that he was being followed. The mistress of the house where he was going was already waiting for him. He came to her and said:

"Say that I came to the wrong address."

Then he quickly left the house and again got into the taxi and said to the driver:

"Take me back to the station."

On the way the driver left the road and went to a kiosk to buy some cigarettes. At that moment a police car went past in the direction of the woman's house. Having arrived at her place, the police asked:

"An old man came here. Where has he gone?"

"He came to the wrong address," she replied as agreed.

Meanwhile Vladyka arrived at the station and left the town.

It is known that Vladyka practised confession by correspondence. On receiving a letter of confession from a penitent he absolved him from his sins and sent a letter of absolution in reply in the form of a leaflet with a type-written text.

During his life Vladyka suffered much from slander. Once he was accused of being a name-worshipper - a member of a heretical sect which worshipped the name of God. Metropolitan E. writes:

"When rumours spread that Archbishop Anthony was a name-worshipper, I, the sinful one, asked him about this, and he replied meekly and humbly that he drew people out of name-worshipping into Orthodoxy, and explained to me what this heresy was. Therefore I am a living witness of his actions and life. I am not worthy to loose the straps of his shoes. Let many slander him, but I pray God not to let me fall into madness and say something similar or agree with it..

"Our Archbishop Anthony was very strict about serving. He never left anything out and was always vested fully like a soldier of Christ. He never performed a single service or need without wearing his omophorion. I am a witness of this. When he came out to speak with the people, he always wore his epitrachelion."

The last words of the metropolitan refer to the accusation made against Vladyka Anthony that he carried out "many ordinations without an omophorion or service-book..."

There were also people who accused him of having children in his passport who came into the world only after he became a bishop. But it has already been explained above why Vladyka carried this passport and whose children were inscribed in it..

Once God worked a terrible sign in defence of Vladyka from similar attacks. A nun slandered Vladyka, and tried to turn his flock against him. Some people, seduced by the authority of the nun, were inclined to believe her. But there were others who said:

"Fear God - do not say false things about Vladyka. God is not mocked. He will punish you for these words!"

"But look - he is not punishing me! See...?!" replied the nun boldly.

The next day after these words were spoken, a lorry travelling at great speed ran the nun over and killed her. Moreover, her monastic prayer-rope flew away and was found far from her body. Also at a distance from her body was found her monastic paramon and cross, which monks and nuns always wear on their breasts under their clothes tied across the shoulders and around the body. In

an inexplicable fashion it had flown away over her breast and head. Thus did God Himself deprive of monasticism her who instead a humble fulfilling of the vows she had made at her tonsure, occupied herself in slandering a true archpastor and sowing scandal in his flock.

Archbishop Anthony tried to imbue his flock with his truly Orthodox Faith. He was arrested for the first time, in actual fact, for defending the dogma of baptism by full immersion, and he zealously watched that baptisms were carried out by his clergy in the same fashion - only by threefold immersion. He warned them that he would defrock any of them who dared to baptize any healthy person by pouring.

Vladyka Anthony always served on feasts, and if he had to go anywhere, he always measured out his time in such a way that he would without fail serve on a feastday.

When he was already quite old, he still served zealously. Once in winter he was going to serve some sick people. It was a long journey. He had to go along some railway lines. Completely exhausted, he sat down and would probably have frozen to death if someone passing by had not noticed him, taken him into a booth and warmed him up with some boiled potatoes.

"Tell me," asked the passer-by, "where can I drop you off?"

But Vladyka replied: "Thank you! I must be on my way."

And he set off towards the people who were waiting for him.

When, as a very old man, Vladyka visited his catacomb flock in Byelorussia, he could move only with difficulty. So some young girls hitched themselves onto a sledge and carried him in it.

"I've been pulled along by horses, deer and dogs in my life," he joked, "and now I'm being pulled by people!"

Vladyka Anthony considered that one should not impose heavy penances on people in our time because, as he said, life itself for a True Orthodox Christian in the Soviet land is a penance. He said that according to the sayings of the Holy Fathers, people in our times are saving themselves, and will continue to do so, largely through standing firm in the True Faith. So he gave a penance if he learned that any of his spiritual children had entered into communion of prayer with the Moscow Patriarchate.

In connection with this, Metropolitan E. has recounted the following story. There was a Mordovian woman from Vladyka Anthony's flock who went to Leningrad and there, on going into a patriarchal church, was present at the service at the moment when a hierarch of the Moscow Patriarchate was being vested.

"Well, how was your trip?" Vladyka Anthony asked her when she returned home.

She told him of her impressions from going into the church of the Moscow Patriarchate, and especially from the ceremony of the vesting of the hierarch.

"O, how beautiful it was!" she said at the end of her story.

"I excommunicate you for half a year. Now you'll learn what it's like to go there!" replied Archbishop Anthony.

Archbishop Anthony was in correspondence with St. John Maximovich, Archbishop of San Francisco in the Russian Church Abroad, who was his spiritual father. In 1965 he ordained Archpriest Valentine from Vyatka province. In 1997 Fr. Valentine became a monk with the name Anthony, and was consecrated Bishop of Yaransk in the Russian Orthodox Autonomous church.

At the time of Vladyka Anthony's death 15 hieromonks and several very large parishes were under his omophorion, all of whom were blessed to continue serving by Metropolitan Philaret, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, in December, 1977.

Archbishop Anthony reposed in the Lord on March 31 (according to another source, April 13), 1976 in Kiev. He once said to a nun:

"My whole life has been a martyrdom".

And even his burial was carried out only with difficulty. The coffin would not go through the doors, and they had to drag it out through the window. During the burial it was raining and they had to carry the coffin closed. Vladyka lay in it vested in his hierarchical vestments. He was buried in the cemetery at Buchi, near Kiev. His remains rest there to this day.

Above the grave, which is surrounded by an iron fence, stands a beautiful cross. When his spiritual children come to it, they feel peace and signs of the spiritual presence of Vladyka Anthony.

"What fragrance enveloped me," said one woman after visiting his grave.

His prophecies continue to be fulfilled in the lives of his spiritual children. They understand their hidden meaning in their own experience only after Vladyka's death. His spiritual children express their gratitude and spiritual devotion to Vladyka Anthony in verses which they themselves compose and which contain spiritual power and unfeigned love for their archpastor.

Metropolitan E. writes: "In our difficult times he was a good shepherd for the Orthodox Christians. He did not abandon his sheep, but comforted them, fed them and taught them. He always said to us that we must not fear death, if we are required to die for our Orthodox Faith. His labours were boundless, and he served as a model of the Christian life. He completely gave himself to the service of God and the people. When Archbishop Anthony was released from the camps, he did not go to the parishes of the official Church, but chose the catacombs and lived in them with his people to the very end of his life."

93. HOLY NUN-CONFESSOR HELENA OF SUKHUMI (+1977)

and those with her

Nun Helena was born in Minsk, Belorussia of noble parents who were related to both the Russian and the Greek ruling families (through Queen Olga of the Hellenes, Abbess Tamara Romanov of the Convent of the Ascension, Eleon, Jerusalem was her cousin). According to Olga Abramides, who had been healed by the saint and lived with her for some months in her hermitage, the family of the blessed one had nine children (six daughters and three sons), all of whom embraced the monastic life at an early age.

Helena and her sister Nina struggled under the direction of a certain virtuous abbess in a coenobitic monastery near Batumi, in Georgia, in order to learn the monastic life. The only photograph of Mother Helena shows her wearing the great schema.

At this time there died a virtuous bishop in the Batumi area. During his burial the face of the virtuous bishop sweated, and came down in streams which the faithful standing by gathered up with reverence. Mother Helena took some of this "holy water" and kept it for the next 75 years. Through her faith, and the faith of those sufferers who came to her, this "holy water" became wonder-working.

After the revolution, the monastery in which the sisters were struggling was destroyed by the Bolsheviks, and they sought refuge in the Caucasus mountains, in an impassable ravine one hour's walk from the village of Chin, in a thick forest of evergreen trees. For the first two years of their struggle here, the sisters lived in complete isolation. Their only food was a little warm water and a prosphora once a day, which appeared in a miraculous way. Later, when the villagers learned about them and began to help them, and they began to cultivate a garden, the fresh prosphora ceased to come...

During the winter they lived in an underground passage. Then the villagers helped them to build a typical Russian cell made out of trunks of trees with a stove. They ate only once a day - boiled potatoes. They never had oil. For Pascha, "to honour the day", they ate one egg.

The nuns had no communion with the official Churches of Russia or Georgia, and when clergy from these Churches would come up to meet them, Mother Helena would not let them into her cell, nor allow them to celebrate Divine services. For confession and communion they themselves went down to Sukhumi to an exiled priest of Bulgarian origin.

Once some secret policemen tried to catch them. However, Mother Helena was hidden in a miraculous manner, so they found only Mother Nina.

"Are you praying?" one of them asked.

“Yes,” she replied, “for all the Christians. And also for you, since you were baptized in the Name of Christ but have denied Him.”

In 1957 the hermitage was struck by fire. Flames were destroying everything. Then Mother Helena knelt down, raised her hands to heaven and fervently prayed to the Mother of God to help her servants. The Mother of God appeared and put out the fire! And as a sign of her appearance she left the mark of her immaculate foot there. From that time many people came to the hermitage to venerate the foot-print of the Mother of God.

To repair the damage caused by the fire, Mother Helena accepted help from the villagers and pilgrims. A twenty-year-old young man called Christopher Damianides and 42 other Christians worked for three months there to erect new buildings. (Christopher had come a long way from Kazakhstan on hearing of the fame of the saint, although he was very ill. And Mother Helena had healed him after putting him on a strict fast.)

The hermitage was built from wood. So to reconstruct it they had to use huge trees up to 50 metres high. After the completion of the works, Mother Helena called the Christians together, thanked them and said that the next day “Christopher will be able to leave”. The following day, however, she asked him to stay, because “they would have a great temptation”. And indeed, they had many problems from the local Forestry department, because the trees had been cut down without its permission.

After the work was done, some of the faithful offered to Matushka that they use a tree in order to construct a fence around the hermitage.

“No,” she said, “we shall not cut down another tree. But if God wills this work, He Himself will send it us.”

That night there was a terrible storm, and the next morning everyone saw to their amazement that a fir-tree of enormous proportions had been uprooted and stretched from the water right to the boundary of the hermitage. So, in accordance with the saint’s prophecy, the Lord Himself had sent wood to fence it round, in a manner that exceeded human and natural strength.

They had also build a little chapel inside the hermitage. When it was completed, Matushka called the young Christopher, together with Theodore Boukharides, and sent them to the village, saying: ‘There where the Georgians have built a school, there is a buried church dedicated to Saints Constantine and Helena. You excavate it and you will find a hidden icon.’ The two young men obediently dug for the church, but could not find anything, and so set off back to the hermitage. Matushka Helena sent them there again, this time with clear and accurate instructions (how many steps to the right and to the left). The young man dug, and this time they found a big icon of the All-Holy Mother of God. While they were bringing it to the hermitage, Matushka, informed

“from above” about the discovery, went to meet them holding the honourable Cross and wonderworking holy water. She took the icon, kissed it and put it in the chapel. Then, in the presence of about 50 faithful, the church was filled with a wonderful fragrance. “Come, my children,” she said, “come and see the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

Through the grace of God, Mother Helena knew who were coming to visit her; she called them by their Christian names and said who would be received and who not. She did not receive those with little faith or those burdened by mortal sins.

Once (according to the witness of the monk Fr. Luke Panides) she was visited by a mother with a sick child, who was carrying some food. Matushka did not receive her. Later, when asked she explained that “all of them in the family are unbelievers”. Another time, she told her visitors to sit in a room containing the icon of the Lord not-made-with-hands. While they all saw that the eyes in the Lord’s face were open, one woman saw that they were closed.

“Why is that, Gerontissa?” asked one man.

“John,” she replied, “I am not hindering her, but the Lord Himself, because she practices magic.”

Mrs. Despoina Kalaitzides got to know Mother Helena in 1965 together with a relative of hers. Matushka – who had not seen them before – said to her:

“You are the daughter of Alexandra and you are very like her. I see your father Panagiotes dressed in green.”

Before Despoina and her relative, the hermitage had been visited by two Russian women, bringing some food. However, Blessed Helena had again not received them. Later Matushka Nina told Despoina and her relative that the Russian women had a sick child and on an earlier visit Matushka Helena had advised them to keep the fasts of the Church in order that the child should be healed. And indeed, the child was healed. However, “the Russians easily forget”, and since they were careless, in the end the child fell ill again. And she did not receive the food because it had been stolen from a state institution where they worked.

One evening a bear started groaning mournfully outside the hermitage of the saint. Matushka was frightened at the beginning. However, the cries of the animal forced her to interrupt her prayer. Then she saw that the bear’s paw was wounded. The blessed one plucked up courage, came closer to the bear and bound up the wound.

A few days later the bear returned peacefully, holding in its paws some maize. Matushka received the animal’s gift gratefully, but when she understood that it had taken it from some farm, doing injustice in this way to

some unsuspecting farmer, she “scolded” the bear and showed him a piece of wood, indicating in this way that in the future it should bring her firewood. From then on the animal brought firewood, demonstrating in this way his gratitude to the saint.

When sick people came to Matushka, she would counsel them to fast and pray, “for this kind cometh not out except by prayer and fasting” (Matthew 17.21). And since there were no priests to read the Gospel, she would read the Gospel, sprinkling the sick with “holy water” and anointing them with oil from the lampada of the Mother of God. And in accordance with the faith of the sick people, the Lord performed miracles. From the sick she demanded only faith in the power of God and a Christian life thenceforth. At that time there were many “healers” in the Soviet Union. When the sick could not go to the hermitage themselves, their relatives sent their clothes there so that Matushka should bless them.

Like a true nun, Mother Helena had prepared her own grave while she was still alive, outside the hermitage. The simple people, during her lifetime, would take earth from the grave and it would work miracles.

One of the first to be healed through the prayers of Mother Helena was “Katya from Krasnodar”, who suffered from epilepsy. After her healing Katya stayed at the hermitage and became a nun with the name Catherine.

Olga Simeonides witnesses that when she was newly married and her son George was one year old, She fell mentally ill. She was oppressed, didn’t want to be in the house, feared lights and people, etc. With her mother and husband she went to many psychiatrists, with no result. Then a lecturer in psychiatry who was probably a believer discreetly recommended that the prayers of the Church for driving out demons be read. These prayers also did not work, but they did make the condition evident: Olga produced symptoms of demon-possession, and attacked the priests (of the official Georgian Church). Finally her mother in despair began to visit “magicians” and “healers”. At one such visit to a well-known medium, God had mercy on her: the medium, compelled by the grace of God, told her:

“Sit down and listen. You have to find a woman; only she will be able to heal your daughter. She was seven Gospels. At the third your daughter’s illness will be loosed.”

“Since the wretched husband and parents of Olga did not know where to go, they brought the sick woman to her house. For the next month Olga remained lying in a dark room, wrapped in a bed sheet, with absolutely no food or water. There was an icon of the Deisis in the room. One day she heard a sound. Starting up, the sick woman saw a nun standing in front of the icon.

“I am sorry for you,” she said. “Give me your hand, so that I can lift you up. You have twelve days left to live.”

Olga found the courage to stretch out her hand, and hardly had the unknown nun touched her than she felt a supernatural power go through her. Her strength returned and she was completely healed!

When this miracle became known, the thoughts of all turned to "Matushka Helena of Chin". Olga visited the hermitage to thank her, and recognized in the face of the blessed one the unknown nun who had healed her. Then the saint told her about the satanic bonds of magic, with which, with the permission of God, she had been bound.

"Don't seek to find out who was responsible," she said, "because then you will die from sorrow."

The wife of a very high-ranking Soviet general fell mentally ill. No psychiatrists could help her, so her husband took her – at great risk to himself, since people of his rank were supposed to be atheists – to the hermitage of Chin. Matushka Helena healed the woman. Then the general offered to bring electricity to the hermitage. Matushka refused"

"We are nuns," she said. "Wax and oil are sufficient for us."

The general then offered to bring water from the sides of the hill into the depths of the ravine by aqueduct. She accepted this gift.

Matushka Helena was also a prophetess. In 1955 Christopher Damianides, aged 18, was told by his parents to go to Matushka to ask her whether there would be a war.

"No," she replied. "There will be no war."

"And how will the situation develop?" asked Christopher.

"The eighth leader [of the Soviet Union] is called Michael [i.e. Michael Gorbachev, the eighth Soviet leader since Lenin]. He will be young and good-looking. He will change the situation. However, there will come great poverty. But finally good times will come..."

Many Pontiac Greeks living in the region wanted to return to Greece. She warned them that they must go only to the Old Calendar Church:

"In Greece there is the new calendar. Don't go to the churches where it is followed... If Greece returns to the Old Calendar, it will triumph. Otherwise it will perish."

