

The Shepherd

An Orthodox Christian Pastoral Magazine

VOLUME XXXI NUMBER 9 MAY 2001

FROM THE FATHERS

"THE SOUL OF THE BELIEVER takes to itself wings of faith, so that raised above earthly things, and dwelling wholly in the spirit, *it can comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length and height, and depth of the knowledge of God* (Eph. 3:18-19). But heretics, not possessing these wings of faith, dispute concerning God, and have in mind only the things of earth; and weighed down by the burden of earthly considerations, they are led away from the loftiness of the knowledge of Divine things towards that which is carnal and fleeting. Neither can they come to the understanding of that boundless Divinity where only the believing soul has access, which perceives, believes, confesses, and proclaims the Unity of the adorable Trinity; and since it cannot fittingly express this in words, in this also is it worthy of praise."

Saint Gaudentius of Brescia, +c. 410 A.D.

"IF YOU SEEK JESUS, forsake the old pits (see Ps. 7:15); for Christ sits not by a pit, but by a well. There the Samaritan woman found Him; she who believed, she who desired to draw water from the well (John 4:16). And though you ought to have come early, yet though it is late, still come; for even at the sixth hour you will find Jesus, weary from His journey. He is weary, but because of you, because He has long sought for you; it is your long unbelief that has wearied Him. Yet He will not be offended should you come now; He asks that He may drink, Who will give you to drink. He drinks, but not of the stream that goes past, but of your salvation. He drinks of your love, He drinks of the chalice, that is, of that Passion which redeemed you from your sins; that the drink of His sacred blood may extinguish in you the thirst of this world. So Abraham merited after he had dug the well (Gen. 21:30). So did Isaac merit as he walked to the well (Gen. 24:62), receiving as his wife her who came there as a figure of the Church. The believer at the well; the unbeliever at the pit. And lastly Rebecca at the well, as we read, found him who sought her; and the harlots washed themselves in blood in the pool of Jezebel (3 Kgs 23)."

Saint Ambrose of Milan, +397 A.D.

"THE DAY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, which began on the holy Day of Pentecost, is ever present in the Church in the inexpressible fullness of all the divine gifts and life-giving powers (Acts 10:44-48; 11:15-16; 15:8-9; 19:6). Everything in the Church comes about through the Holy Spirit, from the least to the greatest. When the priest blesses the censer before censuring, he prays to the Lord Christ to 'send down the grace of the Holy Spirit.' The clearest testimony that the entire life of the Church comes from the Holy Spirit is at the consecration of a bishop, when God's indescribable miracle, holy Pentecost, is repeated and the fullness of grace is given. There is no doubt that the Lord Christ is in the Church through the Holy Spirit, and that the Church is in the Lord Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Lord Christ is the Head and Body of the Church; the Holy Spirit is its Soul (cf. 1 Cor. 12:1-28). From the very beginning of the theanthropic

dispensation of salvation, the Holy Spirit has made Himself a part of the foundation of the Church, the foundation of the Body of Christ, by "bringing about the incarnation of the Logos in the Virgin."

Blessed Justin of Chelije, 1894-1979 A.D.

FATHER GEORGE CHEREMETIEFF, for many years the chaplain and spiritual father of the Convent of the Annunciation in London, celebrated his name-day at the end of April on the feast of the Great Martyr George and he ended his earthly course thirty years ago this year on the festival of Mid-Pentecost in 1971, and so it seems that this May issue of "The Shepherd" is a good one in which to begin serializing the spiritual heritage of one who is himself part of the "spiritual heritage" of the Orthodoxy now, after centuries, re-established in Britain.

THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE OF FATHER GEORGE CHEREMETIEFF

THE LITERARY HERITAGE of Archpriest George (in the world, Count Cheremetieff) is not extensive, but it is essentially deep. Father George was an example of how much the nobility might have done for Russia and for Orthodoxy had it been wholly devoted to the thousand-year-old ideals of Holy Russia. For many years, Father George's writings, "Thoughts on a Journey," were kept in the archives of the Cheremetieff family, and they are now published for the first time [*in Russian, in "Orthodox Life, June 1997*]. His work could be called an insight into an Orthodox soul. The creative inspiration for his theological reflections, Father George gleaned from the Orthodox services, and from the writings of the teachers of the Church. The great advantage of his work is that, on the one hand, it is absolutely devoid of boring "scientifications," and on the other that it is full of all the positive characteristics of true church literature.

We will say a few words about the author of "Thoughts on a Journey." Count George Alexandrovitch Cheremetieff was born in 1887 in Saint Petersburg. There he studied at the historical-philological faculty at the university. Then he was enrolled as a volunteer in the Cavalry regiment. In 1910, now an officer, he married Princess Catherine Dimitrievna Galitzine. Count George went to war with his troops in 1914. Defending the "Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland," he spent the whole war with his regiment, until the Revolution when the regiment was disbanded. Foreseeing the inevitability of revolutionary events, Count George transferred to the Caucasus. There the light of hope to free his homeland from the yoke of the Godless ones seemed to be kindled again. When a Cavalry squadron was reformed in the Crimea, Count George returned to his former position and, right up until the evacuation of the White Army, he participated in the action against the Reds in the Crimea. He was only reunited with his family in the emigration. The end of the Second World War found Count George in a refugee camp, where after some time, he received the priesthood. Father George helped the refugees a great deal both spiritually and materially, although his own living conditions were more than modest.

In 1958, Father George was sent to England, to London, where eventually he became the chaplain at the church of the Convent of the Annunciation. He died in London in 1971.

Father George built his family life completely on the principles of Christian morality, as is particularly shown by his testament to his son. It could be considered a testament for the whole generation of Russian young people. With that testament, we shall end this short word about this good pastor, Father George Cheremetieff. May the Lord grant him rest with the saints.