Matushka Helena died in 1977 (her sister Nina died between the years 1957 and 1959). A Russian-style "open" wooden church has been erected over her grave, and a monk called Boris lives at the hermitage. Her relics have not been

uncovered yet. But the earth from her grave is refreshed by a fragrant myrrh which, especially at night, makes the whole area fragrant. And the saint once appeared in a dream to the person who buried her and said:

“Don’t move me, for the oil has reached my eyes...”

*

In the early 1980s, in the same mountainous region about 60 kilometres from Sukhumi, a small secret community of monastics was discovered by the KGB. 18 managed to take shelter in a cave. The pursuers in a helicopter threw a cask full of burning liquid into the entrance and set it on fire. All those hiding in the cave perished. Their names were: **Irina, Maria, Eudocia, Ulyana, John, Gregory, Basil, Andrew, Stephen, and others.**

94. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR ALEXANDER OF OMSK **(+1977)**

Hieromonk Alexander, in the world Athanasius Vasilyevich Turuntayevskikh (he later changed his surname to Orlov), was born in 1878 in Vologda province in the family of Protopriest Basil, who served in one parish for 50 years. His mother, who was called Olga, was a deeply believing Christian. There were six brothers and one sister in the family. All the brothers and the brother-in-law became priests. The Lord placed the mark of His grace on the youngest son of this noble spiritual family from his youngest years – Athanasius refused to eat meat from the age of five.

He went to study in a theological seminary. Now atheism was widespread among schoolchildren in those years, and Athanasius fell into its nets. And so on leaving the seminary he abandoned the spiritual path and entered medical school.

Athanasius's fall was not hidden from his mother. On her deathbed – she died at the age of 56 – she told him: “Leave your atheist comrades, change your character and God will not abandon you.” The death of Athanasius' mother had been exactly prophesied by a fool-for-Christ, which made a strong impression on him, the more so in that a good provincial doctor had said that she would recover.

After the death of his mother Athanasius began to become interested in theology, the philosophical approach to religion, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and life after death. But he was burdened by the fact that he had been so attracted to atheist ideas, and he was constantly pursued by the thought: “you will not be forgiven”. The thought gnawed at his brain: “If you wish to receive forgiveness, offer yourself as a sacrifice to God”.

In despair he decided to commit suicide. His nearest relatives did not let him out of their sight, but followed him day and night. Many priests tried to convince Athanasius to abandon his plan, but without success. He took a raw thong from a harness, put his head into a noose and stepped off the stool... But just at that moment a fiery streak of lightning flashed before his eyes, and for the rest of his life he remembered the voice which he heard: “Now you are mine. There is no repentance in the grave.” And then he heard the powerful laugh of the devil.

At that moment he repented and came to on the floor – the end of the raw thong was swaying on the ceiling, and a noose hung round his neck. On hearing the noise his relatives ran up. His godfather, who was a priest, confessed him and gave him communion. He sincerely repented and the thought of suicide never entered his mind again. Another priest, a friend of his father's, said to him: “Athanasius, Satan told you the truth – there is no

repentance in the grave. But you are not yet in the grave, and you can still repent.”

Athanasius imposed a strict fast upon himself and intensified his prayer. He took up a three-year practical as a psalm-reader in a small parish where there were few services – only every Sunday. Since he was knowledgeable in medicine (according to one source, he had both a medical and a university training), he worked to counter epidemics of typhus and dysentery.

In 1915, during the First World War, he went to the front as a volunteer, serving as a regimental priest. With a cross in his hand, he would go in front of the soldiers into battle for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland. His fearlessness, untiring service and flaming faith attracted the soldiers.

At the defence of Yakibstadt bridgehead, Priest Alexander did not allow the sappers to blow up the bridge until all the soldiers and the numerous wounded had been transported across from the German side of the river, for the water was cold and swift-flowing. The soldiers then met and decreed that Priest Alexander should be given the cross of St. George.

He was three years at the front, and fell into captivity for seven months, but managed to escape. He did not go home, but returned to the front. He went into the trenches with his cross and words of encouragement. He also gave sermons. For his faithful service he was awarded with a *gramota* and golden cross by his Majesty Tsar Nicholas II. He was to receive this award personally from the Tsar, but the arrest of the Tsar in 1917 prevented this.

After the revolution Priest Alexander received no salary. However, the older soldiers tried to persuade him not to leave. And he remained until the front was liquidated, saying: “Dear ones, it’s a shame to break one’s oath”.

In 1918 he returned from the front and took up a position in the village of Gribtsevo, Vologda province. His parish consisted of widely scattered villages and a church near a river. There was a bell-tower with one bell weighing 450 pounds, a second – 150, and a third – 80. There were always many parishioners in church. On the eve of Sundays and feasts, Priest Alexander introduced all-night vigils, which were followed by choir rehearsals with everyone chanting. He also introduced discussions outside the services: explanations of the Creed, the commandments and the Law of God, Church history, explanations of prayers and answers to parishioners’ questions.

Priest Alexander used to reminisce about this period: “I felt myself to be an irredeemable debtor before the Lord for my previous sins, lack of faith and the sins of my youth, and full of gratitude to the Lord for His mercy towards me in the war and in captivity. I was young, my voice was strong, I did not tire easily. I often had to speak on the subject of atheism, and to discuss the reality of the personality of Jesus Christ. I considered it my duty to acquaint my parishioners with the great scientists who had believed in God.”

At this time the Law of God was forbidden in schools, so Priest Alexander tried to speak more about God. This did not please the atheists. In the provincial newspaper they began to slander him. It became still more difficult for Priest Alexander to serve in his parish. The authorities sought the slightest excuse to arrest him, they imposed insupportable taxes on him and forbade him to preach.

Once a group of agitators came to the village soviet and posted a notice ordering the villagers to appear at a debate. The old rector refused to speak at the debate, but Priest Alexander decided to speak. He used what he himself had read and what he had heard in a debate in 1921 between Vvedensky and Lunacharsky against the atheists. The agitators could produce nothing in reply, and the senior member of the collective began to shout: "Arrest him...!"

"Everything you have is based on might, not on right," said Priest Alexander fervently, "and not on facts or logic. A bear has got still greater might – he can beat up whomever he wants."

Priest Alexander went home and the peasants dispersed. Two weeks later, they arrested him while he was paying a visit with his wife. He was brought to the village soviet under the guard of a policeman. This was on Cheesefare Saturday, and there were many people in the street. The people gathered at the village soviet and began to demand the release of the priest. The president of the soviet summoned a detachment of red-army soldiers.

"The priest has stirred up the whole district in rebellion," he said.

The bell for the all-night vigil was sounding, and some of the people went into the church. It became quieter on the street. The Bolsheviki said that Priest Alexander would be taken out the next day. However, during the service they took him out of the village, and then forced him to go the whole way by foot. Snow was falling heavily, the convoy were traveling on wooden sledges while he walked behind them for 50 kilometres along the snowy road. The soldiers whipped the horse, and forced him to run. Later it turned out that they had been given the order to shoot him while he was supposedly trying to run away.

First he was put into a common cell in Kandakovsk prison. The investigators interrogated him, often using the butts of their rifles and constantly coming back to the same accusation: "He went round the parishes and villages conducting discussions". But this was not true – he gave sermons only in the church. The investigator demanded that he confess, and that would be the end of the matter. But this would have meant that they could drag off any villager who let him conduct a discussion in his house.

Priest Alexander exposed their coarseness and refused to give any evidence before the drunken investigator. They sent him to the GPU in the provincial capital of Vologda, and then to a revolutionary tribunal. The interrogators

began again, with yet more accusations – there were now 18 points in all. The president of the revolutionary tribunal accused him of mocking the soldiers in the war. In rebuttal of this accusation, Priest Alexander produced his cross of St. George. Then they accused him of conducting anti-semitic propaganda against the Jews. But Priest Alexander did not have a single Jew in his parish. And at the front he had even defended the Jews, for which they had given him a present, a sacred book in Russian and Hebrew with a silver plaque and the inscription: “To the highly respected priest of the 237th Graiboronsky regiment, from the Jews of this regiment”. They asked to see the book, and it served as a proof of the truthfulness of Priest Alexander’s evidence.

Throughout the Great Fast until Palm Sunday Priest Alexander was constantly being brought under armed guard from his solitary cell for interrogations in various parts of the city. He was not allowed parcels from home. However, the day after seeing the procurator he was given back his clothes and documents and allowed to return to his parish. He served the services of Holy Week and met the Day of Resurrection with joy.

“That Pascha was especially joyful,” he said, “for my family, for me and for the parishioners. Their petitions, even as far as the centre, had been crowned with success. By the mercy of God, I, too, was resurrected!”

Priest Alexander rejected the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius. He was a mitred protopriest with the right to wear two crosses, and the people stood up for him through thick and thin in his conflicts with the authorities, who watched his every step. The MVD boss declared openly that he wanted to get him. And they began to threaten him with prison and execution for his fierce sermons against atheism.

In 1930 he was arrested and spent three years in a camp on the Pinyuga road. Since he refused to be an informer, he was constantly receiving new arrests and imprisonments. He ran away, but had to hide continually from the authorities.

Priest Alexander sought an answer to his dilemma in the Gospel. He found it in Luke 14.26-27: “If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whosoever does not bear his cross, and come after Me, cannot be My disciple”. These few words made his decision clear and firm – to leave his family, because he was not allowed to serve honourably as a priest under Soviet power and his conscience did not allow him to become a traitor.

In 1935 he left his family, his wife and four children – his youngest son Nicholas was only six years old. He went to the river, and left a note on the bank which said: “It is impossible to live like this”. Then he left his clothes there (so that they should not look for him in the surrounding villages), signed himself with the sign of the cross and left his native land. He took up

employment as a shepherd, and in the winter was a sexton in the church of the Holy Spirit. He changed his surname to Orlov.

As a shepherd he wore old peasant clothes and was distinguished from the others by his meekness, humility, eagerness to please and kindness. It was clear from his face that he was not who he said he was. The villagers noticed this, and to test him gave him sour food to eat – but he was satisfied with everything.

In the church he did not go up close to the kliros in case he forgot himself and began to chant. Once, however, in Staraya Russa, he couldn't help it – he began to chant. This gave him away completely. Once he was asked to baptize a child, he couldn't refuse. There were rumours that this was not a simple peasant but someone who was hiding from Soviet power.

The time had come to leave the area. And so, thanking God, Who had enlightened him through the Holy Gospel and Who had made it easier for him to bear the burden of leaving his family, he went to the railway station and got on a train taking him eastwards. This was in 1941.

He came out in Omsk in Siberia. Having neither money nor even a crust of bread, and not knowing anybody, he began to beg for alms, first by the viaduct, and then in the Nikolskaya church. But nobody gave him anything. Fr. Alexander prayed to God and thanked Him for sending him this trial for the purification of his former sins.

He came out of the church and saw an elderly woman with a heavy suitcase. He offered to help her. This woman turned out to be a believer, and she gave him something to eat. He told her that he was a priest, but did not recognize the sergianist church. Gradually a parish was formed around him.

At first only a few individuals came, then it was tens of people. Finally, such a large catacomb community was formed that it was difficult to find a place where they could all fit in for the festal services, and admission had to be limited. The community included nuns who had been driven out of their destroyed monasteries. The nuns and believing old women collected books and vestments and church utensils. Then people were found who sewed gonfalons, and former monastery artists who painted icons. Then there appeared readers and chanters. People learned how to make candles, to bake prosphoras and boil incense.

Fr. Alexander commemorated Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin) of Nizhegorod, and later the First Hierarchs of the Russian Church Abroad. At some time during his wanderings he had accepted the monastic tonsure with the name Alexander. According to one source, he became a monk at the end of the 1940s in the city of Ufa. He also adopted a new surname, Orlov, after a nun whom he had tonsured in Omsk.

People invited Fr. Alexander to their homes, and he went from house to house. Children were baptized, people repented of their sins and received the Holy Mysteries, burials and pannikhidas for the reposed were carried out. All this was done at great risk both for Fr. Alexander and for the parishioners, but God preserved and strengthened them.

On great feasts as many as 100 people gathered. The service was long. It began with an all-night vigil in the evening and finished at 4 in the morning, lasting twelve hours. The daily services began at about 3 or 4 o'clock and continued until late in the evening. During the proskomedie Fr. Alexander took out a particle for each believer. He spent a long time on confessions and sermons, which caused some of the old women to complain, but he was adamant. In his sermons, which made a great impression on many, batyushka especially concentrated on the refutation of atheist propaganda about the existence of God, and pointed out how many of the great scientists believed in God.

Fr. Alexander had a special veneration for the Mother of God. With what emotion and love he read akathists and molebens to her, and recounted the miraculous healings wrought through her icons in Holy Russia! He also knew the lives of the saints very well, and would often bring up examples from their lives to illustrate a point.

During the 1950s, when atheists were being introduced into the seminaries, Fr. Alexander would warn about these "wolves in sheep's clothing".

Twice batyushka was picked up off the streets of Omsk because of the unusual nobility of his bearing and brought to the police station. But with the help of God he was released. Once, while he was celebrating the Divine Liturgy, at the moment of consecration of the Holy Gifts the police came in. Fr. Alexander took the chalice with the Holy Gifts and stood up against the wall, covering himself with a tablecloth. The police did not notice him. By the Providence of God and the prayers of the Most Holy Mother of God, Fr. Alexander and his flock were often saved from the torture-chambers of the KGB.

Fr. Alexander carried out miracles of healing. The servant of God Anna went to Fr. Alexander on Sundays and feastdays seeking healing from her illness. Most of the time she seemed a normal person, but when they began to chant the Cherubic hymn she suddenly became anxious and began to shout in an inhuman voice. They had to drag her up to receive communion. In 1952, at the request of her relatives, Fr. Alexander read prayers over the sick woman, and the demon was driven out of her. Then Anna became a normal Christian who regularly, in peace and with the fear of God, received the Holy Mysteries and lived a Christian life.

Once, during a service, Fr. Alexander was seen accompanied by two angels in the altar.

In the middle of the 1960s a chance arrival at one of the services turned out to be a former parishioner of Fr. Alexander's in the church where he served before he left his family. She recognized him, as he did her. After she had told him about his family he decided to visit them.

They were convinced that he had drowned in the river. After he had told them what happened, they told him that his daughter Olga was working for the KGB. His wife just wept. But his daughter said to him: "Father! I give you my room. I will hang it with icons. You pray in it as much as you want, but stay with the family!"

Fr. Alexander replied: "My daughter, I'll do everything you suggest, but only on condition that you leave your work for the KGB".

His daughter replied that she could not do that. Then Fr. Alexander said: "Well then, my daughter, you cannot leave your work at the KGB, and I cannot leave my service to God and the people who have been entrusted to me. My life belongs to the Church of Christ."

At this they parted. Fr. Alexander and his novice Maria left for Omsk, not suspecting that at the order of his daughter he had been placed under constant surveillance.

By the will of God, however, Fr. Alexander did not fall into the hands of the KGB. His novice went through all the interrogations without giving away anything about batyushka or his address. However, this information was supplied by Maria's landlady.

Once on arriving in Omsk Fr. Alexander said: "My daughter has betrayed me." So church services stopped, and people came to visit him more rarely because many, and especially young people, were being summoned to interrogations. There they always demanded answers to the same questions – about Fr. Alexander. And they were asked to work as stooges for the KGB. Maria was forced to go to her parents in Semipalatinsk while for Fr. Alexander there began a life full of alarms and persecutions. In order not to expose his Omsk parishioners to danger, he went only where he was invited. By the Providence of God, faithful Christians offered him refuge in many towns, especially Tavda, Vyatka, Ufa, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Semipalatinsk and Novy Afon.

Fr. Alexander was a man of extraordinary courage. Thus on feasts of the Lord he would travel on the train holding placards with glorifications of the Lord. Thus at Pascha travelers would look with astonishment at the old man with a beard holding in his hand a placard with the words: "Christ is risen!"

Once, when he was traveling by boat to Semipalatinsk, he sat down at the piano and began to play: "God, save the Tsar". A detective who was travelling

on the boat then told him that he would be arrested on disembarking. But it turned out that the detective got drunk, fell asleep and set fire to his mattress in the cabin. Meanwhile, Fr. Alexander had disembarked and escaped.

Once Fr. Alexander went with Nun Elizabeth (Orlova) to Novy Afon, and there stayed in the house of a believer. Unexpectedly the KGB came to arrest him. He and Mother Elizabeth hid in the loft. In the morning the KGB left without having found them. However, there had been a strong frost during the night, and they were both very ill. Somehow they made it back to Omsk, but they did not go outside again and never completely recovered. Fr. Alexander walked with difficulty, and Nun Elizabeth lost all her teeth.

In 1969, eight years before his death, his sight began to fail. Then he became completely blind and fell ill. But his hearing was good to the end. He knew the simple services by heart, but he needed to be prompted when it came to the festal exclamations. He celebrated the Liturgy only in the presence of his spiritual father, **Hieromonk Anthony**, who had been a cleric of **Schema-Bishop Peter** (Ladygin) and had spent many years in prison. Fr. Anthony would often go to Omsk to fulfil the needs of the Christians of that city. Fr. Alexander spent most of his time with Fr. Anthony in Tavda until his death there in 1973. Then he returned to Omsk.

In one of his last letters which have not been destroyed, Priest Alexander wrote:

“Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

“I appeal to you with a last humble request before my death: receive as a prayerful memento of the sinful hieromonk Alexander a humble gift which will nevertheless be very useful for all believers: the five prayers of the hierarch Demetrius of Rostov.

“I ask forgiveness of all if I have offended anyone in anything because of my feeble mind, lack of foresight, pettiness, insufficient self-control or, most important, lack of the fear of God – the beginning of spiritual wisdom.

“I beseech you all who believe in the Lord God to raise your fraternal Christian prayer that the Lord send me a Christian end and count me worthy of a good answer before the Terrible Judgement Seat of Christ. May the Lord reward you with temporary and eternal blessings.

“My path is life is ending with the words of St. John Chrysostom and the hierarch Nicholas, my favourite hierarchs – Glory to God for all things!...”

Before his death he said: “I have much to say, but I can’t”.

And before his death he forbade anyone to make any inscription over his grave, saying: “I lived in secret and must lie in secret”.

Twenty-four hours before his death, he began to breathe with difficulty. In the neighbouring room they read the prayers for the departure of the soul from the body. On the morning of his death they had already read the prayers for him although he had not heard them. As he was dying they were reading the akathist to the holy great-martyr Barbara.

He died at the age of 99 in the city of Omsk (according to another source, Tomsk) in the family of a pious widow on August 29, 1977 at six o'clock in the evening. He had been a priest for more than seventy years, forty of them in the catacombs.

He was buried in Omsk in the north-eastern cemetery. In accordance with his wish there was no beautiful memorial on his grave. "I live secretly," he said, "I must die in secret."

The radiant memory of this wonderful pastor and fierce denouncer of the atheist Bolshevik power lives on in the hearts of his parishioners who are still alive. The path to his grave is not overgrown. When the parishioners meet, the conversation always turns to Fr. Alexander, and the prayers of those who pray to him at his grave are always answered.

95. HOLY CONFESSOR VARENKA OF SERGACH (+1980)

and those with her

Blessed Varenka, or Barbara Pavlovna Shulayeva, was born in 1914 in the village of Maidany, Pilninsky uyezd, Nizhni-Novgorod province, into a peasant family. The family worked on weekdays and went to church on Sundays. Varenka, who was no different from other peasant children, also went to church with her parents. Her spiritual father was **Fr. Vyacheslav Leontiev**.

Once, when she was thirteen years old, she saw in her sleep a church and a Woman in monastic vesture, and many people around her. The eyes of all were directed upon her; they went up to her reverently and received her blessing. And Varenka very much wanted to receive her blessing. She got up after the others - there were nuns there, as well as priests - and went closer and closer to her. Finally she came up to her and asked:

"Give the blessing."

"No, I only bless the weekdaysers, who go to church on weekdays."

And such sorrow gripped the heart of the girl, she so wanted to receive her blessing, that from that day she began to go to church every day. And so that people should not laugh at her for going to church every day like a nun, Varenka wrapped her face in a scarf and went to the church through the kitchen gardens.

Some time later, she for the first time fell asleep in a special way and slept for several days. In her sleep she saw the habitations of Paradise and hell and what awaits a man after his death.

"Do you remember," she said to her mother on awakening, "when I threw up my hands? That was when I saw a woman who was being flayed with iron combs. Then she was thrown into a boiling cauldron, and I was frightened."

Sometimes she told people what the Lord had been pleased to show her. Thus Matthew Leontiev died in Maidany, and since it was a time of famine his relatives did not want to have a funeral repast on the fortieth day. When Varenka fell asleep she saw him standing up to the knees in a fiery river.

"Tell our people to help me," he said.

Varenka told this to his relatives, and they had a funeral repast. After this she saw him again in her sleep, but he was now standing on the bank.

The news of her unusual gift spread among the Orthodox, and they began to come to her so as to learn the lot of their dead relatives. An old woman called Olga lived in the village. She was extremely poor and weak. She had a wattle

fence which was rickety; she cut wood with a mattock, and her courtyard was always covered with snow - she didn't have the strength or time to clear it because she still had a horse and cow, without which not one peasant household could survive. She had worked all her life and her life had been hard. And when she died Varenka saw her soul in Paradise.

Sometimes when they asked her about something, she did not reply immediately, but only the next time she woke up.

A few days before she would go to sleep, an Angel would appear to her and warn her not to leave the house in case she fell down somewhere with nobody to look after her.

When she fell asleep she became as if dead, so that the limbs of her body grew numb and became immobile.

Once in the church after the end of the Liturgy, Varenka said to Anastasia Astafyeva, with whom she was friendly:

"Let's go home, I'm going to fall asleep now."

"I haven't yet gone up to the cross," she replied.

"Quick," said Varenka hurriedly.

And indeed they hadn't reached the square before Varenka began to fall asleep. They had to go for a sledge to bring her to her house.

Sometimes while she was asleep she would describe in detail what she was seeing at that moment. These stories were written down and filled a thick notebook. But during the persecutions, for fear of the atheists, those close to her threw the notebook into the stove.

These revelations took place regularly in the course of almost ten years. She said that she had seen the Mother of God, that she had been led by St. Nicholas, that there is a fiery river which every soul must pass over after death, and she showed a place on her hand which had been burned to the bone when a drop from the river fell on her.

The authorities heard about Varenka. Members of the Komsomol used to come to her house while she was sleeping, they even beat her in the hope of awaking her and 'uncovering the deception'. Then doctors began to come from Gorky (Nizhni-Novgorod); they gave her fast-acting injections with the same aim as the komsomolites. They injected her with such strong doses and so often that when she woke up she couldn't raise her hands.

But, whatever they did, the atheists were unable to break her sleep. Then they decided to take her to a hospital so as to continue their experiments there.

Once they had already come to the girl and were trying to lift her, but they found her so heavy that they couldn't tear her away from the bed.

"It doesn't matter," they said. "Tomorrow we'll come with the car and take her together with her bed."

After their departure Varenka woke up, and her mother, bitterly complaining that she could do nothing, told her what the doctors were intending to do. On the same day Varenka got her things together and left the house. And for the next several years she wandered round the holy places of the Volga region, sometimes alone, sometimes with some friends.

Varenka was a member of the Catacomb Church. She refused to have a passport or to take the pension that they imposed on her. When Metropolitan Sergius' declaration was published in 1927, she went round the churches reproaching the priests who accepted the declaration. Once she even rebuked a bishop, although he became very angry. A certain sergianist priest Ioann from Nizhni-Novogorod greatly venerated her and used to visit her. He always wanted to give her communion, but she said:

"I've already corrected myself" (that is received communion, for she did not receive communion in the sergianist churches).

When he died she wept very much, because she knew what happened to him after his death. Once the Lord showed her all the renovationists and Metropolitan Sergius. They were in a dark place and their hands were bound.

Once the priest Peter sent her the Holy Gifts. He put them in a specially adapted icon. When they came to arrest Fr. Peter in the house where he was hiding he suddenly had a heart attack and died.

In 1936, when she was only just twenty-two, she went with some friends to the elder Ioann Ardatovsky, who was famed throughout the region for his righteous life and gift of clairvoyance. He said to her:

"Go to Sarov - it's not far from here."

But her friends did not want to accompany her; they were in a hurry to go home. And so she, fearing that her mother would worry about her, did not go to Sarov.

"I'd better go home first, to warn Mama."

She left the house to go to Pilna, where she lived, fleeing persecution, with the Opariny sisters. She left them with the girl Damasha, and went to the station to go to Sarov. Six policemen were lying in wait for them in a remote place. One of them had been her persecutor for a long time; his name was Gavrilov.

Varenka understood that they wouldn't let her go. And she prayed to the Mother of God.

The policemen beat her mercilessly, kicking her and hitting her with iron rods; they beat her in such a way that her face was turned into a purple mask, and blood poured from her ears and mouth. When they were preparing to dishonour her, the Mother of God defended her - an invisible force stopped them from approaching her.

They retreated, and took the girls to the police-station, but they did not abandon the thought of punishing her. When Varenka asked for a drink, they gave her instead, in the guise of medicine, some arsenic powder in the water. But Domasha, who was being kept in the police-station together with Varenka, stealthily poured away the arsenic, and gave her water. The policemen were waiting for the poison to work, but when they saw no signs of her being poisoned, they said:

"Well, you're a tenacious one. Probably a saint."

From that time Varenka was deprived of the use of her legs, and spent the next 40 years until her death lying down. She had control only over the upper half of her body.

"There's my Sarov, my disobedience," she would say.

Her falling asleep also stopped. But now she was persecuted by the authorities, so she couldn't stay long in one place, and had to go from place to place, whatever the weather. In the winter they transported her in a basket attached to the sledge.

One night when the weather was bad Varenka fell out of the basket into a snowdrift, and they didn't discover it immediately. They returned, but wandered round the whole night, having lost the way.

Varenka had to suffer not only from the atheists, but also from those close to her. At first she was looked after by Annushka, who was nicknamed Handless, and by Nyura. When Annushka didn't like something she beat the sick Varenka cruelly, while Nyura soon married, taking all Varenka's things except her icons and the bed on which she lay. Soon the house in which she lived with her husband burned down. Then they built another one - and it also burned down. Only then did the mother of Nyura understand that the Lord was punishing her because of the sick Varenka, and she came to ask forgiveness for her daughter.

Finally, Varenka managed to buy a small, but well-built house on the money collected by the Orthodox. Many people visited her, some sought her prayers, others - her spiritual advice. The authorities noticed that many people were visiting her, and when they found out why they decided to evict her. They

began to demand from the former owner of the house that he return the money and take back the house. Frightened, the former owner agreed. But God is not mocked. The next day the former owner died, and the house remained Varenka's.

Once Darya Zaikina came to Varenka, sat with her for a while and then got ready to leave. But Varenka asked her:

"Don't go. There are so many evil spirits in the house..."

And she covered her head with the blanket.

"Varenka, look at me," said Darya.

"I can't open my eyes, they're so terrible."

At this point a woman arrived, began to pray and said:

"Go where you came from."

But the demon replied in a coarse masculine voice:

"None of us are there now, we're all here, on earth. Whoever has no straps we do whatever we like with." Then he said, turning to Varenka: "Drop it, take it off."

And Varenka replied: "I won't drop it, I won't take it off"

(They were talking about her prayer-rope and cross.)

Twice the demon repeated this, and twice Varenka replied. Suddenly he said with hatred:

"Ach, what a hunk of bread you are! You've hung up an internal lock, otherwise I'd wear you out completely!"

Then he lifted her up and shook her strongly.

The demon tormented her for days, trying to frighten her.

"Mother of God," she cried, "help me!"

At that time many demons came to the house, trying to frighten her. And they retreated only when the Queen of Heaven herself appeared and placed an epitachelion on her head. At the appearance of the All-Holy one the demons disappeared in a puff of smoke.

All of Varenka's spiritual fathers died in prison. All the nearby churches were closed, and she began to beseech God to send her a spiritual father.

And in a subtle sleep after prayer she heard a voice saying:

"A priest will come to you on the day of the Vladimir icon of the Mother of God in the guise of a stove-repairer. His name is Philip - don't let him go until the end of your days."

She came to. What was that? she thought. Probably a demonic illusion - and she made the sign of the cross all around her.

Again she lost consciousness, and again she heard the same voice, repeating the same words. On coming to, she again made the sign of the cross all around her. And she lost consciousness a third time, and the same thing happened again.

It was the 21st - the day of the Vladimir icon. A peasant workman knocked, called himself a stove-repairer and asked:

"Don't you have anything to repair?"

She remembered her dream and asked:

"And what is your name?"

It turned out to be Philip.

"Well, come in then, and stay."

It was the priest **Fr. Philip Anikin**. He was born in 1878 (or 1880) in Chuvashia, and served in the Chuvash village of Kulatka (Ulyanovsk region). In 1915 he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Palladius (Dobronravov, +1922) of Saratov and Tsaritsyn. Fr. Philip was arrested in 1929 or 1930. The parishioners did not allow their church to be closed, and Fr. Philip was accused of inciting them. He was given ten years on Solovki. Fr. Philip rejected the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius and joined the Catacomb Church. He recounted how, on the first day of Pascha, they were being escorted from work. They stopped in the middle of a wood and immediately began the Paschal all-night vigil service. There were many bishops, priests and deacons. At first, when the priests stopped, the guards shouted at them, but then they fell silent and the service went off without incident. At the end they began to exchange the paschal kiss. And even the guards, who usually abused the prisoners, began to exchange kisses with everyone. Fr. Philip served his term with the Shamordino nuns who did not want to work for the atheists in prison, and took no camp food. Fr. Philip and other priests brought them food from their own meagre rations. The nuns lived on Solovki during the summer, and were then taken somewhere and were reported killed.

Before being released, in 1940, Fr. Philip asked one of the Solovki bishops to bless him. And to his question: what should he do now? the bishop replied:

"Wherever you find one of the Lord's sheep, feed him."

First he went to Krasnovodsk in Central Asia. He went to the cemetery to pray. The authorities heard about it, and they wanted to arrest him. His spiritual children sent him to Ashkhabad, but he had to escape from there, too. Then Fr. Philip went to Shumerlyu, in Chuvashia, a place where dekulakized peasants were settled. Under the guise of a stove-repairer he would go from house to house serving. And very many people came to him. When the war began and they began to open the churches, many went into the Soviet churches, but he did not go, and many left him. He lived secretly with his matushka, Catherine, who died in 1946 when she was sixty-five years old. For the last eight years of her life she was blind. They had ten children, of whom five survived.

Fr. Philip's son, **Ivan**, was imprisoned for eight years in Archangelsk. He wrote: "Papa, there are people like you here, and they give us what you give us (i.e. communion)." Soon he died from hunger.

In his last years Fr. Philip used to sit most of the time on his bed - he could no longer use his legs. He died on April 17, 1974. His flock was looked after by **Fr. Andrew** from Chuvashia, and later **Fr. Nicetas Lekhan** from Kharkov.

In Sergach the church had been destroyed, and many believers from the town and nearby went for church services to Varenka. On great feasts and at Pascha up to 70 people came to her. When there was no priest there would be services at Varenka's according to a "catacomb typicon" which took place quite openly. The authorities knew about them but did not touch her. Varenka was too well-known, and knew too much, not only earthly things but also heavenly (in all she had spent 101 days in heaven at various times).

In spite of her weak health, she was a great faster. During Holy Week she ate nothing. Once at the beginning of the Great Fast her novices brought her some soft white bread and began to persuade her to eat it. She obeyed and ate a little piece, after which her ulcer became worse and she ate nothing during the whole of the Great Fast. Her head was constantly aching, and her liver was also painful. So as to relieve her sufferings somehow, she artificially made herself vomit, but she never complained, and was always joyful.

She knew the day of her death in advance. A week before her death the Mari Protopriest Gurias (+1995) gave her communion, and it was he who buried her. The day before her death she ordered the bath to be stoked up, and when they took her across the courtyard she asked them to stop so that she could look at the starry sky and the snowy earth for the last time. She died on December 1/14, 1980, and was buried in the cemetery at Sergach. When they took her past

the church, everyone sensed that the space around became many-coloured. Obvious miracles took place during the burial.

Twice a year, on her anniversary and at six months, up to 100 people gather to serve a pannikhida. Many believe that earth from her grave heals illnesses. In her house there live the two women who assisted her during her life, strictly keeping the testament Varenka gave them, serving the whole cycle of services daily. They do not think about food or material needs. Once when they had run out of peat for the stove, a lorry full of peat with some driver whom they did not know came up and unloaded some briquettes. God does not abandon His people!

96. HOLY HIEROMARTYRS ISHMAEL (+1937) AND MICHAEL (+1988) OF PETROGRAD

and those with them

Fr. Ishmael (Izmail) Vasilyevich Rozhdestvensky was born in the village of Khubets, Krestetsky uyezd, Novgorod province on June 10, 1894, and was the second son of six children of the priest of the church of the village of Perechino (or Peregino). In 1909 he finished his studies at the Starorussa theological school, and in 1915 – at the Novgorod theological seminary. In the same year he entered the Moscow Theological Academy. He knew eight foreign languages. In 1916 he served in a student battalion in Nizhni Novgorod. On graduating from the Academy in 1919, he went to the St. Anthony monastery in Novgorod (where the Novgorod seminary in which he had studied was situated), becoming the leader of the choir. After six months, in 1920, he had made up his mind what to do: he married Maria Vasilyevna Tretinskaya and was ordained to the priesthood in the Tikhvin cathedral. Very soon, on May 19 / June 2, 1921 he was arrested for the first time “for counter-revolutionary agitation” (probably for resisting the closure of the cathedral). After three months in the provincial cheka prison he was released after five days, but was forbidden to live in Cherepovets province (in which the town of Tikhvin was situated). In 1921 he was arrested for a second time in Moscow, and was cast into Butyrki prison. However, he was acquitted by a revolutionary court. However, according to another source he went to Petrograd in the autumn of 1921.