TESTAMENT TO A SON

1. This stone is quartz from the forest between Aichshtaud and Alpenrose. May it remind you of Seis. You love Seis, don't you? But if you love it, even more you must love God, Who made Seis and you. How can one express love for God on earth? By doing good to people and loving them as yourself. So the first thing that this stone should remind you of is love, and love is God.

2. This stone is from Seis. Seis is nice. Seis is high up in the mountains. So you must aspire high, to the heavens, to all that is exalted and noble, or in a word, to God. So the second reminder through this stone is from the exclamation in the Holy Liturgy: "Let us lift up our hearts."

3. This stone is white, like the snow on the mountains. Then let your soul also be white. How can you achieve this? - through purity of thought. Cast away from you every filthy and dark thought, which cause one to fall into temptation. Don't give it a try, don't give in to temptations of dark and evil thoughts which come once, and then once again, and once again, because you will not notice how this will turn into a habit and then lead to defiling deeds. And even without such actions, filthy, dark and unseemly thoughts are themselves the cause of illnesses and misfortunes in life, for they separate one from God. So the stone's third reminder is: pure thoughts and the casting away of dark and filthy ones. With pure thoughts you will find Seis everywhere you are, and with dirty ones even in Seis you would be miserable.

4. May the whiteness of the stone remind you of white-stoned Moscow, of Russia. Remember that you are Orthodox and Russian, that you must work on yourself and perfect yourself for Russia and for the Holy Orthodox Church, and that these two subjects cannot be separated, because you must be faithful unto the Church and to the homeland even unto death. This is the fourth reminder.

5. This stone was made by God. God is perfect. By striving towards God, we are perfected. But perfections are various: the whole point is in the intention. One can strive to become better than others, but you can also strive to become better for others. In the first case, envy of those more successful is manifest; in the second, those who are more successful are good examples to follow; in the first instance, there is contempt for those who are less successful; but in the second, pity and a desire to help them. The first is for personal glory; the second is for the glory of God, the only One important. Thus the fifth reminder is to have in one's actions pure intentions and to strive not to become better than others, but to become better for others. For as you become better, you will be of more use to people. Concerning your intentions - they

give tone to your deeds. If you give money to a poor man from vainglory, that is bad; if you do so from a desire to help, that is good.

6. This stone is very hard. Likewise your faith and spirit must be firm. There is no place for fear, because even a hair will not fall from your head without the will of your Heavenly Father. His will be done. There is no place for laziness and idleness, because they are the source of every vice. If this stone had been soft, long ago it would have turned into dust and disintegrated; but it is strong and firm, and you must be strong and firm and not give way to dirty thoughts, fearfulness and sloth. You must be noble, as is this pure, hard stone. Remember that it is nobility of soul which is the only nobility in life. A man may be born with a noble name and a title, but this does not necessarily make him noble. This only signifies his responsibility; by good actions he must maintain the good name of his ancestors. A scoundrel is always disgusting, but if he also bears an honourable name, that is a complete abomination. The stone's sixth reminder: firmness of soul and nobility of spirit. That man is noble whose deeds are noble irrespective of the name he bears.

7. This stone is a good example for you. By His generous hand God has spread abroad similar stones and great blessings for the people; so you also be generous. Almsgiving is a great virtue, and preserves a man's life. This is the seventh reminder.

8. When walking in the forest, maybe you accidentally stepped on this stone and pressed it down with your foot, without noticing, but all the same it still gives you good reminders. That is how you should also forgive people all personal offenses and still do good for them. This is the eighth reminder. But even as you forgive offenses against yourself, you must also courageously fight those who hurt those who are weaker, and those who destroy the churches of God and His ordinances. Remember that you can and must only forgive debts owed to you, which are the offenses done to you, but you have no right to forgive other debts and you must combat transgressors. The holy fathers tell us: "He who defends one who is offended has God on his side."

Yes, and Christ Himself gave us an example when, with a scourge, He drove the traders out of the Temple. In the Gospel, it is said: "Resist not the evil person" that is the one who offends you, and on the contrary, do him good; but nowhere is it said that we should not resist evil, for throughout His whole earthly life Christ Himself gave us a strong example of the struggle with evil, which He conquered, destroying hades and death by His Resurrection.

In conclusion, I should say: remember that this stone is not a holy icon, and it has no kind of miraculous power within it, but it is only a reminder. Remember how good it was in Seis. If you fulfill all that is written here, then always and everywhere it will be good for you. If you defile your soul -everywhere it will be bad.

Love God and your neighbour, be patient with their inadequacies, because you have the same; pray morning and evening, which is absolutely required; do not be lazy, trust in God's help, do not boast, avoid arrogance, for it is the mother of all the vices.

May Christ, the all-holy Theotokos and the holy God-pleasers keep you.

Your father, G. Cheremetieff.

*To be continued with "Thoughts on a Journey."
Taken from "Pravoslavnaya Zhizn" June 1997,
Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N.Y.
Translation by Mrs Valentina Merritt.*

*The editors of "Pravoslavnaya Zhizn" expressed their thanks to the family of Father
George for making materials available for the compilation of this article.*

CONCERNING PRAYER

Its Inner Qualities and Outer Effects

Lord, teach us to pray (Luke 11:1)

**According to the Teaching of the Sacred Scriptures,
the Holy Fathers, and the Teachers and Writers of the Church**

*A Translation from a Booklet Published by
the Russian Skete of the Prophet Elias on Mount Athos.*

Translation by Mrs Valentina B. Merritt of Brookwood, Surrey

Conclusion

4. On the Prayer Rule

Seven times a day have I praised Thee (Psalm 118: 164)

WHEN you are saying the prayers, the rule, especially from a book, do not rush from one word to the other, without experiencing its truth, without placing it in your heart, but try, always try, to feel the truth of what you are saying in your heart; your heart will resist this, sometimes through slothfulness or a stoney insensitivity to what you are reading, sometimes through doubts and lack of faith, by a kind of inner fire and constraint, sometimes through absent-mindedness and an inclination to all kinds of worldly subjects and problems, sometimes through the remembrance of offenses caused by neighbours and thoughts of revenge and hatred towards them, sometimes by the thought of the pleasure of reading a novel instead or other worldly books. Do not give in to self-love, conquer your heart and offer God a well-pleasing sacrifice: *My son, give Me thine heart* (Proverbs 23:26), - and your prayer will wed you, will unite you, to God and to all the heavens, and you will be filled with the Spirit and His fruits: righteousness, peace and joy, love, meekness, long-suffering, heartfelt compunction. Do you want to finish your prayer rule quickly so as to give rest to your tired body? Pray from the heart and you will have a peaceful, quiet and healthy sleep. Do not rush your prayers. Half an hour's prayer will win three full hours of healthy sleep for you. Are you in a rush to get to the service or to work? Get up earlier! Don't oversleep, but pray diligently; this will bring you peace, energy and success in your activities throughout the day. Is your heart striving after the vanities of this life? Constrain it; let its treasure not be worldly vanity, but God; instruct your heart how to be attached to God through prayer and not to the vanities of this world, lest you be shamed during the time of sickness or at the hour of your death, being rich in worldly vanities and a pauper with regard to faith, hope and love. If you do not pray as I have told you, you

will not succeed in life, nor in faith and nor again in spiritual understanding - *Saint John of Cronstadt*.

FOR THE BEGINNER solitary prayer is not profitable; for this reason the Church typicon, while forbidding self-motivated prayers, lays down that those living in a monastery offer their prayers to God together in God's church, with the exception of those who are sick and are confined to their cells through infirmity, and the elders who are experienced in solitary prayer in their cells - *Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov*.

IF ANYONE asked me how I consider prayerful activity, I would say to him: train yourself to walk in the presence of God or to maintain the remembrance of God and to be reverent; to maintain this memory [of God] choose several short prayers, or simply take the twenty-four prayers of Chrysostom [*these are recited in the Prayers before Sleep in the Russian practice -ed.*] and frequently repeat them with appropriate thoughts and feelings. While you are practising this, your head will be enlightened with the remembrance of God and your heart will be warmed. In this condition, God's spark, a ray of grace, will eventually penetrate your heart. Nothing can constrain it to do so, it comes straight from God. Then you will be able to remain only with the Prayer of Jesus, and the spark of the prayer will kindle a flame. This is the straight path. - *Saint Theophanes the Recluse*.

ONE CANNOT start straightaway on this prayer [*Prayer of the Heart -ed.*], and at the beginning everyone must become accustomed to praying *from the heart* the appointed prayers and the prayers in church. Then when you go deeper into prayer, you may say the Prayer of Jesus continuously, binding it to the remembrance of God in fear and reverence - *Ibid*.

NEVER tie yourself to a rule, and do not think that having a rule is an aim in itself and that you have always to fulfill it. The whole purpose of the thing is fall down in heartfelt adoration before God - *Ibid*.

IN EVERYWAY, one must flee from formalism and mechanicalness in prayer. Rather, every time, let it be a deliberate and free decision that one does it, fulfilling it with understanding and with feeling, and not willy-nilly. One must approach the rule in full freedom. One must never turn to God carelessly. Always with great reverence. Our prostrations are not necessary to Him, nor are our long-winded prayers. A cry from the heart, short and strong, is what will reach Him! And one can do this even when walking. This means that you can pray constantly. And this should be our main concern. They asked Saint Epiphanius: at what particular hours should we pray? Hours! There are no particular hours for prayer; prayer must continue at every hour and at every minute. They asked St Basil the Great: How can we pray constantly? He replied: Have a prayerful disposition in your heart and you will be constantly praying. Work with you hands and lift up the mind to God. The Apostles went about over all the earth. How many were their labours! And amid all this, they prayed without ceasing. They it was who recorded this commandment. The spirit of faith, hope and devotion to the will of God; it is with this that you must be warmed in heart - *Ibid*.

WHEN YOU ARE READING a long prayer rule aloud in the hearing of others, the enemy will attack your heart and silence the word on your lips with the thought that the people do not understand many of the words and that such prayer is a waste of time [*Of course, St John is talking of a situation in which the liturgical language being*

*used was somewhat different from the modern spoken language of his time - ed.]. Quite obviously, it is nonsense. But what about the Holy Spirit, the Guide to all truth? Does He remain idle and not act to enlighten the heart of man? Have you never experienced this enlightenment of the heart by the Holy Spirit? At first you do not understand certain words and phrases, but then of a sudden the Holy Spirit opens up your mind to comprehend the words and phrases that formerly you did not understand, and suddenly this light is illuminating your heart; believe me, the same thing also happens with other people. Read with conviction of heart; do not give way to destructive mistrust. Sow the seed - God will cause it to grow - *Saint John of Cronstadt.**

THE KEEPING of the aforementioned rules concerning the maintenance of reverent prayer can improve the conduct both of the monastic and of the pious layman unto their edification, teaching them how to be constantly reverent and how to conduct themselves. Those who order their conduct thus can be compared to a well-made vessel, without any flaws in it, in such a vessel one can safely put precious ointments and be absolutely sure that they will be safe there - *Saint Ignatius Brianchaninov.*

AFTERWORD

From the collection of thoughts about prayer presented above, the reader can see how particularly important the significance of prayer is - it is the Queen of the virtues, of which it is also the source. Essentially it is that love towards God, which was praised in the person of Mary by the very lips of the Lord Himself as being the "one thing needful." From it, we can see the significance of the silence of the monastic life, which is so indispensable for the maintenance of the mental prayer of the heart, the practice of which was in ancient times incumbent not only on the monastics but also on the lay people (Saint Gregory Palamas); nowadays it is falling into neglect and even into complete oblivion, because of the present-day enfeeblement of the monastic life.