At the beginning of 1922 (according to another source, 1921), he was appointed rector of the Transfiguration church in Strelna, near Petrograd, and began to lead a very serious and conscientious priest's life. According to a member of the Makushin family, who lived not far from the church, “the honest glance of the pure eyes of Fr. Ishmael attracted many believers. At times they could not all get into the church and stood in the garden. They waited in hope until batyushka would come out to them and bless them. Some of them had come from distant places, sick and demon-possessed people came to be healed. It was enough for Fr. Ishmael to read a prayer and press the holy cross to their lips for the attack to cease, and for the sick to become normal instantaneously, getting up on their feet and looking around. We were more than once witnesses of such healings.” The suffering women sometimes trembled even at the sight of his devoted, obedient spiritual children.

Fr. Ishmael was also clairvoyant. A man who lived fifteen miles away never came to church, even though he had heard of this exceptional priest who drew people to himself. One Sunday he decided to verify the rumours, and he came. At the end of the Liturgy, while standing among the faithful, he heard Fr. Ishmael say:

"Well, thank you, servant of God Peter, for praying for me,"

and he looked in his direction. He was indeed Peter, and this struck him so forcibly that from then on he became a constant visitor to the church and close to Fr. Ishmael.

In the spring of 1925 Fr. Ishmael was promoted to the rank of protopriest and made rector also of the Dormition cemetery church in Strelna.

On December 28, 1927, Fr. Ishmael and his brother, Fr. Michael signed a document rejecting the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius (their signatures were numbers 51 and 52), and joined the Catacomb Church.

The former renovationist deacon Anatoly Levitin-Krasnov writes: "Ecstatic speeches were uttered in Strelna, where at the head of the church stood the popular priest Fr. Ishmael, who was called 'the Strelna fanatic'. Fr. Ishmael was tall, with long hair falling on both sides to his waist which flew in all directions during his sermons. In a heart-rending voice he denounced the 'sergianist church', calling it 'the whore of Babylon', and he called the services of the sergianists and renovationists - between whom he made no distinction - the service of Satan..."

This led to his persecution. Once Fr. Ishmael said:

"I am going to Golgotha. Who will follow me?"

He was arrested in the night of February 12/25, 1928 in his house by the church in connection "with the sending to the OGPU of agents' information" concerning the fact that "he systematically conducted counter-revolutionary propaganda in church and went round the houses of believers stirring them up against Soviet power".

But it took four months for two false witnesses from Strelna to be found who could confirm this accusation. The assistant station chief of Strelna railway station (who had been sentenced to ten years' hard labour for stealing a bag of oats) declared that "Ishmael Rozhdestvensky built for himself a house and in general lived in style... He showed himself to be an enemy of Soviet power, making a public counter-revolutionary sermon in the church on November 20, 1927." The second witness, a woman, said that the priest "deliberately does not use the word 'Petrograd', but 'Petrograd', etc." In spite of a written petition signed by 403 parishioners that Fr. Ishmael should be released, these two false-witnesses were enough for the OGPU to sentence him, on August 17, to three years' exile in the Urals.

Fr. Ishmael's house, which had been built near the church in 1923, was now occupied by the family of a policeman.

But in 1931, at the end of his term, the authorities added three more years, forbidding him to live in 12 specified places. When they saw him off for the last time, people wanted to run after the train, but the rifle-butts of the Red Army

soldiers drove them back. Before going on his last journey, he handed over the care of his flock to his brother, Fr. Michael, and forbade his flock to have anything whatever to do with the Soviet church.

According to one source, a woman who was not well known to Fr. Ishmael once came to him for confession. When she returned home, perhaps desiring to please her daughter, who was married to an atheist, she declared that the priest had hit her while blessing her. Fr. Ishmael had the custom of as it were implanting the sign of the cross in the forehead and shoulders. A trial followed, and he was condemned to forced labour.

However, according to another source, in 1931 Fr. Ishmael remained to live in Perm, and in 1932 moved to the village of Bystritsa, Orichevsky region, Vyatka province, where he served in the local Josephite church. In April, 1936, in view of the church's closure and his inevitable arrest, he left Bystritsa and lived illegally in Petrograd province, carrying out secret services in the homes of believers.

On May 2/15, 1937 a daughter by the name of Maria was born to Fr. Ishmael. But he never saw her, since from April, 1937 he was forced to live in hiding.

Once Fr. Ishmael was serving before the icon of the Mother of God "Assuage My Sorrow". While he was reading the Gospel, before the eyes of those present there appeared a small rose-coloured cloud surrounding his head like a halo. This was not long before his arrest and martyr's death in 1937.

On July 18/31, 1937 Fr. Ishmael was again arrested in Cholovo station, Oredezhsy region, Petrograd district, and was sent under escort to Vyatka, where he was investigated as "one of the leaders of the counter-revolutionary organization of churchmen, 'the True Orthodox Church'". Two months later, on September 16/29, a special troika of the Kirov district UNKVD sentenced him to be shot. "Citizen I.V. Rozhdestvensky" was accused as follows: "being one of the leaders of a counter-revolutionary-monarchist organization, he organized illegal meetings in his house, where questions relating to the organized struggle against Soviet power were discussed. He was closely linked to the leaders of counter-revolutionary organizations..." In accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, he was sentenced to death.

Fr. Ishmael was shot on October 1/14, 1937 in Vyatka. It is possible that he was buried with other victims of the Bolshevik repressions in the Petelinskoye cemetery in Vyatka, where a general memorial was recently erected. Fr. Ishmael's matushka, **Maria Vasilyevna**, was left alone with her one-year-old daughter. She died of hunger in the terrible winter of 1942. By a miracle his daughter survived.

In the 1930s Fr. Ishmael had told his brother that if he heard that he had died of illness in prison or in the course of fleeing he should not believe it, but should know that he had been killed. And he asked him in that case to serve a burial

service near the grave of the superior of the Saviour-Transfiguration church, Protopriest Nicholas Kedrov (+1904). In 1967, on hearing reliable news about his brother's death from returning prisoners, Fr. Michael carried out the will of his brother.

Protopriest Michael Vasilyevich Rozhdestvensky was born in 1901 in the village of Peregino, Starorussa uyezd, Novgorod province. In 1915 he finished his studies at the Starorussa theological school, and in 1917 - at the Novgorod (or Petrozavodsk) theological seminary. From the summer of 1918 he worked as a peasant in Peregino and served in the local church. Then, in 1919, he worked as a teacher in the Ostrov village school in Starorussa uyezd. In June, 1920 he was enrolled in the Red army, and served as a teacher of literacy for soldiers in the Penza rifle regiment. In December, 1922 he went on leave for two weeks, but was detained for several months for family reasons and was sentenced to one year in prison for desertion. In the middle of 1924 he was released early, was demobilized and returned to his village. He became a student at the Petrograd Higher Theological Courses. At the beginning of 1925 he was ordained to the diaconate and served in the local church. At the end of 1925 he was ordained to the priesthood by the future hieromartyr, Metropolitan Joseph of Petrograd. He served with his brother in the Transfiguration church in Strelna, and also in the parish of Saints Peter and Paul in Vyritsy.

He rejected the declaration of Metropolitan Sergius, and during the first wave of arrests had to hide. Once, at 11 p.m., he knocked at the door of Alexis and Zinaida Makushinsky and asked to stay the night. At that time he no longer had his own quarters near the church, since everything had been taken away. He went from house to house and stayed wherever people were not afraid to receive him. This time, after walking the dark, unlighted road from his spiritual daughter to the Makushinskys, he told them by the way that she had unexpectedly sent him away. After spending the night with them he set out on his way; but he did not in the least change his attitude towards his spiritual daughter, knowing that she was forced to do this because the secret police were looking for him to arrest him, and she had a family of her own to protect.

Fr. Ishmael's arrest left Fr. Michael as the only priest of the parish, and on February 25, 1928 he became rector. However, he was arrested on December 27, 1930 in connection with the case of the Petrograd branch of the True Orthodox Church, and on October 8, 1931, in accordance with articles 58-10 and 58-11, was sentenced to three years in the camps. He was sent to Siblag, then, in 1932, to the Belomor canal, where he carried sand in wheelbarrows on starvation rations, and later to Dmitrovlag. Towards the end of his term his wife, too, was arrested.

He was released in August, 1933 without the right to live in twelve major cities and at least 110 kilometres from Petrograd for three years. He settled in the village of Malaya Vishera and worked on the railway. From the beginning of 1934 he was living in Peregino, served as a reader in the local church and

secretly visited his family and believers in Strelna. In December, 1937 he moved to Strelna and lived illegally, secretly carrying out services in the homes of believers. He saw his children by night. During the German occupation he was living in Petrograd with his spiritual children. Just before his next arrest he was living with **Maria Fyodorovna** on Lekhtenbergskaya near the Baltic station. He was in contact with **Archimandrite Claudius**, who was shot in 1943, and with **Hieromonk Tikon (Zorin)**.

Alexis and Zinaida Makushinsky write: "Father Michael's deep understanding of Christianity and his faith in the future life, for which temporal earthly life is only a preparation, sometimes simply stunned people. And so an ever-increasing flock was drawn to Father Michael just as they had been to his arrested brother. He celebrated the Divine services, which at first were still in the church, reverently, penetratingly, and attentively. His sermons, which he considered indispensable, were penetrated with the desire to teach people to love God entirely, with a true, self-sacrificing love, preparing a soul for unavoidable trials, and perhaps for death for Him.

"The unforgettable meals after the Liturgy were a great joy, despite the poor food and, in addition, the strictly observed fasts! At table there sat poor and miserable people. To everyone Father Michael had the same attitude; everyone he encouraged. After one such pauper had been buried without charge, the widow was treated with special kindness and was asked to eat at the common table for the whole forty days afterwards. This was an apostolic family; everyone was kin and close, each suffering for the others. Having almost no income, since their flock was very poor, both brothers lived with a single thought: to help, rather than to receive.

"In those frightful times, when people were jailed and banished without trial or investigation, solely for faith in God, Father Michael went immediately wherever he was summoned, risking his life, supported only by his faith in God's Omnipresence. He went even to complete atheists in the hours before their death, if by inspiration from above he hoped to awaken their frozen souls. And a dying atheist would glance at the face which bent over him in love, would soften, and... repent.

"In 1934 Father Michael also was arrested with his wife and sent in banishment to various places; his two children were taken by their grandparents. After three years [in 1938] he was released, and then he could serve only in secret, having no right even to a place to stay. His wife could not endure such a life of suffering, and on being released from prison she did not return to him but found another man for herself. Still, Father Michael waited to see her when she would come to visit the children. He had no home where he could see his wife or children, and of course he could not meet them at the catacomb services; and so he would meet his wife at various places in the country, and would see the children often at our place. Once she wished to take the children for a visit to her home in Alma Ata. Father Michael asked us to come with him to see them off at the train station. The tickets had already been

bought and we sat there waiting for the train, when suddenly the little girl declared that she did not want to go but would remain with her father. The boy, however, went, and when he returned he was already quite different.

"After Metropolitan Sergius' 'Declaration', which delivered the Russian Church into the hands of the militant atheists, Father Michael, of course, became a 'Josephite' like his brother, and he allowed us no contact whatever with the Sergianist church. Once he became extremely angry with me for merely turning to look into a Sergianist church as I passed by on the street.

"After the Second World War broke out, life became ever more frightful. Here our father increased his prayer and began to prepare everyone to accept a yet more difficult cross. All of us were already prepared for death. Somewhere in a little village, in a hut located far from the main road, services would begin at 5 in the morning. When and where the services were to be held was communicated by word of mouth, and people would gather, but tried to come separately, at different times, so as not to attract anyone's attention. Afterwards, also, people would leave separately, one at a time.

"There were few people at a time for services. Each person was well known to Father Michael, all 'our own' people. No new person was accepted into the Catacomb Church until he, his life and outlook had been investigated. If you told an outsider, you might unwillingly become a traitor.

"In place of an altar table there was a simple table; on it were a Gospel, a Cross, and the Holy Chalice. On the wall were icons. Those who were going to sing would gather by the entrance. There were many icon-lamps, and they illuminated the room. Beeswax candles were obtained, apparently from whoever made them. Everything was quiet, orderly, reverent. In the reading and singing not a single letter was allowed to be added or taken away; the services were absolutely complete.

"By the beginning of the Proskomedia everyone would have gathered for the Liturgy. One can never forget it! Such prayer one cannot experience again in one's whole life! Father Michael with his arms outstretched, and tears streaming down his cheeks... Everyone would weep together, both for themselves and for him, who had, besides everything else, such great trials in his own family. He served slowly, penetratingly... When the dogs would bark outside our hearts froze; but it was for this that we were called, trying to strengthen ourselves.

"One's spiritual state at such catacomb services is difficult to express in human language. It is not at all like any service in our free Russian Church Abroad, even though it is the same Orthodoxy. First of all, there is total fearlessness, peace of soul, a heavenly, unearthly joy, the desire not to leave, not to cease praying. One wished only to be with the faithful; let them take us away, let them deprive us of life!

"The Paschal service was entirely of heaven. Father Michael was in white linen vestments. His face was unforgettable; it entirely glowed from within, with a heavenly, angelic smile.

"Father Michael remained always calm. In moments that could be dangerous, when he, not having a roof of his own and for the sake of his flock not wishing to be arrested, would spend the night with us, suddenly all our fear vanished and we were ready to go with him wherever he might be sent. He was both friend, and brother, and father, and mother. If he had to celebrate a service at our place, he would come in lay clothes with a suitcase in his hand which contained his vestments, and, under cover of the noise made by the kerosene stoves in the common kitchen, he would peacefully and quietly celebrate the service. And God preserved him!

"The words which Father Michael spoke to us that last time we saw him were remarkable. The Second World War was raging. The approaching enemy was already bombarding Petrograd, when at night Father Michael secretly visited us on his way to give Holy Communion to his spiritual daughter in the city. All our pleas not to go because of the danger, or to come with us into occupied territory, were in vain, and nothing could stop him. He sat by our table, called us close to him, and said,

"Listen carefully. Now we are all about to part. Many of us will not remain alive, will be killed. But remember: no matter where you may be, at the hour of your death, I will come to you, will confess you and will give you Holy Communion and will myself lead you to the Heavenly Kingdom to the Altar of God, bearing witness for you; for my brother, Father Ishmael, entrusted you to me to take care of you as spiritual children, and I must give answer for you.'

"These were his last words to us. He got up, blessed us, and went away into the night that was charged with guns, fire and death."

On the feast of Theophany, January 19, 1943, during the first part of the Divine Liturgy, there was a knock at the door, NKVD agents burst into the flat, and arrested Fr. Michael. As he was being driven to prison, the NKVD investigator turned to him and said:

"Michael Vasilyevich, how fortunate you are!"

"It is a great happiness to be taken to prison," replied Fr. Michael.

It turned out that the day before, January 18, the blockade of Petrograd had been lifted and the death penalty rescinded!

"If they had managed to arrest you even yesterday morning, they would certainly have shot you," explained the investigator.

After an unusually quick trial, Fr. Michael was sentenced on March 13 to ten years in the Vorkuta camps, followed by deprivation of rights for five years, for being “a leader of an anti-Soviet illegal group of Josephite churchmen, followers of the so-called True Orthodox Church”. Later he was transferred to the invalid section of the camp at Abezi. However, after serving his term, in 1953, he was arrested on the basis of a false accusation and sentenced to another ten years. Only on October 7, 1955 was he released after a medical commission certified him unfit.

His son took him to his domicile in Pechora. However, Fr. Michael still had to live in a dug-out and appear regularly before the local officials. In 1957, he was allowed to move south to the Bryansk region. There he continued to serve secretly. But in 1962 the authorities came to his house searching for rations and accusing him of murdering an old woman. As they left they said that if they found even one believer in the house during a service they would arrest him.

For two years Fr. Michael had to stop serving in his house. However, twice a year he would leave - ostensibly to see his son, but in fact to carry out the needs of Catacomb Christians in various regions as far afield as Petrograd, the Central Black Earth region, the Volga region, the Caucasus, Ukraine and Belorussia. However, he had to act in great secret, both for his own sake and so as not to cause trouble for his son. So no-one saw him leaving or entering his house.