This month's section ends the translation of the Athonite booklet on Prayer.

THE COMING MONTH

MAY this year covers a period which sees us complete Pascha, celebrate the Great Feasts of the Ascension of the Lord (Thursday 11th/24th May) and Pentecost-Trinity (Sunday 21stMay/3rd June) and enter the Fast of the Holy Apostles. All of these things are appointed according to the year's paschal cycle of services, services which, as the name implies, depend upon the date of the movable feast of Easter. At the same time, of course, there are commemorations which are ordered according to the days of the month, the Menaion.

On the day before the Ascension, we have the leavetaking of Pascha, and in many churches the services for that day are celebrated in the same way as they are in Bright Week, with the doors open, no readings from the Psalter and the chanting of the paschal hymns. The day ends, of course, with the Vigil Service for the Ascension. This year this day coincides with the Menaion service for the holy Apostle Simon the Zealot. He was one of the twelve Apostles, chosen and ordained by the Lord, and had been the bridegroom at the wedding of Cana in Galilee. He is the only one of the

Twelve, whom Tradition tells us came to Britain, although there are various legends about others coming, many of these legends given greater currency than perhaps they deserve by nineteenth and early twentieth century ecclesiastical romantics. According to St Dorotheus, Bishop of Gaza in Palestine (c. 300 A.D.), St Simon was martyred in Britain, and this is confirmed by the eighth century Patriarch of Constantinople, St Nicephorus. According to local British history, he died at Caistor, in what is now Lincolnshire, in A.D. 60. Remains of a Roman camp have been found there, and the Apostle was said to have been slain by being crucified on the orders of the Roman imperial officer, Catus Decianus. Another tradition places the site of his martyrdom in the Black Sea area, where an ancient church commemorating him was found. In 1875, this church was renovated when the area fell into the territory of the Russian Empire, and a monastery was founded there, and this gave some currency to the claims of that site. Whether he died in Britain or in the East is of no great moment. His flaming love of Christ is why he is remembered today, and we, in Britain, have the joy of knowing that according to all sources, he visited and preached that love in our land.

The feast of the Ascension always falls on the Thursday of the sixth week of Pascha, forty days after the festival itself. The event which it celebrates is recorded in two of the Gospels (Mark 16:16-20; Luke 24:50-53) and in the book of the Acts of the Apostles (1:4-12), when the Risen Saviour was parted from His disciples and ascended into the Heavens to be seated on the Throne of the Most High. For us the significance of the festival is that, just as in the previous festival Our Lord opened unto us the way of resurrection through His resurrection, so as a Forerunner now He opens to us the way into Heaven. Now in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, our nature, once tyrannized by sin and subject to death, is now enthroned on high. From this festival we also derive a beneficial custom still maintained among the Orthodox. St Luke records in his Gospel, that before Jesus was parted from His disciples, "He lifted up His hands, and blessed them." So today, when meeting or taking leave of a Bishop or priest, the faithful ask his blessing. He in turn "lifts up" his hand, arranging the fingers to spell out the Greek letters IC XC - (the first and last letters of the name Jesus Christ in Greek) - and blesses them, placing his hand in their cupped hands, and they kiss his hand as though it were the hand of Christ, remembering that in the Church Christ is with us even unto the end of the age.

Ten days after Ascension, we have the feast of Pentecost, the culmination of the cycle of feasts which centre on Easter. This, the eighth Sunday of Pascha, starts for us a new creation. In the beginning, in six days God created all things and rested the seventh day. The figure of the eighth day is used throughout Scripture as one of the life of the age to come, of the resurrection. Both because of the fact that Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday, and because it is the "eighth day" we keep Sunday as the day of Resurrection, the Lord's day. Now, we have the eighth "eighth day," and we celebrate a new order of creation here on earth: the inauguration of the New Testament Church, life lived in the Holy Spirit. On this day at Vespers, for the first time since Pascha, we hear the prayer, "Heavenly King," which from now on it used again every day to begin all our prayers and services. We begin thus because, as the priest prays each day at Mattins (in the twelve secret prayers, read during the recital of the

Six Psalms): "We know not what we should pray for as we ought, if Thou, O Lord, guide us not by Thy Holy Spirit."

The second day of the feast is kept as Holy Spirit Day, and the Vespers for this day is often joined to the Sunday Liturgy, because in it there are three long prayers read by the priest, while he and the people kneel down. They are called the Kneeling Prayers, and again this is the first time since Pascha that we have kneeled in church or in our prayers. The prayers ask the blessing of the Holy Spirit on all aspects of our life, and for His grace to be poured out upon the faithful departed. This takes up a thought emphasized by the fact that the Saturday before the day of Pentecost is kept as a Soul Sabbath, a day on which the faithful departed are commemorated. The New Testament Church, inaugurated at this festival, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of the Creed, is thus shown to embrace both those who are struggling for their salvation within the Orthodox Church here on earth, and those who have already ended their earthly course. We pray for each other and share our blessings, as beloved members of one loving family.