Through Fr. Lazarus (Zhurbenko) he petitioned Archbishop Leontius of Chile to come under his omophorion. In 1982 he was put forward by Fr. Lazarus as a candidate for the episcopate. However, he was not able to arrive on the appointed day for the ordination, and Fr. Lazarus was ordained in his stead.

In the spring of 1986 Fr. Michael was visiting some of his flock in Belorussia when the Chernobyl catastrophe took place. As a result he contracted cancer of the lung. However, in spite of his worsening health, he never stopped serving. In the difficult conditions of his life he constantly celebrated the Divine Liturgy during the night. Batiushka passed the whole of his life in constant prayer and strict fasting. He slept no more than four hours in the twenty-four. His constant food was bread, potatoes and water.

Father Michael strictly followed the canons of the Ecumenical Councils. In all his sufferings he was patient, placing all his hope on God. To his spiritual children he was condescending, affectionate and kind. He was sensitive and responsive to suffering, was compassionate to poor people, helped widows and orphans and was truly a loving father to all, warming everybody by the warmth of his love. He was joyful with those who rejoiced, wept with those who wept and comforted everyone, teaching them to rely in all things on God.

On August 16/29, 1988, Fr. Michael celebrated his last Liturgy in Luga, Petrograd province, and on August 28 / September 10, 1988, at 11 p.m. he

peacefully passed away at the age of 87. The news shook the hearts of many people. His faithful children were inconsolable. He was buried in the Vrevsky cemetery in Luga. His funeral service was carried out in absentia by Bishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) of Tambov.

97. HOLY CONFESSOR PELAGIA OF BEREZOVO (+1990)

Pelagia Arkhipovna was born in 1893 in a peasant family in the village of Berezovo, Gorshezhensky region, Voronezh province. Her father was the precentor in the church choir of the local church. For the rest of the time he cut and sewed short sheepskin coats for people and looked after the house.

The closest relatives of this family were pious people. Pelagia's grandmother, Martha, went twice to Jerusalem. Her husband, Pelagia's grandfather, Cosmas Vasilyevich, became a drunkard in his youth. Martha persuaded him to go to Fr. John of Kronstadt. He went to him, took communion and returned home a different man. The church now became for him the most important thing in life. At that time he was still young. He raised his son Archippus, Pelagia's father, in the faith. Archippus became a psalm-reader. His wife, Pelagia's mother, Alexandra Trofimovna, was also a believer. She went on foot to the opening of the relics of St. Joasaph (or as the peasants called him - Yesafy) of Belgorod. She died at the age of 45.

Pelagia's parents had six children in all - Pelagia, Alexander, Andrew, Gregory, Paul and Martha. Pelagia was the eldest, while Martha was the youngest. (Later four of the children died and only Pelagia and Martha remained.) The whole family worked together. Pelagia's mother and the oldest of her children made hay, and bound and stacked the sheaves. They worked barefoot. Archippus Kuzmich was a God-fearing man. Fearing to be late for the beginning of a service, he would deliberately choose to make hay in no far distant places, so that as soon as the bell began to ring he could immediately give up his work and go to the church.

The church where they went had two altars, the Pokrovskaya and the Akhtyrskaya. Archippus taught his daughters to sing and put them on the kliros - until then only men had sung there. He would bring The Lives of the Saints back from church and give it to his children so that they could look through them and read them. However, Pelagia never learned to read.

Her mother, Alexandra Trofimovna, was also illiterate. She taught her children by instruction:

"Daughter, this is a sin and that is a sin..."

That was how the children grew up as believers.

Although Pelagia was illiterate, she was the cleverest of the children. She was very beautiful and dressed well. Although they were not wealthy people, her father was well known in the town as the precentor.

Before the First World War they had two horses and began to get richer. But the revolution came and activists took away one of the horses. However, the horse did not let them ride her, and Archippus was forced to lead her.

Before the revolution Pelagia married. This marriage was not happy. Her father- and mother-in-law were atheists and her husband also mocked God. Before this Pelagia had had a fiancé - the cousin of her husband - a good, believing person. But he drowned in the sea when he was swimming - he had cramp in his legs. And his brother seduced Pelagia and became her husband.

The priest who served in their church was called **Fr. Valentine**. His father and grandfather had been priests before him. In 1927 Metropolitan Sergius issued his "Declaration". Fr. Valentine signed it. When the chanters in the church heard about this, one of them - a bass, the cousin of Archippus Kuzmich - stood up and declared that the priest had renounced God. Soon the authorities again brought Fr. Valentine papers to sign. But he tore them up - both the new ones and the ones he had signed earlier. After this they took him away and no one saw him alive again.

In Fr. Valentine's place they sent a renovationist priest to the church and the church began to be considered red.

Pelagia's father continued to go to this church and took his youngest daughter, Martha, there. Martha did not go there long - in this same year of 1927 she married and left the area.

Pelagia was a very believing person and paid careful attention to what was happening in the Church. Some kilometres from their village there was a women's monastery and she regularly ran to the nuns and asked their advice - could she now go to the church? They answered her:

"Sister, the times are such that it is impossible to go to church anymore. There is no true faith there."

And they exhorted her not to take a Soviet passport. Pelagia tried to persuade her father and sister to go along the same path, but without success.

During the war she lived in a cellar in the kitchen-garden. After her house had been bombed by the Germans, she lived for a time in a hollow, in a hut overgrown with trees. Next to her there lived other people, including her father. The Germans came into this hut, but did not touch anyone.

Pelagia had seven children. Three of them were taken to the front, where two of them were killed. After the war the remaining younger children went to the children of another Orthodox Christian woman living three kilometres from Berezovo. There they bumped into a mine and two of them were killed. So after the war there remained with her only two sons - the one who returned from the front, and her youngest.

Her husband was a drunkard. He died after an unsuccessful operation. Before his death he repented to his wife:

"The doctors have cut me up because I reviled a godly woman..."

Pelagia continued to tell her father that he should not go to the red church. Archippus Kuzmich's wife had died by this time and he had married again. His new wife went to the local village soviet to complain about Pelagia that she was forbidding her father to go to the Soviet church.

Pelagia was arrested together with her sister-in-law Anisia (whose daughter had also been killed by a mine), and two other true believers from Berezovo. Pelagia was also slandered before the authorities by her niece. But Pelagia had a combative character and she went triumphantly to prison, telling the authorities what was true in the words of her niece and what was false:

"I don't deny this, but that is a lie!..."

Pelagia was imprisoned first in the prison of the town of Niznedivitsk, and then she was driven to the far north (to Yakutia, it seems). There she spent eight years in the camps. Later she told her sister Martha about her life in the camps.

In one camp where she was held the believing women used to meet for common prayer. Among them were two Orthodox young women who knew the services well. They were put as readers in the centre while the other women surrounded them in a tight circle. There were so many of these praying women that the camp authorities were not able to push their way through into the centre and stop those who were leading the prayers and chanting. But later they arrested the two young women and subjected them to the following torture. They laid them on the ground and covered them with a huge mound of snow. When they dug them out again, they were still alive, but one of them died shortly after. The other one survived, but the authorities were not satisfied with their punishment they had already meted out and sent her out of the women's barracks to that of the criminals. Somehow she managed to meet one of the women from the women's barracks and asked them to pray for her, saying that, although she covered her face with soot and took on the dirtiest work in the hope of making herself look unattractive, she was perishing...

The camp authorities, before letting her and the other true believers go home, drove a cart with passports on it up to them. Pelagia and those who were with her were indignant:

"Passports? Haven't we been in prison because of [our refusal to take] passports? But if that's the way things are, then we are again [ready to go] to prison!"

And they were again sent off to the camp zone for another term. And so they eventually released them without passports.

She returned home to Berezovo. This place is very beautiful - the village itself and everything around it is full of birch-trees.

She went and visited her younger sister Martha and persuaded her not to go to the red church anymore. Before her arrest Pelagia had been very thin, and always ate very little. But when she returned from the camps she was very stout and her hair hung down to her heels. Martha looked at her and concluded:

"A person gets to know God more deeply, and God gives him such strength!"

Pelagia told Martha some of her prophetic dreams. Their dead brother, Paul Arkhipovich, had taken part in the destruction of a church. Pelagia dreamed that she was going along a path and saw that the Lord had covered the body of Paul Arkhipovich with bricks in such a way that only his head remained free. "Is it difficult for you, brother?" she asked him.

"Oh, so difficult!" he replied.

She described another dream as follows: "I was running and running along a path made of sand of the most indescribable beauty. Some guides were standing by.

"Where are you going?' they asked.

"I replied: 'I'm looking for Archippus Kuzmich."

"I heard them reply: 'Over there a beautiful little house had been prepared for him, but now it's in a decrepit state. But the house which had been prepared for him at the beginning has been handed over to his neighbour.'

(This neighbour had used bad language in his youth, and when he had died a very long tongue fell out of his mouth. But he had a sister in a monastery - she may have saved him by her prayers.)

"My father was lying on a stove with his face down and could neither turn nor breathe.

"He said to me: 'Polya, it's very difficult.'

"This was the punishment the Lord gave him for betraying the faith and beginning to serve in the red church."

Pelagia never went to the churches of the Moscow Patriarchate. She feared them more than fire. She called the red priests who served in them "godless

batyushkas". They invited a red priest to the funeral of her son. Even then she did not go to the funeral, but stood at a distance.

Pelagia Arkhipovna died on May 25, 1990, at the age of 97. She was buried by her neighbour, a woman of eighty with the same convictions. Pelagia's son invited a red priest to her burial, but when he arrived he was driven away.

98. HOLY MARTYR JACOB OF THE ALTAI (+1991)

Once at the end of a hot summer's day a wanderer with a pack on his back and a staff in his hand appeared in the small village of Alexandrovka, Kurgan uyezd, in the Altai mountains of Siberia. He went up to the gates of the house of Theodore Arkatov and stopped, fixing his eyes on a three-year-old child who was playing in the sand. For a long time he looked at him, and then when the mistress of the house came out he asked for a bed for the night. It was the year 1906.

In the evening, as they were sitting down to supper, the owners of the house asked their guest to sit with them. The wanderer did not refuse, but said that he would eat only his own food. Then he took a black crust of bread and a copper mug out of his bag. Then he went up filled a mug of water from the tub, put it on the table, crossed himself and got up to take part in the prayer before eating. Because of the negligence of the owners, the lampada in front of the icons was not lit. And it lit up of itself. Naturally, after such a phenomenon the owners were particularly interested in the opinion of the man of God on all questions, and especially on the issue which particularly worried people at that time: what was going to happen. The wanderer spoke much about the future; the main thing he said was that one could count the years to the enthronement of the power of the Antichrist. They would destroy monasteries and churches, and subject Christians, and especially the clergy, to tortures. Whether he spoke from himself or retold the prophecies of the Holy Fathers is not known. But his words were remembered in the village for a long time. The next morning, on saying goodbye to the owners, he said, pointing to little James: "Look after him: he will be a great man," Theodore remembered that, and when he had to punish his little son, he thought: "Here I am applying my belt to this 'great man'."

James's childhood passed normally, one might say, although God's mercy was sometimes clearly observed on him. Once, when he was four years old, he fell into the chute leading to the wheel of a water-mill, and of course he would certainly have been killed if, as he was borne along at a mad pace, he had not caught hold of a hanging branch. How long he could have held out, paddling in the water, is not known, but at that moment he was discovered and saved by his grandfather who was passing by and who was the owner of the mill.

James remembered an incident from his early childhood. One feast day he ran into the wood behind the kitchen garden, where he loved to run and romp around in the thick grass. Running out into a glade, he suddenly discovered a wonderful way to enjoy himself: over the glade there hung a shining golden chain. Unthinkingly James took hold of the chain and began to swing on it from one end of the glade to the other. He was delighted, and decided to share his joy with his sisters, who were older than he. But when

he brought them to the glade, a bitter disappointment awaited him: there was no chain, only traces of trampled-on grass. Moreover, his sisters mocked him, saying that there had been no chain to hold onto, but only empty sky...

James did not understand the meaning of this vision, although already at this time a firm faith in God and the invisible world was being forged in him.

Once when he was nine, his father sent him out in the evening to look for some grazing horses, so as to use them in pairs to plough the land. He pointed to where they were approximately. On arriving at the pasture, James did not see the horses, but in the distance he saw an old man sitting on a boulder. He decided to ask him. Moreover he was curious to know where he was from – there were no such old men in the village.

The old man replied to James's greeting and asked: "What do you call this mountain?" pointing to a mountain that was higher than the rest. Incidentally, this mountain was unusual; clearly of volcanic origin, it was higher than all the others, and from it ridges and valleys pushed out in all directions. Rivers which began in the mountain flowed down the valleys. Until halfway up it was wooded, but from then on it was bare and had a rounded top. Moreover, the whole of the upper part of the mountain was not composed of solid rock, but of piles of small stones no larger than a football. Hence its name: "bald".

James said: "Bald". "A good mountain," said the old man, "in time it will blossom." "Some hope!" cried James. "Until St. Peter's day it is covered with snow, and from St. Elijah's day it is again covered with snow." The old man smiled and said: "What I mean is: it will not be covered with flowers, but will be glorified. And your horses are grazing over there."

James went and found the horses precisely there. Everything was normal, and yet for some reason his soul was filled with a strange exaltation, and everything seemed to him not quite normal: how did the old man know that he was looking for horses, that his horses were there, that the Bald mountain would blossom one day. Moreover, the appearance of the old man was too unusual: his pure white hair and beard fell down to his waist, while the skin of his face was young, as on a child, and without a single wrinkle.

James found his family at supper, and immediately as he came in he began excitedly to tell them about what he had seen. However, nobody showed the slightest interest. He was offended that they weren't listening to him, and silently ate the food he was given. Only later did he understand that they simply didn't hear him.

However, this vision was only the beginning, and had a continuation. Four years later, his father again sent James to look for horses and again

indicated the same place. And again James saw the same wonderful old man in the same place, and now he ran up to him joyfully with the words: "Hi, dedushka! I know you." "And I know you, young man. Are you looking for horses again? But don't hurry, listen to what I'm going to tell you." And the old man began to tell him much about what would happen soon to the world and to him. The Tsar would be overthrown, the new authorities would be against God, everyone would be forced to recognise it as lawful and given by God, and would be drawn into unfaithfulness to God. About James himself he said that he would remain faithful to God. However, he would have a difficult life. Soon he would be forced to leave his native land and go alone through life. Then he pointed to where his horses were grazing, and added: "Before you wanted to tell your people about me, but they didn't hear you, but now don't talk at all." "But where do you live, father?" asked James. The elder smiled again and replied: "Everywhere and here."

Now James returned home in a thoughtful and determined mood.

Soon he received proof of the truthfulness of what he had been told. Once, six months later, in the winter, James left the house in the morning and was amazed by the untimely festal rejoicing of his fellow villagers. He asked the first whom he met what this was for, and received the reply: "Freedom! Now there is freedom! The Tsar has been overthrown!"

James began to step backwards into the yard, ran into the stables, fell face down in the manger and sobbed inconsolably for a long time. In his imagination from that moment the world was covered in darkness. The incarnation of nobility and defender of the faith was no more, and now the antichrist would be enthroned without fail. In his ears there echoed the words of the elder: "The authorities will be against God."

And truly, from that moment darkness descended on the world, and James began in an adult way to prepare himself for coming trials. He now saw the meaning of life only in one thing: how to remain faithful to God in the face of universal apostasy. Already at that age (14) he had started to help his father in the heavy work of a peasant, and it helped to distract his mind a little from thoughts about the future, about the meaning of his future life. And he had to work hard. His elder brother Ivan was at the front.

At that time James's remote village lived on rumours from the front and on revolutionary news from central Russia. The villagers lived in dark presentiments induced by stories of wanderers and various events. And James's character was formed in this atmosphere. It was different from all the others. His inner torments once pushed him to decide to struggle with evil by force of arms: he attached himself to a unit of Whites who were setting off to join the White Cossacks who were fighting on the Panuj river. But he was caught by the Reds. He was saved from death only by the appearance of a fellow-villager of his in the camp of the Reds who expressed

his amazement that James was among the Whites. He had to say that he had come upon them accidentally while searching for lost horses. They let him go home...

But now in addition to all other woes his brother returned from the war as an atheist and a blasphemer. Life became unbearable. Once while he was quarrelling about ideology with his brother, in his youthful ardour he took up a gun and was almost on the point of shooting his brother. His father took away the gun and said: "It is dangerous for you to live together."

His father himself feared his communist son, and James, seeing this, decided to leave home and begin the life foretold by the strange elder. At first he went to live with his uncle, the brother of his father, helping him in his daily work. But he could still hear the words of his brother that had made him mad: "These popes... They go in front of the armies of the Whites and think that the cross will protect them: you fire - and off go the head and the cross."