Such is the solemnity of this festival that we have a fast-free week following Pentecost-Trinity Sunday. The Russians have a fantastic word for these fast-free weeks: *sploshniya*. The next Sunday is kept as that of All Saints, and then on the very next day, the Monday, we begin the fast that leads up to the commemoration of the martyrdom of the holy chiefs of the Apostles Peter and Paul, on 29th June/12th July. This year that fast lasts 31 days. It is longer or shorter depending on the date of Easter. On Saturdays and Sundays in this fast, we are permitted to eat fish, wine and oil; on Tuesdays and Thursdays just wine and oil, and on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays we eat only vegan meals and seafoods other than fish itself. If an important commemoration falls, then on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays we are permitted wine (alcohol) and oil, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays fish. The intensity of this fast is thus considerably less than that of the Great Fast or the Dormition Fast, but in this fast we do not have the support of the special lenten services and commemorations or the Parakleses, and thus the Church instructs us to fast in different ways, training us for every kind of spiritual warfare. Because it is less intense, this fast is likely to be more tedious; but we need to be trained in dealing with tedium as much as we do in combatting our other spiritual foes.

The fast not only prepares us for the feast of the Apostles, but it reminds us that the Apostles themselves trained for their Apostolic ministry by prayer and fasting, - see Acts 13:1 -3. In keeping this fast, we are following their example, just as we follow their Faith.

Among the Saints in May:

The holy New Martyr Ahmet the Calligrapher (3rd/16th May) was a Turk living in Constantinople. He was unmarried but had two Russian-born slaves, one an older woman and one younger. The older one would go as often as she could to church and would bring back holy water and antidoron as a blessing for the younger one. On the occasions when she partook of these holy things, Ahmet noticed that her breath smelt particularly sweet and he marvelled at that sweetness. He therefore asked what she had been eating and she confessed that she had taken nothing special, only the bread blessed by the Orthodox priests. Ahmet was curious to know how this blessed bread

could have such a fragrance, and he arranged with one of the priests that he should be permitted to watch the Divine Liturgy from a hidden place when the Patriarch was serving. On the appointed day, he dressed as did the Christians and went to watch. The Lord, Who desires the salvation of all men, worked a second miracle. Not only had he permitted Ahmet to sense the spiritual fragrance of holy things, but when he entered the church he saw the Patriarch bathed in a heavenly light as he came through the doors to bless the people, and as he blessed rays of light came from his hands and alighted on the heads of the faithful, but not upon his own head. Each time the Patriarch blessed this happened, and the blessed one realized that it was because he was not of the household of Faith that the blessing did not descend upon him. Thus, he came to believe, sought instruction in the Orthodox Faith and was in due time baptized. For a period, he remained a secret Christian because it was a capital offense for a Moslem man to convert to Christianity, but once when he was entertaining his Turkish friends at home, they began to discuss what was the greatest thing in the world. Each had an opinion, but when it came time for Ahmet to speak, filled with holy zeal, he could no longer hide his Faith and proclaimed that the greatest thing in the world was the Faith of the Christians. At first his friends were aghast at what they considered his foolishness, but when they saw he was in earnest, they were filled with wrath against him and dragged him off to the judge. On the latter's orders he was beheaded on 3rd May, 1682, and thus died as a Christian Martyr. We do not know his baptismal name, because he had had to keep his conversion secret, but through his martyrdom he has added a new name to the canon of Christian names. His life also shows us what grace is given us, if only we were to see it, in even the seemingly inconsequential rites and practices of the Church. How often we receive the antidoron at the end of the Liturgy, as if it were at best just a symbol and at worst just a custom to which we give no thought. Yet its blessing revealed the fragrance of the Christian Faith to this man, whose heart must have been good ground upon which the seed of faith might fall.

The Venerable Madern (17th/30th) was a hermit in Cornwall most probably in the sixth century. Except for this fact nothing is known of his life, although the village in which he lived is now named Madron after him. It is a short distance from Penzance. About a mile from the church dedicated to the Saint, there is a holy well also consecrated to his memory, and nearby a ruined chapel. It contains an excavation which may have been a font. Miracles have been recorded at this place through the centuries, even long after the separation of the believers here from the Church of their forefathers, for God's mercies extend to all peoples. One particularly well documented miracle was attested to by Bishop Joseph Hall of Exeter in 1641. The miracle had occurred in the previous year, and the Bishop had interviewed the man who had been healed and other witnesses, and asserted that "I found neither art nor collusion: the thing done, the Author invisible." The miracle is so remarkable that it bears telling in full in the words of another contemporary chronicler Francis Coventry (Christopher Davenport), who writes: "I will relate one miracle more done in our own country, to the great wonder of the neighbouring inhabitants, but a few years ago, viz., about the year 1640. The process of the business was told the King when at Oxford, which he caused to be farther examined. It was this: - A certain boy of twelve years old, called John Trelille, in the county of Cornwall, not far from Land's End, as they were playing at football, snatching up the ball ran away with it; whereupon a girl in anger struck him

with a thick stick on the backbone, and so bruised or broke it, that for sixteen years after he was forced to go creeping on the ground. In this condition he arrived at the twenty-eighth year of his age, when he dreamed that if he did but bathe in St Madern's well, or in the stream running from it, he should recover his former strength and health. This is a place in Cornwall, from the remains of ancient devotion, still frequented by Protestants on the Thursdays in May, and especially on the feast of Corpus Christi; near to which well is a chapel dedicated to Saint Madern, where is yet an altar, and right against it a grassy hillock (made every year anew by the country people) which they call St Madern's bed. The chapel roof is quite decayed; but a kind of thorn of itself shooting forth of the old walls, so extends its boughs that it covers the whole chapel, and supplies as it were a roof. On a Thursday in May, assisted by one Periman, his neighbour, entertaining great hopes from his dream, thither he crept, and lying before the altar, and praying very fervently that he might regain his health and the strength of his limbs, he washed his whole body in the stream that flowed from the well and ran through the chapel; after which, having slept about an hour and a half on St Madern's bed, through the extremity of the pain he felt in his nerves and arteries, he began to cry out, and his companion helping and lifting him up, he perceived his hams and joints somewhat extended, and himself becoming stronger insomuch that partly with his feet, partly with his hands, he went much more erect than before. Before the following Thursday he got two crutches, resting on which he could make a shift to walk, which before he could not do. And coming to the chapel as before, after having bathed himself, he slept on the same bed, and awaking found himself much stronger and more upright, and so, leaving one crutch in the chapel, he went home with the other. The third Thursday he returned to the chapel and bathed as before, slept, and when he awoke, rose up quite cured; yea, grew so strong, that he wrought day labour among the other hired servants; and four years after listed himself a soldier in the King's army, where he behaved himself with great stoutness, both of mind and body: at length, in 1644, he was slain at Lyme, in Dorsetshire."

FROM "AN ATHONITE GERONTIKON"

AN ELDER SAID: "Once I was on a bus. What a situation! Somebody asked the driver to lower the radio. 'We have a priest among us,' he said (for they had noticed me). The driver put the sound higher. I was saying the Jesus Prayer. The person who had spoken wanted to help me, but I said, 'It doesn't bother me,' for I was thinking: if, God forbid, there were an accident and they brought all the people out of the bus - one having a broken leg, another an injured head, another crying, and perhaps even a little child hurt - how could I endure such a sight? 'Thanks be to God,' I said to myself; 'everyone here is well and they can even sing!'

"Thus their noise became the foundation tone for my prayer. They behaved the way they wanted, and I did just fine.

"There is no other way but to face all situations with a positive attitude, and to try and put yourself in the other person's place. Instead so often we try to have our own way, and the world becomes a madhouse.

"When a person puts himself in another's place, things fall in order. Take for example an old woman and her daughter-in-law. The younger woman should try to put

herself in the elderly one's place and say to herself, 'How would I want to be treated? When I am an old, drooling woman would I want my grandchildren making fun of me? And my daughter-in-law snapping at me? Would I like that? So how should I behave toward my mother-in-law?'

"You should know also that if someone does not behave in a spiritual way, then the spiritual laws will be in effect. You will have to pay for everything. God will allow it, because of His love, for us to pay for everything in this life."

THE EARTH mystically danceth,
and the Heavens are filled with joy
on the Ascension of Christ,
Who by grace hath united
the things which were formerly separated,
and Who hath destroyed the wall of enmity.
From the Prefestival services of the Ascension

SERBIAN PATRIARCH ADDRESSES LETTER TO KOFI ANNAN

IN MID-MARCH, Patriarch Pavle of Serbia addressed a letter to Kofi Annan pointing out that since the arrival of the "peacekeeping troops" in Kosovo in June 1999, "a great number of Serbian Orthodox shrines of priceless value have been destroyed; over 250,000 people have been expelled; thousands have been murdered, kidnapped or otherwise mistreated." He states that as the Yugoslav government is now striving to resolve the crisis through peaceful and democratic means, Albanian extremists are committing increasingly greater misdeeds, and he calls upon the United Nations to do everything in its power to stop the evil, protect peoples' lives, and secure peace.

MOSCOW - COPTIC DIALOGUE

TWO CONFERENCES between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Coptic Church (Non-Chalcedonian) have been scheduled to be held later this year. One, in Moscow will be held between 24th and 28th September, and the second will be in Cairo between 3rd and 8th December. These will be open to all the faithful and will seek to give participants an idea about each other's churches and promote discussion. Combined youth activities between the two communions are also to be promoted, as are visits between their clergy, exchange of education materials and of seminary professors and students. These plans have been presented to Patriarch Alexei II of Moscow. Moves have been made for a rapprochement between the Russian Orthodox and Coptic churches for almost a century now. Hitherto, for various reasons, they seem to have come to nothing. The present proposals at least appear to have the virtue of being sober and of not anticipating a final union with joint prayer services and inter-communion.

MOVE TO GLORIFY TSAR PAUL I

"THE UNION of Orthodox Standard Bearers" opened their National Assembly in Moscow on 25th March this year, with a call from their head, Leonid Simonovich, for the glorification as a saint of the Emperor Paul I of Russia. Emperor Paul, the son of Catherine "the Great", was assassinated on 24th March, 1801, and so the Union's opening coincided with the two-hundredth anniversary of his death. The head of the "Christian Regeneration" union, Vladimir Osipov, also addressed the Assembly, and spoke of the murdered Tsar as a "zealous confessor of Orthodoxy." He stated that it was because the Emperor could not "reconcile himself to the activity of anti-Christian secret societies in Russia," which "signed his death warrant." Certainly his memory has been besmirched in official histories and yet the Emperor Paul has long held a place in the hearts of many of the Orthodox faithful, and those in trouble, especially with the courts, the bureaucracy or those in authority, often have memorial services chanted for him and find their prayers are answered. The present movement to promote his canonization, while undoubtedly essentially well-founded and right, seems to be being used by some extreme nationalist movements, and sadly this might hinder rather than expedite the process.