Once his father came up to him and said: "Yasha, don't disgrace me: either leave here completely, or return home." And of course James decided to do the first. It was the summer of 1921. James went home to say goodbye. His mother fussed around, tried to feed him, put some bread and milk on the table. And this point his brother Ivan came in and said from the threshold: "you work somewhere and come here to wolf it down." James got up with the words: "Okay, I can also not eat here." He said goodbye to his mother and left. Without looking back, he set off out of the village onto the big road leading to the big world.

Beyond the village he ascended a hill from which he could see the whole village as if in the palm of his hand. He sat on the grass, immersed in thoughts. He was not upset with his brother, and had no fear of the unknown. In his ears there sounded the words of the mysterious elder that he would remain faithful to God, although he would live a hard life. The fire of determination lit up in his heart, and James cried out: "I will remain faithful to Thee, O Lord", striking his fist on the earth. Under his hand there was a stamen from last year's harvest, and he cut himself. Immediately he thought: "Well, Lord, I have sealed my promise with my blood." He got up and left without looking back.

Going from village to village, and meeting various people, James learned carpentry and sadlery. "A Christian living under the power of the Bolsheviks," he said later, "has to be able to do many things, otherwise he won't survive." He was helped by his physical strength: he could lift two bags of grain onto his shoulder and take them a long distance. This enabled him to find work anywhere. His external appearance also instilled trust: he looked like one of the ancient Romans, and to some he looked like the saints on the icons...

However, simply finding the means to live was not his main purpose. He was always looking for like-minded people from whom he could acquire spiritual knowledge. He often mixed with priests, but only up to the 1930s. One priest from whom he learned much told him (this was about 1929) that the prosperous peasants would soon be exiled, after which all the unsuitables of all nationalities would be imprisoned, and first of all the clergy. Then would come the war with Germany. They would reach Moscow, but would not hold out, would return, and then the communists would triumph. James did not much want to believe this prophecy, but he had to: the priest was an unusual man.

Once they were travelling on business to a town that was about 15 kilometres from the village. On the way they talked. Suddenly the priest pointed upwards, James looked and saw two swiftly flying crows racing each other. The priest shouted: "Where are you hurrying to?" One of the crows turned and replied: "We have to go fast." "You see, the demons are hurrying to some evil deed," he said to James. In the town they saw a crowd of people near a house discussing something. Some said that a man had fallen from a balcony and hurt himself for some unknown reason. Others said that it looked as if some force had pushed him. "This is where they were hurrying to," said the priest.

Soon the church in that village was closed and the priest was exiled. But James continued to live there.

James had many revelations from God, especially in visions in sleep. Knowing many things beforehand through these revelations, he was able to escape from very difficult circumstances. He tried to warn many, especially those who, as he foresaw, would be sent to prison or exile.

Thus he once went up to his friend Timothy and heard him joyfully telling of his plans for the future. He was going to sell bread, and buy seed and some other things. James sadly told him that he had to prepare himself for a long journey. "They're going to put you in a carriage with other families and take you to the north, where your bones will lie!" "Don't talk such rubbish," said Timothy, "otherwise I'll hit you." "Okay, you can hit me later, if they do not take you away this year." And truly, that year Timothy's family was put into two carts with all their insignificant belongings. Timothy went up to James and said: "Forgive me, Yasha, you were right. Pray for us here."

James's family, his parents and sisters, as he later learned, were also sent into exile, to the city of Narym.

Until the beginning of collectivisation, James was able to live comparatively easily, the authorities did not trouble him. And there were still people he could talk to and learn from. And there was even the danger of becoming worldly. Among those around him he was distinguished by his

piety and good looks, and the girls were constantly wanting to get to know him. He even became engaged to the daughter of one prosperous townsman. However, his bride once went to the baths and discovered a blister on her leg, which began to grow rapidly. It burst and she soon died.

Another incident showed that it was not God's will that James marry. Once on a feast day he was walking in a field with a girl who had fallen in love with him. Then he had a vision: not far away he saw a table and a young woman leaning over it and weeping. He got up from the grass and went up to her. He lifted her eyes full of tears to him and said: "Oh, you... I chose you to be a conqueror-vessel, but what are you doing?" James suddenly woke up. Silently he got up and left. Later, on meeting the girl, he explained, as best he could, why he had suddenly left. And from that moment he began to avoid getting close to girls, having made the firm decision not to marry. In any case, it was not the time to think of marriage - the time of fiery trials had arrived.

The beginning of collectivisation was proclaimed. For the peasants it was a diabolical noose. From that moment everything and everyone was compelled to work for the victory of the idea of Bolshevism. James understood well the true nature of this idea. Its purpose was to extirpate the image of God from man and replace it with the image of the beast. And under socialism it was practically impossible to buy or sell or earn money without entering into it, without becoming part of the system. James, like other True Orthodox Christians, refused to enter the collective farms. But it was more difficult for him to survive outside them because he did not have his own vegetable garden. He remained alive only by the mercy of God. Once someone ordered some shoes from him in exchange for a sack of potatoes. Another time some unknown visitors would simply turn up and feed him. Once a close friend came up to him and was horrified: "James, what's wrong with you? Come with us and do some road-building. You will immediately receive six kilograms of groats, salt and sugar, and you will receive bread." "Okay, I'll think about it," replied James. "That was a temptation," said James later. "I suddenly began to feel good at the possibility of receiving these good things. But then I immediately thought: why have I been suffering all this time, if I so easily go over to the kingdom of satan for a piece of bread?!" And of course he didn't go over.

With great difficulty he survived to the summer. In the forest the bird-cherry and other berries were beginning to ripen. "Now," he thought, "I'll survive somehow. There are berries in the forest, and enough edible herbs." In the morning he set off for the forest, which was about five kilometres from his house. He reached the forest at about lunchtime, and immediately set about the bird-cherry. He did not eat much, but began to pick them and put them into a bucket he had brought from the house. He already filled half the bucket when his leg got caught on a blackberry bush. He fell face down and lost consciousness. He came to and was appalled: there were pools of water all around. The bucket had not turned over in the thick grass,

and was standing, full of water, so that the bird-cherry was pouring over the sides. "This is no dream, since such a downpour was not able to wake me up," decided James. "I'll go back home, dress in white and go out into the forest. It's better to die in the forest so that my enemies should not rejoice over me and mock my body."

By evening he was already home. He lay down from exhaustion and fell asleep. And suddenly he heard words coming through his sleep, the words of Altai Tatars, Altai names of villages, villages in which he later came to live. Suddenly he woke up and thought: there are people from the Altai here. Their villages began a hundred kilometres from his village, and on the way to the town they went through this settlement. He listened. He could hear the squeaking of cart wheels. James got up, looked through the window and saw some Altai people coming to his gates and up to the house. "Master of the house, greetings! Will you let us stay the night?" "Why not?" replied James. "Only, what are you going to sleep on? I have only one jacket as a bed and blanket." "We have brought everything with us," they replied. And in exchange for him making shoes for them, they gave him bread and meat.

In the morning he went off with them to the Altai. There, in the wilds of the High Altai he lived almost beyond the bounds of the Bolshevik state. The Altai people were good-hearted, the more so in that they needed his skills.

Two years later, James returned to his village. He heard that socialism was progressing triumphantly, and that almost everyone had been driven into the collective farms. Those who resisted were starved to death, and the remaining "individualists" were stripped of everything to pay for impossibly high taxes.

James's village was called Yarki (later re-named to "Verkh-Katunskoye"). It was on the Chuisk road 15 kilometres from Biisk. James first came to it in the middle of the 1920s, on a cold autumn day. He tried to find a place to sleep for the night in several cottages, but was refused. Seeing some steam coming from a bath-house in one courtyard, he quietly went in there and lay down for the night. Later he often returned and lived with the owners of the bath-house. And at the end of the 1950s they simply gave him the house. It was in this house that he died. He lived in this village as if chained to it, although he was always burning with the desire to run away from it. For it was renowned throughout the Altai for its hooliganism and blasphemy. However, when they called him to move to another place, he replied: "It is not the will of God."

James decided to change his behaviour in view of the changed circumstances around him. While previously he had tried to live as a model citizen, now he tried to look lost and disorderly. This method of survival soon had to undergo a trial. A few days after his return he was summoned

to the village soviet. When they told him that he must go into a collective farm, and shouted at him that the people was building socialism, while he was an "enemy", James began to chuckle and through his laughs said: "Go and build it! You very much want to marry soon and raise a family. So get together and build a happy life for your families. Or you want me to till the earth for your families. But I still have to have a good time. So when I've done enough of that, I'll raise a family and have more children than you. And then I'll come and join you." And more in the same spirit. His first summons to the village soviet went well. They continued to call him, but by that time they had begun to spread the rumour that he was a real drunkard who would get drunk at the most unearthly hour. But nobody suspected him of acting, and the Lord closed their eyes. This went on for two or three years. James was more and more often summoned to the regional headquarters for a working over. There they sometimes kept him under lock and key for three days at a time as a warning. He was saved by constant prayer.

James prayed much, but nobody suspected him of it. He could see what none of those around him could see. Once, before collectivisation, he was with friends. Everybody was sitting on the floor and chatting. At that point James saw an unknown person enter and lie behind his back. Nobody paid any attention to him. Soon everybody got up and went out. The unknown person also went out. He went up to James and began to speak about the future, clearly warning him and preparing him in advance. When, the next day, James mentioned the previous day's visitor to his friends, it turned out that nobody had seen him. There were many such instances.

James also had visions of demons. Once at the setting of the sun he looked through the window into the kitchen-garden and saw the whole garden and beyond it filled with beings that looked like men about a metre tall. He noticed that those which were slightly taller commanded the others. Suddenly the door burst open and the first column invaded the room with shouts. In their hands they had weapons, hooks and spears of an unseen variety. James stood with his back to the icons and began to make the sign of the cross with the words: "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen." A shout was heard, and whistling. Some rushed back towards the door, while the others disappeared. He heard them speaking outside: "Cowards! You couldn't conquer one man! "But he was burning us with fire!" This went on for some time, and then everything stopped. James heard some knocking on the door. The door turned out to be on the bolt. The neighbour had come for something. A similar incident took place while he was sleeping in somebody's house on the steppes.

The terrible year of 1937 arrived. They were arresting and taking away even those whom it was difficult to suspect of anything, they were clearly settling scores. James was inwardly ready for this. At this point one of his friends, who understood the situation quite well, began earnestly to advise him to go away with him to Izhevsk. There were many factories there, and

one could get lost in the masses of people, the more so in that work could be found for such a skilled worker. James was about to agree and had already begun to prepare to leave.

One morning he was sitting sewing shoes. The mistress of the house took a pail and was going out for water. On her way out she reviled James: "You're sitting down, you idler!" She was quite a quarrelsome woman. As she understood it, work was only cutting wood and, ploughing the fields, but not doing some kind of sewing. James, as usual, did not react to her. She went out and soon came back with a man and said: "James Fyodorovich! I've brought a man who will tell you the whole course of your future life," and then she left. "There's an actress for you," thought James, "and she even knows how to act in a cultured manner when necessary." "But I don't believe in soothsayers," said James to her as she was leaving. "I'm not a soothsayer," said the man. He went up to the table, thrust onto it a map the size of a playing card and added: "Here is my map." (A bright green twig was drawn on it.) Then without a pause he continued: "You're planning to go to the west, but you won't go there. You will go to the east, and not in accordance with your will. The first place they will take you to you will be full of people. But don't look for like-minded people there, there won't be a single one. However, you will not be held there long." This manner continued his strange story in the same tone for perhaps half an hour. Then he took his map from the table and said: "I've said everything." Then he turned and left. At this point the mistress of the house came in. "What kind of man did you bring in?" "What are you talking about? You were sitting here playing the fool, and I bring someone to you?! I was out at the well talking with the women."

From that time James's life proceeded as he had been told it would. Later he recalled episodes in his life which were such that if he had not been warned about them in advance, he would not have known how to act. For example, when he was in prison, before his escape, two good friends of his were giving him contradictory advice. "Flee, James, the Lord will help you." But the other said: "Don't flee, they'll catch you, the dogs will eat you." Then he remembered the words of the prophet who had been sent to him, that there would be two friends who would give him different advice. "Both are good people, but don't listen to the one who will say: don't go, but the one who will say: go." And James went.

Another example. The prophet had told James that he would injure himself in a wood after fall over a cliff. Then, on entering a village, he was not to go into the first or second house, but on seeing near the third house a fair-haired man with a girl in his arms, he should address him and ask for what he needed - he would help. This happened with absolute accuracy. When James went up to this man, he immediately understood that he was dealing with a runaway prisoner and pointed out to him a safe way out.

When the prophet left him, James understood that he had perhaps only

hours before he was arrested. He gathered his things and in the evening gave them to a man he trusted for keeping. The night passed without incident, but with thought and preparation. In the morning James was arrested and taken away.

Again new conditions of life. Again it was necessary to adapt both inwardly and in his external behaviour.

The first prison in the town of Biisk was full of people. Many of his fellow villagers were there. They understood little, and had nothing to do with politics or ideology. James went up to one of them, laughed, and, pointing with his finger, proclaimed: "A contra!" The peasants, overcome with sorrow, began to laugh, understanding the stupidity of what was happening. Thus began the life in prison of a completely uncriminal man. Transfers and convoys and labour camps lay ahead of him. To they took him far away to the east to the city of Kamertal.

Life in prison was the same for James as for all the other political prisoners in the Soviet camps. Perhaps with this difference: that he behaved as an unbending opponent of socialism, refusing outright to work and passing most of his time in the punishment cell. Once the boss of the third section gathered all the prisoners and conducted a "conversation" with them. "There are among us," he said, "those who refuse to work, saying: we will not work for a satanic order." "Who are they? Shoot them!" "Arkatov!" said the boss of the zone and pointed to James.

James began to prepare for his end.

However, he was fading away on the punishment cell rations. Once it reached such a stage that he crawled under the bunk to wait for them to drag him out as a corpse. A criminal he knew came up and shouted at him: "Yashka, what are you doing there?" "That's it, it's the end for me." James pointed at the muscle of his leg and showed him a hole in his body as he pressed it with his finger. It didn't come back - a sure sign of approaching death. The thief swore and said that he shouldn't fear: "Take my rations and get up." "And how are you going to survive?" asked James. "I've fixed myself up in the kitchen and feed myself there."

Wonderful are Thy works, O Lord! James began to get better, thanks to the wise thief...

James refused to do any work linked with the building of socialism: he would not go lumber-jacking or building, but he would not refuse to work even for the boss of the zone, because this work was not for socialism, but for a private individual, whoever he might be. Nor did he reject carrying water and cutting wood to bring to the kitchen. Once he was again approaching death. By the mercy of God he was sent with other prisoners to saw wood and lay it out in the flat of the leader of the guards. The wife

of the boss came out onto the porch and watched. At the end of the work her mother went up to James, thrust a bread ration into his hand and said: "My daughter has been watching you and said: 'Mama, this one is a man, while the other is a wild animal. From today let him (James) come each day and take a man's ration, and when the cow has calved - a litre of milk.' Please don't say no, otherwise my daughter will be sorrowful," added the old woman. James thanked her and left. From that day he came to them every day, although it was very unpleasant for him. But what was he to do? As always, when he went to them, either the mother or the daughter took a bread ration and a bottle of milk from the table and gave it to him. He drank the milk, clutched the rations to his chest, thanked them and left. This went on for a long time, but his conscience tormented him more and more. "What if I am impudently using their kindness, and they repent of their decision?" For several days he did not visit them, and then the wife of the boss met him and scolded him. When James said that it was necessary to have a conscience, she exploded: "Then how are we to be saved?" James was soon sent off on convoy, but from that day he began to pray for that servant of God.

Time passed. The war began. Stalin began to take volunteers from the camps to the front, promising to give them freedom. But James could not go along with this, although the feeling grew in him that they would not let him get out of there alive. He again began to weaken. Once a boss came up to him and said: "Can you deal with horses?" "Can I?!" replied James. "I can give a lesson to Dzhigit!" "There, in the kitchen, they can't transport water on the old nag, while the stallion doesn't let anyone come near him. The old carrier has died, and nobody can deal with him any more." James really knew how to deal with horses. He caressed him, put a huge barrel on the cart, and did not take him more than twice a day for water, while getting enough food from the kitchen. Soon he was quite manageable. But now he could think only of escaping. Once the boss came up to him, slapped him on the shoulder and said: "Good! It's time to give you interest!" "Yes, yes. That's the way I feel, too," agreed James with a show of gaiety. He had already thought up his plan of escape, which involved working at the general labours. And he began to work there.

First he had to go lumber-jacking. There he tried to put an axe into the hollow of a tree and matches in a prominent place - just in case. But soon the work changed to carting earth in wheelbarrows on boards far beyond the zone and throwing it over a cliff into the wood. They were doing this because they were building some kind of boiler in the zone. James set about this work with great zeal, he ran with the wheelbarrow like a boy. He fulfilled three norms per day, and his exploits were announced over the radio. And nobody guessed that he was not doing this out of madness. He was training himself for his escape, and deadening their watchfulness. With great longing he would look at the wood, which was not far away under the cliff. The woods continued for a long distance, while beyond the zone on the other side was a lake. It was very suitable for an escape.