HIERARCH FROM GREECE SERVES AT LONDON CONVENT

HIS GRACE, Bishop Ambrose of Methoni, of the Traditionalist Greek Orthodox Synod of Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili, celebrated the Divine Liturgy at the Convent of the Annunciation in Willesden on Sunday 16th/29th April, the Sunday of the Ointment-bearing Women. Not only was this very appropriately a particular festival for women, and, as the Bishop pointed out in his sermon, of women monastics in particular, but this year it was the day on which both Mother Elizabeth and Mother Seraphima, the two previous Abbesses, had celebrated their name-days before becoming monastics. The Bishop, who is a British-born convert to holy Orthodoxy and now a member of the brotherhood of the Sacred Monastery of Sts Cyprian and Justina in Fili, Attica, Greece, does much missionary work in Africa and had recently returned from Kenya. During the celebration at the Convent, he was assisted by Fr Alexis and Fr Hierodeacon Sabbas, and the service, as is now the custom there, was celebrated in Arabic, English, Greek and Church Slavonic, reflecting the make-up of the congregation of the faithful. At the end of the service, Mother Vikentia and her sisters invited Bishop Ambrose to a breakfast with special Greek, Arabic and Russian paschal foods.

"BLEEDING ICONS" REPORTED

THIS YEAR, during the ceremonies on Holy and Great Friday in the Church of the Resurrection (Holy Sepulchre) in Jerusalem, an icon of the imprisoned Christ, situated in the chapel of the Mocking of Christ, was seen to be bleeding. Smears of red, seemingly blood, were seen on the legs of the Saviour. A tall young man in the crowd of worshippers was able to reach up and wipe these smears with handkerchiefs and cloths and give the stained cloths to the faithful, but as he did so the blood miraculously reappeared and the flow of blood increased as the faithful watched it. Bishop Timotheos of the Jerusalem Patriarchate was present and witnessed the marvel, and stated that although he had served for many years at the Holy Sepulchre

he had never previously witnessed such a manifestation, although he was wisely reticent to proclaim the event a miracle or to proffer an interpretation.

An Icon of the Mother of God, of the Sweet-kissing type, has recently manifested blood-like smears on the Virgin's neck in a church in Athens. This has already been witnessed by 100,000 people who hearing of the miracle have visited the church. The priest of the church, Father Chrysostomos, is reported as saying that this manifestation is a clear sign that the Mother of God shares the sorrow of the Orthodox faithful at the imminent visit of the Pope to Greece.

ATTACKS ON TARTAR CHRISTIANS

ORTHODOX REPRESENTATIVES in Tartarstan have reported that the secretary of the Kazan diocese was summoned to the Tartarstan Security Council and told that the diocese is supporting "Russian Orthodox wahhabism." The Cossacks are accused of maintaining the security of Orthodox churches from encroachments by Tartar nationalists - (Why should they not, if these churches are threatened?!). The Kazan Orthodox Brotherhood in turn has cited specific attacks on Orthodox churches on the part of activists of the All-Tartar Public Centre. In Naberezhnye Chelni, the construction of the Cathedral of the Nativity of Christ has been interrupted by these activists, and in the same town the Chapel of the Holy Martyr Tatiana was set on fire, as was the vestry of the Church of Sts Cosmas and Damian. The Brotherhood stated their respect for Islam as one of the traditional religions in Russia, but protested against the discrimination against baptized Tartars.

KOREAN UNITY SERVICE

THE KOREAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL in Seoul was to be the venue for a "Common Easter Prayer for Christian Unity" on Easter Day this year. The committee for church unity of the National Council of Churches, the Korean Catholic Bishops' Committee for Promoting Christian Unity and Interreligious Dialogue, the Korean Orthodox Church, and the Korean Lutheran Church agreed to this celebration. Together they represent about 7 million believers, about half of them Roman Catholics. The service was expected to last about 90 minutes, and is supported by the Patriarch of Constantinople, His All-Holiness Bartholomeos I. It is also hoped by its sponsors that this service will be repeated in subsequent years (ENI Bulletin 01-0107).

DUTCH INTER-RELIGIOUS INITIATIVE

A FAR MORE LAUDABLE INITIATIVE by Christians of various denominations has taken place in Holland, where representatives of numerous Christian communions, including the Orthodox, joined with Moslems and Jews in protesting against the state's legalising voluntary euthanasia. Unfortunately as we know, their efforts were in vain.

REVIVAL OF PAGANISM CENTRES ON KOSTROMA

A PAGAN TEMPLE is being constructed on Lelevaia Hill in the province of Kostroma, Russia, built by the local Slavic-Pagan Society, with the support of the district administration. The leader of the Shchelykov pagan society of wizards, declared that this was a "splendid place for the revival of Russian paganism, the more so since in antiquity a Slavic temple was located on Lelevaia Hill, which was destroyed in the

thirteenth or fourteenth century." Idols of Veles and Khors, and later of Dazhbog and Lada, are to be erected in the temple, and lastly one of Perun. The administration see this as a possible tourist attraction, but the rector of the Orthodox Church of the Transfiguration, Father Dimitri, is firmly opposed to this revival of Slav pagan rites and is organising a procession around the site. Archbishop Alexander of Kostroma and Galich (MP) had not commented on the affair.

BELFAST CHAPEL VANDALIZED

THE TINY CHAPEL used by the Holy Trinity Orthodox Mission in Northern Ireland, which is located in what Father Deacon Geoffrey Ready calls "a difficult inner city area," was vandalized during Holy Week this year. The faithful arrived for the evening service on Holy and Great Friday to find that the chapel had been broken into. Icons, carpets, candlesticks and oil lamps had been damaged, oil and sand spread everywhere, drink bottles and cigarettes left and some icons and books were missing. Some things had also been damaged with paint. The congregation had to transfer their paschal celebration to the garden chapel at the Ready's home in Bangor. Hearing of these troubles, we held a retiring collection after the Easter Liturgy at Brookwood and raised £189.89. To this the mother of one of our parishioners later added another £25. One of our people at Brookwood also sent a parcel of icons and lamps for the mission, and we hear that icons have been sent to the Belfast Mission from the St Elizabeth of Russia Mission in Birkenhead and Sts Constantine and Helen Chapel at Easton, Congleton. We hope that all this will help the Belfast Mission re-establish itself. If any of our readers would like to send help, the contact name and address for the mission is: Rev'd Fr Deacon Geoffrey Ready, The Shepherd's Gate, 18 Ardkeen Avenue, Carnalea, Bangor, Co Down BT19 1ER.

A few weeks previous to this incident, the chapel used by the St Boniface Mission in Ryde was broken into, but very little damage was done. A window was shattered, the door broken (but in any case it needed attention) and one icon slightly damaged by a glass splinter from the window. There was no deliberate attempt to vandalize or desecrate the chapel, and we suspect that the purpose of the break-in was theft, and nothing was found there to steal.

BROOKWOOD NEWS

BECAUSE the day of Saint Edward's martyrdom always falls in Great Lent, we keep as his primary festival the day of his Enshrinement here in 1984 (3rd/16th September). This year, however, the Martyrdom fell on a Saturday, it is the thousandth anniversary year of his glorification in 1001 A.D., and quite unexpectedly His Grace Archbishop Mark arranged to join us for the celebration, flying into Heathrow from Germany just over an hour before his arrival to serve at Brookwood. Our congregation was joined by others who had come to support us from the St Werburgh Parish in Congleton, the St Boniface Mission on the Isle of Wight, from Cardiff, Dublin, Somerset, Suffolk and other parts of the country. We were also pleased to welcome several clergymen and parishioners from the local Roman Catholic and Anglican communions. The Archbishop was greeted at the door with the traditional bread and salt, and vested in the centre of the church. During the Divine Liturgy he was assisted by Father Alexis, Protopresbyter-stavrophore Milun Kostic of St Sava's Serbian

Orthodox Church in London, Father Vadim Zakrevsky of the Dormition Russian Orthodox Church there, Father Radomir Acimovic also of St Sava's, Father Peter Baulk and Father Paul Elliott, who had also rather heroically driven down that morning from the St Elizabeth Mission in Birkenhead to be with us. Hierodeacon Sabbas assisted as deacon. Father Hieromonk Avraamii from St Nicolas Parish in Bradford was not with us physically, but helped by serving at Harvard Road, and thus freeing Fr Vadim to come and taxi the Archbishop. At the end of the Liturgy, the Archbishop preached a sermon saying that we were celebrating the Laudation of the Mother of God with St Edward's Martyrdom, and pointing out that although exteriorly almost everything about these two saints was different, that both of them had for the love of Christ received a piercing: the Mother of God, as Simeon had foretold, in her heart at the Crucifixion, and St Edward in his martyrdom. He reminded us that for the love of Christ our hearts also have to be pierced, even though we might not be called physically to suffer martyrdom as did our heavenly patron.

The next day, the Archbishop presided at the Divine services at the Russian Orthodox Church on Harvard Road, London W4. In the afternoon, he celebrated the Mysterion of Holy Unction there assisted by Fathers Alexis, Vadim, Thomas Hardy, Peter, and Avraamii. with Fr Sabbas as deacon. After the service, the clergy and members of our Brotherhood enjoyed a meal together at the Church-house adjacent to the new cathedral, where they discussed recent developments in church life and the Archbishop gave some insights into present difficulties facing us in the Church. Fr Vadim's matushka, Natalia, taking up the ministry of Martha, deserves special mention for the lenten banquet that she provided.

HOLY WEEK BAPTISM: On the instructions of Archbishop Mark, Joseph Eleazar-Hurson, who had years before been received into Orthodoxy but had been troubled by doubts about the manner of his reception, was conditionally baptized at St Edward's on Holy Saturday, before the Divine Liturgy for that day. His sponsor was Reader Gabriel Lawani and he is named for St Joseph the Betrothed. Joseph stayed with us for the eight day during which he wore his baptismal robe, so that he could partake of the Holy Mysteries on each of those days. The robe was removed on the eighth day at the Ryde, Isle of Wight, Liturgy. May the Lord grant that now firmly established by baptismal grace, he may ever remain faithful to Holy Orthodoxy.

PASCHAL CELEBRATION: For only the second time in the eighteen years we have been celebrating here (in 1982, we went up to London for Pascha, having then been on site only a month or so), we were unable to centre our paschal breakfast around the bonfire. The weather was reasonably good, but the continuous rains for weeks before meant that the land was waterlogged and boggy. Nonetheless we lit the bonfire and centred the breakfast itself around the house. And even the rains brought something of a blessing: never in all the years we have been here have we previously had wild ducks come and settle to swim on the lawn next to the church! The waters are abating now and we hope in the Summer to improve the drainage channels. Our thanks to all parishioners and friends who brought foods for the paschal meal, who helped prepare and decorate the church, and especially to John Russell and Evphi McOnegal who not only helped in preparing for the feast, but came again on the Monday after Thomas Sunday to help dismantle the decorations and clean the church. May God's blessings be upon you.

PRACTICAL TIP

THE FAITHFUL should be aware - (and many of us who convert from other religious backgrounds often are not), - that it is considered disrespectful to sit in church with one's legs crossed. When sitting in church, which, contrary to a widespread misconception, is sometimes enjoined upon us, one should sit straight with both feet firmly planted on the floor. We sit in church to listen to the psalms and the Old Testament scriptural readings. Properly during the New Testament readings we stand, showing greater respect, although during the reading of the Epistles in the Liturgy, the priests sit to indicate their apostolic responsibility as preachers of the word. When sitting, one should not slouch or sit as if you were relaxing at home, waiting at a bus stop or in a bar or restaurant. One should try to maintain reverent attention, and by one's attitude show that, although sitting, one is aware of the holiness of the place.