It was Sunday. That night James had a dream from which he understood that the Lord blessed him to do what he was thinking of. In the morning he abstained from excessive food. A Jew who was sitting next to him looked at him attentively, shook his head and said: "James, I saw you today in a dream. I saw a white horse grazing. You jumped on it and it took you off. They were shooting at you, but you rushed away on her and in this way she took you away." James gave the impression that he was talking nonsense, but in his heart he thanked him.

James made three trips with his wheelbarrow and then noticed that the guard who was standing on the edge of the cliff was looking attentively in the direction of the zone without paying attention to what was happening on the cliff-top. Then James hurled the wheelbarrow over the cliff and then hurled himself after it, as if trying to overtake it and stop it. He heard shots and the whistling of bullets. He spurted off to the side, but then ran towards the wood. The zone was immediately transformed into a kennel with dogs barking everywhere. He had to run a long time through the wood. His aim was to go round the lake and hide in the hummocks there. For a long time he went through the water, and even swam occasionally. Finally, he immersed himself, hiding his head among the hummocks.

The dogs were now yelping all around him, and he could even see some of them on his scent. James entrusted himself completely to the mercy of God and prayed intensely. Eventually the day, which had seemed like an eternity, drew to its close. It was dark and quiet. It was time to get out of the water. But then James found that his legs would not move. After all, it was Siberia and the water was cold, even though it was the middle of May. He had to crawl out onto dry land and rub some life back into his legs. Finally, with a staff in his hand, he set off for the axe and matches he had hidden in the tree. Only towards the morning did he find them. At dawn he hid in some bushes in a ravine. Then, when it was night again, he set off towards the south-west, towards his native land.

Sometimes James asked for food from those working in the fields or in the woods. Only occasionally did he go into a village, remembering what the prophet had told him about a fair-haired man with a girl in his arms. He fed on grass, bird-cherries, lungwort and wild onions. Later, when he would list the edible herbs, he mentioned young sprouts of willow, wormwood and others. When he could he grilled mushrooms on a bonfire.

The Lord preserved him in various ways. At the slightest danger he felt alarmed and hid or passed by the dangerous place. Later he found out that the place truly was dangerous. Often during moon-lit nights a cloud would cover the moon, and James already knew that he had to be careful and make a detour. Later he discovered that he would have had to pass a collective farmer's house in a field or tractor-drivers and their technicians.

Once James went off the path into the wood and sat down on a stump in order to rest. Suddenly a bird hurled himself at his feet. He looked up and saw that it wanted to devour a bug. James pushed it away thinking to himself: "I'm like this bug." This happened again, and James was on his guard, taking this as a warning. He wanted to get up and go into hiding, but did not have time. Along the path two detectives with a dog were walking. "Who's this? Documents," - the usual question. "What documents?" replied James. "Can't I go to the toilet without documents?!" "What are you doing here? Show me what you've got there." James took his axe wrapped in string out of his bag. The other detective waved his hand and said with irritation: "Leave him. Don't you see: he's a peasant going about his business here," and went off. The other one trudged after him, but then stopped and said to the first: "We should take him." "You want to get mixed up with him?" And the first started walking more quickly with his dog. The second then grudgingly went after him.

James spent the summer under the open sky, trying to keep closer to the forest. But he was in trouble when the winter came. He had to look for a shelter somewhere in a village. Moreover, the indications of the prophet were not enough; he had to look for a place to sleep trusting the commands of his spirit. Once he asked for a place to sleep in an unfamiliar village in a house which pleased him for some reason. The master of the house agreed to let him in, but he had to sleep on a sleeping bench and not move out, because some guests were coming. James gladly agreed to lie quietly.

The guests came. Quite a stormy conversation began. It went into various theological questions and especially into the interpretation of the prophecies on the end of the world. James attentively listened to their judgements, which were full of the most improbable errors - and, moreover, with a sectarian bent. It turned out that they were all Old Ritualists, while being the cream of collective farm society: the president, the brigadiers, the accountant. For James it was impossible to listen to these corruptions of the truth: it would have been better to sleep in the frost than under the bombardment of such lies. Finally, he could stand it no longer and, lifting his head from the bench, said: "You've been talking for an hour now about the coming Antichrist. Allow me to ask you: to what seal or trumpet or vial do you refer this regime under which we are living?" At first the guests were perplexed by the presence of a stranger, and even the master of the house was embarrassed. One of them said: "If you want to say something, say it."

Then James briefly expounded his understanding of the basic prophecies. First, all the prophecies spoke not only about one time of the reign of the Antichrist, but about three sections of the last times: the first was called "the beginning of sorrows", according to the prophetic word of the Saviour, or "apostasy", according to the Apostle Paul, and in the Revelation of the Apostle John it is referred to as the coming out and reign of the beast from the sea with his head-followers. The second section of the last times is "the beast who was and is not" or the time of the preaching of the Gospel

throughout the world, and, finally, the third period, which is in fact the time of the enthronement of the Antichrist. The Saviour calls it "the end", the beginning of which is the placing of "the abomination of desolation" or the coming out "of the beast from the abyss" (St. John the Theologian), who is the eighth in number in the dynasty of the beasts and is of the number of the seven, or the appearance of "the man of sin" (St. Paul the Apostle). As for the "whore", is it not clear to you that this image refers to a traitor-church that has betrayed Christ, that which should be "the bride of Christ", but which has been united with the scarlet beast. In the Apocalypse there are three "women", and all three signify the Church, it is only by their clothes and their activity that we can distinguish them: on the way into the wilderness she is clothed in the sun, but there she is divided into her who is clothed in scarlet and her who goes out to meet Christ, clothed in pure white, which is the righteousness of the saints."

Already from the beginning James's words had amazed his listeners, and at this point they asked him to leave his bunk and continue. The conversation ended with their asking him in turn to stay with them and enlighten their families. And when they knew that he was also a cobbler, they found a job for him for the whole winter. It was hardly coincidental that he asked for a bed for the night at the place where those who were seeking his knowledge were gathered...

So winter after winter James went where the Lord decreed for him, while in the summer he went into the forest and on his travels. He saw much that was miraculous and improbable during the years of his wanderings. And he spent about ten years being pursued by the beast, in constant alarm and constant hunger.

Once, during the summer, he caught a cold and his body was covered with boils and scabs. He had to buy some ointment in a chemist's, but the chemist's was on the other side of a river, and in order to cross the bridge over the river he would have to pass the police who would check his papers. What was he to do? Trusting in God, he took the risk. As he was crossing the bridge, James saw a girl running from the pavement on the other side to his side. Coming up to him, she raised her hand and said: "James, have no fear," and immediately mixed with the crowd. At first James was surprised, but then he understood the Providence of God and went ahead boldly. And it turned out that four policemen were surrounding a car and were searching it for a long time. During this period they stopped checking the documents of passers-by. James was able to walk past them freely. There were many such incidents of God's helping him.

He prayed constantly, and most of the day he spent standing in prayer. He often gave himself a rule in the form of a vow – say, for half a year. Thus once, when he saw a collective farm worker beating some horses, whom he very much loved, he began to ask God to lighten their burden and in their defence established a prayer rule for several months. There were other

reasons, too. He said that the demons often attacked him at such times.

James knew that he would have to wander for ten years, but he did not know how this period would come to an end. Once he was in a place not far from the place of his imprisonment. He had a revelation which told him that he would soon go into the world and establish his life among men, but how? Finally, he decided to go into a village, and there things would happen as the Lord would decide. But he was full of doubts. After all, he had no documents: surely someone would inform on him. He decided to lie down and sleep. In his sleep he saw himself going to Verkh-Katunsky, which was between two rivers: the Bia and the Katun'. Then he saw a canal from Bia to Katun' full of water, which blocked his way. He went up to the edge of the canal and began to weep. Then a young woman came up to him and asked him: "Well, why are you crying?" "I've been hiding now for ten years, I wanted to go and live in freedom, but my way has been blocked!" She went up to him, took a piece of onion from his head and hurled it fiercely into a ditch. Then she got a spade from somewhere and began to fill up the ditch. Then she began to dig at the edge of the ditch and fill it in. Finally she walked to and fro over it and stamped out a path. Then she went up to him, slapped him on the shoulder and said: "Go, and have no fear." James woke up. Now it was time to set off, and without any doubts he set off for the village.

He could not have expected what the Lord had prepared for him. Before his arrest, the destiny of a family had been revealed to James: the father and two older sons would be killed at the front, but the third, youngest son would run away and survive. When James recounted this revelation, the youngest son was listening. Now, as he entered the village, who should meet him but this youngest son! He was amazed at James' appearance, and when he heard that he had no documents, joyfully undertook to help him. He was very close to the president of the village soviet, and decided to use some cunning and influence him so as to inscribe James in the list of the permanent dwellers in the village. In the section for imbeciles. This is what happened: James was numbered among the imbeciles in the village, and this even gave him some privileges, which enabled him to remain faithful to God. However, he then had to take upon himself the exploit of being a fool for Christ's sake. He told everyone that he had been released from prison and had already been signed up in the village soviet. And he showed himself to be not in his right mind. Many were amazed and swore at the authorities for corrupting the man.

At first he had to live with the woman from whose house he had been taken to prison. But then a complication arose. The elder daughter of the woman conceived a violent hatred for him and even tried to kill him. Once James had a dream: he was lying on his bed in a hospital ward when a demon came up to him and tried to strangle him with a piece of cloth torn out of a towel. James prepared himself and when the demon began to move his hand he caught him by the hand and said: "In the name of the Father,

the Son and the Holy Spirit." At that time he woke up feeling a blow and something sharp falling on his chest. His hand was really holding someone else's hand. "Who is it?" shouted James. "It's me," replied the elder daughter of the mistress of the house. It turned out that she was aiming to strike him with a knife in the chest. But James, during his sleep, had caught her by the hand. The knife fell on his chest, cutting him slightly.

He had to find another place to live. The Lord directed him for three years to the house of the writer of this life. Later, an old woman, on leaving the village, donated her hut to James, and then he began to live independently. Later the family of the writer also had to leave, and he was left completely on his own.

His life was hard. He was living as a prisoner in his own country: completely without rights, persecuted and always in fear of being exposed for escaping from camp. Then there was the atmosphere of hatred of monsters who were ready to kill him at any moment. Every Soviet feast was accompanied by complete drunkenness, blasphemy and threats to kill the "believer in God". He was for them an uncomfortable reminder of the existence of God and His commandments. One winter he had to live in a cellar because almost every night they came and looked over his hut, searching for him. But his time had not yet come...

Especially terrible were the collective farm feasts: "the day of the furrow" in spring and "the day of harvest" in autumn. Then to the drunkenness was added demonic pride: everyone boasted of his labours for Soviet power, his zeal and devotion to it. And when arguments were not enough, there were always fisticuffs.

The days of "voting" for Soviet power forced him to live in fear both before and after the elections. The agitator-communists did not always understand that fools don't vote: they still felt intuitively that he was their enemy. Once an agitator-communist, the local teacher, came and announced: "James, it's time to vote." "For whom must I vote?" asked James in surprise. "What do you mean: for whom? For the party and non-party bloc." "But I (an unmentionable word) your party and non-party bloc," replied James boldly. "What then? Lenin also?" asked the disturbed Bolshevik. "Lenin still more..."

Two years later the teacher met James and said: "James, I've written twice to the regional executive committee about your reply, quoting it verbatim, and there has been no reply or greeting. Either the people there are like you, or God is defending you."

Yes, of course, God was defending him, but still it was difficult to live with the constant preparedness to go to prison or be killed by bestial men. It was also intolerable to live with the consciousness that there was nobody around him who thought like him, and no possibility of persuading anyone.

Significant in this respect was the following incident. Once James saw some children doing something or getting up to some mischief beyond the kitchen-gardens. He went to gather some brushwood in the wood, and as he was passing them asked: "What are you doing there?" "We're helping some people who are hanging themselves," they replied. When he left he understood that they were demons. He turned round - but they had disappeared. On returning home, he said to his neighbours: "At Paul Antonievich's there will be a hanging. Probably Pelagia will do away with herself. I saw the demons near their kitchen-garden and they said they were helping some people who are hanging themselves."

In the morning a neighbour shouted: "Hey, you, fool! You said that Pelagia would do away with herself, but it's her brother-in-law who's done it, not her."

James lived until he was 87. He would always say: "I will live until I see the white flag over Russia. Then I will die in peace."

He saw that during the elections, which were now free, they no longer voted for the communists' candidate, but for someone else, even though he was not ideal. And although they had not yet removed the Bolsheviks from their posts, they raised the double-headed eagle and the three-coloured flag.

And the time came when the Lord allowed James's bloodthirsty enemies to carry out their will. On August 9, 1991, ten days before the communist putsch, and only a few months before the fall of Soviet power, the murderers burst into his little hut and cruelly beat him up. In the morning they found him unconscious.

For three days he lay, almost lifeless. Then he recovered consciousness and said: "Yes, the communards know how to beat one up!" But he did not say who had beaten him, although he knew.

On August 12 he died.

Once in conversation James said: "How terrible must be the essence of evil, if, in order that there should not be any inclination towards it in the eternity to come, such saints as the Forerunner, the Apostles and the host of hieromartyrs and martyrs, besides hardening their will in the struggle against sin, have also to suffer violence and death from this evil."

He confirmed this by his own sufferings...

99. HOLY CONFESSOR SCHEMA-ABBESS JOANNA OF SUZDAL (+1998)

Schema-Abbess Joanna, in the world Lydia Afanasievna Sanina, was born into a pious Ukrainian family in the village of Novaya Mayachka, Kherson province, in 1917. Matushka lived a long life replete with suffering. The would-be nun received training to be a teacher in Nalchik, in the Caucasus, where her family had moved from the Ukraine. She was able to teach Russian language and literature, but left her post as teacher because her programme included antireligious propaganda.

When the heretical renovationists came to power, Lydia and her parents stopped going to the renovationist churches. Nor did they go to the churches when the sergianists took the place of the renovationists. "We knew," she said, "that they were all working with the God-fighters. Our parish priest constantly ran to the NKVD."

During collectivization Lydia's parents, Athanasius and Anastasia (in monasticism Agnia) were arrested. Before the arrest their property was seized. On returning from school the young Lydia saw a cart loaded with their property. Even their warm clothes had been taken ("dekulakization" took place in late autumn). For some time the whole family hid in neighbouring villages.

During one of these nights, Lydia saw in her sleep the Mother of God, who calmed her and promised her help. And truly, the next morning a passer-by put them into his cart and took them out of danger. However, this was only a brief respite: soon her parents were arrested.

"My parents were persecuted and oppressed for being true to Holy Orthodoxy," reminisced Mother Joanna. The godless authorities made her father, Athanasius Sanin, choose between recognising Metropolitan Sergius' 'declaration of apostasy', or face punishment. Athanasius Sanin, a man of great Christian conscience and human dignity, chose to go to prison rather than betray his Church. He died in prison years later after suffering bestial tortures. Mother Joanna's mother, Anastasia, spent a quarter of a century in Soviet jails, but emerged unbroken.

Deprived of their parents, Lydia and her younger sister Maria now began a life on the run, constantly changing their place of residence and suffering great need. She never acceded to Sergius' declaration. Together with other True Orthodox Christians she has to go underground, into the catacombs, to survive.

In 1947 (or 1948) she was arrested. It happened as follows. One day a man came to her house pretending to be a believer. He had a penetrating, heavy glance and a dark, unkind face. "Oh how terrible," muttered Lydia

Afanasyevna quietly. She repeated this many times, forcing the embarrassed man to depart from her. After this she expected arrest every day. Two weeks after the visit of this "Judas" she was arrested.

"What have you arrested me for?" she asked her interrogator. "I'm not a thief, I'm not a bandit, I'm not some kind of trickster, I've never done anyone any harm."

In reply one of the chekists laughed and said: "If you were, we would not have touched you."

"Do you recognise the Soviet church?"

"No, I don't," replied Lydia Afanasyevna.

"Why?"

"Because Soviet power does not recognise God, which means its church doesn't either. The only Church I recognise is the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church."

She was not beaten or tortured, as they did to many other prisoners, but subjected her to more refined torments. Having confined her to a narrow solitary cell, they did not allow her to sleep. Every time she collapsed from exhaustion onto the floor (there was no bed), they loudly clanged the door bolts. They summoned her to interrogations in the middle of the night. Her sister, who was arrested with her and who had a nine-year-old son in freedom, was given a tape to listen to. It was the voices of playing children; the name of her son was shouted out loud. These were the moral torments with which the executioners sought to break their faith, forcing them to recognise sergianism. One of the investigators tried to apply hypnosis, but did not attain his aim. Another began loudly to blaspheme the Mother of God – and was immediately paralysed. A sharp pain pierced him, and for several weeks he was taken to hospital.

At the trial, as during the interrogations, the sisters replied that they could not recognise the sergianist church insofar as it was supported by the God-fighters.

"Yes, it is our church," confirmed the judges.

The trial took place on Holy Wednesday, the very day on which Judas betrayed Christ. The judges decreed that they were guilty of "affiliation with the highly dangerous sect of the TOC" (i.e. True Orthodox Christians) and were sentenced to be shot.

Don't weep," said Lydia Afanasyevna to her saddened sister. "They're only doing this to frighten us. They won't shoot us. But if they do shoot us..."

what a light death... for God." She was right. After pausing for the news of the verdict to shake the condemned women, the judges declared that the sentence of capital punishment was commuted to 25 years' forced labour.

"No, God will not allow it," said Lydia Afanasyevna to her sister. "For what?"

For two "Glory"s from the 17th kathisma written on a scrap of paper, which the judges declared constituted the spreading of religious literature and betrayal of the Homeland? In fact, their term of imprisonment was later reduced to seven years.

In her Last Spiritual Will and Testament, written about a year before her death, Matushka wrote that the judge's words "execution by a firing squad" did not frighten her at all. She was actually exhilarated that her suffering would soon be coming to an end, and that she would, at last, go to the bosom of the Lord, having suffered for her faith and the True Church.

However, at the last minute her inhuman pain and unbearable suffering resumed. They were sent to the building sites on the Volga-Don canal. In the rain and the cold, under a biting wind, they had to endure the unbearable burdens of camp life.

"There, on the Don," said Matushka, "the winds are strong. We walk in the wet. It's pouring off us. And we didn't fall ill."

Only with God's help was Matushka able to bear the full measure of suffering and live. Even in the labour camps with their miserly food and hard living conditions, she tried to observe the fasts times as best she could. During Lent, prison guards would intentionally give her nothing but meat to eat. She would remove meat from her soup and eat only the broth.

In 1955 Lydia Afanasyevna was released. Soon her sister Maria was also released. Together with their mother, who had returned from prison still earlier, they lived a quiet life, secretly praying and waiting for the regeneration of Orthodoxy. Around them a small catacomb community was formed. God sent them a faithful priest - Fr. Mark, and in 1960 Lydia Afanasyevna received the first monastic tonsure. In 1974, she took the monastic vows of the small schema and the monastic name Seraphima.

Once several of her neighbours had dreams which they could not understand, and they went to her for explanations. One woman had dreamed of a large and beautiful iconostasis standing as it were in the middle of Matushka Seraphima's room, and priest celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Another man saw in the yard of the Sanins an old well full of clean, transparent water. But in the well he saw some terrible threatening monsters which disturbed the water and filled it with all kinds of rubbish (he was an unbeliever at the time). From all these stories the penetrating mind of the

nun understood that the Lord wanted to show her something significant connected with the destinies of Orthodoxy.

In 1990, they heard of a legally established local parish canonically subordinate to the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad and having no relations with the Moscow Patriarchate. Matushka Seraphima hesitated for a long time, fearing lest this was yet another trap. At one moment she decided to go, then she put off her trip. But immediately she left her home in Vyatka for Suzdal her fears fell away

On seeing Suzdal, she fell in love with the place. "Your will live with us," said Vladyka Valentine to her. And so it turned out. By this time her sister had died, and as had the other members of her community, and she decided to spend the rest of her days in Suzdal. Here she lived for seven years (in which it is impossible not to see a reward sent to Matushka from the Lord for the seven years she suffered in the camps).

A monastic community was formed around her. In 1994, the community was formally organised as the Convent of the Holy Hierarch John (Maximovich). Shortly before her death, Mother Seraphima took the vows of the great schema and received the name of that great archpastor of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad. After a long and painful illness from cancer, she reposed in the Lord on Sunday, August 8, 1999, at the age of 82. She was buried on August 10, the day of the Smolensk icon of the Mother of God.

On Sunday, August 15, on the eve of the ninth day of the repose of Mother Joanna, following a liturgy at the St. Constantine Cathedral in Suzdal, Bishop Theodore of Borisovsk of the Russian Orthodox Autonomous Church read out the autobiographical Last Will and Testament of Mother Joanna from the pulpit:-

"Being in sober recollection and healthy mind, albeit physically weak, I ask my cell-attendant, Novice Elena (Novosilova), to write down my oral spiritual testament.

"I, the unworthy Schema-Abbess Joanna (Sanina), witness to the ineffable blessings of God revealed through His goodness to me. I recognize that my life has drawn to its end and it is difficult to say what was greater in the path I have trodden in life: joy or sorrow.

"I can only witness that the Lord has always been with me and I can only repeat again and again the word of the Hierarch John Chrysostom: "Glory to God for all things", for the Lord strengthened me in prison and during the days that I was free from imprisonment; the Lord surrounded me with the care of those who served Him with all their heart and bore their most laborious cross in life with Christian patience. These people led me along the path of Christian and monastic good works.

“It was first of all my pious parents Athanasius and Anastasia (Nun Agnia) Sanin who taught me the first steps of Christian piety, opened Christ to my child’s heart, and led me into the enclosure of the Holy Orthodox Church.

“My parents were persecuted and oppressed by the godless authorities for being true to Holy Orthodoxy. My father, **Athanasius**, was placed under guard and given the choice: recognize the declaration of apostasy or not. His Christian conscience and human decency did not allow him to betray the Church and Orthodoxy. He was not destined to leave prison, where he reposed in God, amidst the sufferings and horrors of incarceration. My mother Anastasia (**Nun Agnia**) spent 25 years in prison. She left it unbroken and without having succumbed to the violence of those who wanted to force her to betray the Holy Church and Holy Orthodoxy.

I, too, Schema-Abbess Joanna, was not spared the godless court and the terrible interrogations in which the interrogators not only humiliated a man’s dignity but also suppressed his personality, disfiguring him and desolating his soul. Only God’s help, deep faith and burning prayer supported the weak strength of a man.

“Shooting!” – the word pronounced at the trial brought me the joy of the end of suffering for Christ and the attaining of the crown of martyrdom. How I then wanted to receive it! The Providence of God judged otherwise, execution by shooting was commuted to 25 years in prison.

“Exhausting days of heavy, anguished labour. Terrible nights of interrogations, the screeching of opening doors, the crashing of bolts and the fear of saying a word that might cast a shadow on anyone near or distant, whether relatives or acquaintances, or even a completely unknown person. The fear of speaking.

“Now all that is behind me – a long, long life.

“Our community, headed by our confessor, **Hieromonk Seraphim** (Goloshchanov), former member of the Drand Monastery, preserved the traditions and ordinances of the Most Holy Patriarch Tikhon religiously. We never became part of the sergianist patriarchate, never bowed our head to accept the spiritual yoke of the leaders of that organization. The Truth of Orthodoxy – this was always the chief thing for us.

“It is a great pity that so many people failed to see in Sergius’ teaching the seeds of a renovationist heresy, a subtle spiritual delusion akin to that which St. Nicetas of Novgorod and the Venerable Isaac, the Hermit of the Caves Monastery, once fell prey to. The fruit of that heresy has led its believers to spiritual insensitivity, to tepidness. Only a fire burning bright can warm you and dry your clothes. A smouldering fire has none of these

qualities; it gives only acrid smoke and the stench of burning.

“Founded by Stalin’s henchman, Metropolitan Sergius, his Moscow Patriarchate can only repress and spiritually mutilate, making lawlessness the law. Its mutilation is not immediately noticeable; its spiritual venom penetrates the minds of Orthodox people drop by drop. The psychological objective in this is to break down their spiritual immune system to make them ready to accept the Antichrist. The internal is replaced by the external. Remember: belief in lies and demonic allurements destroys your soul (said Holy Hierarch Ignatius Brianchaninov). Recall these words of the Holy Apostle Paul as often as you can: “... [they perished] because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. And for this reason God shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie...” (II Thessalonians 2.10-12). Let not these words ever come true for us!

Eternal memory to our spiritual mentors who rest in God – Hieromonk Seraphim, Hieromonk Tikhon, Monk Mark, Priest Michael, Schema-Abbess Laurentia and her sisters. They bequeathed their conviction and devotion to the truth of Orthodoxy to me. Our community consisted of about 200 people. Hard as it was to find true pastors after Hieromonk Seraphim passed away, the Lord always sent them our way. Verily did His words come true for us: ‘Seek and you will find; knock and the door will open.’ I cannot help but admit that it was with the greatest circumspection and wariness that I came to Suzdal in search of a confessor for our community. Then our sisters and all those of one mind with us also came to visit. Those were the first unforgettable hours of wholesome prayer in a real church adorned with holy icons. By the iconostasis and the Holy Royal Gates, by the tombs of the holy saints and miracle-workers of Suzdal. What bliss has the Lord granted to our community and to me at the end of my earthly life! Sixty-seven long years we did not dare to step inside a church for fear that we become part of sergian delusion. Not only did the Merciful God dispose that I visited the blessed city of Suzdal; he disposed that I stay here and fulfill my sacred mission as Mother Superior of the monastery of the Holy Hierarch and Wonderworker John Maximovich. With great fear and trembling I entered on this walk of life, trying in every way to justify the trust placed in me. I undoubtedly made many mistakes, witting and unwitting. I was bold and irritable, but I sincerely loved and love God and the truth of our Holy Orthodox Church. I was always zealous and am zealous now for the glory of God, for the prosperity of our holy community of the Hierarch and Wonderworker John Maximovich.

“I ask the forgiveness and blessing of the builder of our community, his Eminence Archbishop Valentine, their Graces Vladykas [Theodore and Seraphim], our clergy and all those with whom I have had communion.

“I am grateful to the worshippers and dwellers of Suzdal for their attentiveness and kindness. May the Lord show His mercy to all of you and may He order your life for the good in all piety and purity, may he

strengthen your hearts in the holy truth of our Orthodoxy.

“Do not abandon your rule of prayer, be zealous in Orthodoxy; treasure the memory of our Holy New Martyrs, and keep our abode safe. Turn neither to the right nor to the left. Follow the path bequeathed to us by our Lord; it will lead you to eternal life in the Kingdom He pledged to us.

“Schema-Abbess Joanna Sanin, Lydia Afanasievna. 14 September, 1998.”

100. HOLY HIEROCONFESSOR NECTARIUS OF JERUSALEM

(+2000)

and those with him

Archimandrite Nectarius, in the world Peter Mikhailovich Chernobyl, was born in 1905 in the village of Ustimovka, Globin uyezd, Kherson province. He was the son of **Michael Ivanovich Chernobyl**, a highly successful nursery gardener in the town of Alexandria. Like most pre-revolutionary Russians, Michael Ivanovich and his family were not very religious. He supported the leftist parties, and during the 1905 revolution he entered into conflict with a local landowner, for which he spent a month in prison.

However, after the revolution he underwent a complete change under the influence of a certain pious layman, **Ivan Savvich Mironov**, who acquainted him with many spiritual books, and in particular the Book of Canons and Sergius Nilus' *Velikoe v Malom*. Devoting the rest of his life to God, Michael Ivanovich would read the New Testament from beginning to end every day. In spite of the heavy work he had to do he would get up at midnight and read his prayer rule with many prostrations. Sometimes he would suffer demonic attacks. He fulfilled all the church fasts, and on Wednesdays and Fridays did not eat until three in the afternoon, whatever heavy work he had to carry out. On feast days he unfailingly attended the services in church. He was very simple, meek and warm to his subordinates. His house was always open for wanderers, the poor, monastics, etc. He also gave help to the old and the widowed and to individual poor and sick people. Abandoning his previous attachment to leftist politics, he became a convinced monarchist and an opponent of Soviet power. And in spite of the Bolshevik regulations concerning a six-day week, he continued to stop work on Sundays and feastsdays.

The authorities tolerated him for a while because of the model nature of his nursery. But Michael Ivanovich knew that this could not last long, and often prayed at home: "Lord, count me worthy to suffer for Thy Name!"

Several times the Bolsheviks demanded with threats that he change his behaviour. Finally, in 1928, they arrested him, saying:

"Although you are irreplaceable at work, in view of your religious behaviour, we are compelled to remove you."

After some months in prison, he was exiled to the river Angara in Siberia, to its most north-easterly bend, in a very cold place on the island of Kezhma. Moreover, they drove him there on foot for 1000 kilometres in 60 degrees of frost, staying the night in cold nomads' tents. Even at home he had prayed every day: "Lord, count me worthy to suffer for Thy name!" But here his suffering was so great that he asked God to give him death.

Michael Ivanovich lived for about three years on Kezhma in the most difficult circumstances, without the means to support himself and under the supervision of the GPU. He won the love and respect of the local population, so that sometimes one of them would visit him bringing him something - it might be something from the Holy Scriptures or some church literature. The GPU used this as an excuse to arrest him, which took place almost on the eve of the end of his term of exile. During the investigation his conversations with the local inhabitants were held against him, including the fact that he had greeted a boy and his mother who visited him on a feastday in a Christian manner. They also accused him of things he had never heard of. Thus some Soviet commission, going down the street, had noticed a board with a quotation from the Bible on it which had evidently been carried into the street by some children. In spite of Michael Ivanovich's decisive denial, he was accused of agitating among the local population by throwing such boards around. Later it emerged that the quotation from the Bible had been made by an evangelical and had fallen onto the street quite by chance.

Nevertheless, Michael Ivanovich was sentenced to ten years in the Krasnoyarsk isolator, where he was conveyed under convoy. Here, finding himself in conditions of complete isolation from the world, he gave himself even more completely to prayer. Apart from his usual prayers, and the Jesus prayer, he read services from the *Book of Hours* and everything that could be done in such circumstances, without being embarrassed by the presence of those around him. His fellow-prisoners testified that Michael Ivanovich's presence with them was a great consolation for them - with such a person, one of them said, you could stay in prison the whole of your life. One atheist was converted to God by him and even became a priest.

After Michael Ivanovich's arrest, his family was evicted from their house by the nursery. His wife, Anna Longinovna, went to live in Sinelnikovo with her daughter, while his sons went to the Caucasus and got jobs as gardeners. In 1934 he was visited in Krasnoyarsk by his eldest son, Peter, who testified that his father was given a further twenty-year sentence because his prayers made the chekists furious and he refused to obey their command that he stop praying. During his arrests and investigations, Michael Ivanovich always behaved with complete fearlessness. This truly Christian behaviour even in prison enraged the GPU, and Michael Ivanovich, after completing ten years in the isolator, was given another ten-year sentence.

After Khrushchev's amnesty in 1956 Michael Ivanovich was released and went to live with his wife and daughter in Sinelnikovo (a photograph exists of them there). It was there that he died. Michael Ivanovich was canonized by the Russian Church Abroad in 1981.

His son Peter, meanwhile, had been to a theological seminary and played an active part in church life, acting as a messenger and courier between the Alexandria and Kharkov groups of the True Orthodox Church. At the end of the 1920s he was living in the village of Pervomaisk near Alexandria. On

February 1, 1931 he was arrested for being “a participant in the Alexandria cell of the Odessa group of the counter-revolutionary monarchist church organization, the True Orthodox Church”, and on December 14 was sentenced to three years in the camps and sent to a camp.

He fled to Germany via Slovakia, spent three years on Mount Athos, and was then transferred to Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York. He was ordained to the priesthood and became an archimandrite. He spent the last twenty years of his life in the Spiritual Mission of the Russian Church Abroad in Jerusalem, where he was a strong opponent of the takeover of the Mission by the Moscow Patriarchate. He also rejected the legitimacy of every government in Russia except that of the tsars. He had many spiritual children, some of whom are still alive. He used to tell one of them: “Improve, or go to hell”. He was a man of iron will, but never lost his temper. After his repose in 2000 he was seen at his grave by a nun dressed in Bishop's vestments and radiant with light. He told her, "they have made me a bishop", and smiled...

His last will and testament, made in 1999, was: “Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Russian Land! Warriors of Christ! ‘Seek ye first of all the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,’ Jesus Christ tells us. In 1917 the Russian land proclaimed a Judas-call to ‘freedom, equality and brotherhood’, which was thought up only in order to seize power over the Russian people, and, having seized it, to begin its annihilation. Warning about this, the holy father John of Kronstadt often tried to persuade everybody that Russia can exist and flourish only in the presence of monarchical power, and that a republic will lead it to the Antichrist. Bishops Theophan the Recluse and Ignaty (Brianchaninov) also spoke about this. In the present tragic situation that has been created in the homeland, the main thing is to live without compromise in accordance with our Orthodox faith and pray to God for the re-establishment of a true monarchical power, which is of God, while the other systems are from the devil, who can do only evil.

May the holy Blessing of God be on all those who will walk along this path of the righteousness of God.”

Glory to God for all things!