

The Shepherd

An Orthodox Christian Pastoral Magazine

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FROM THE FATHERS

"HE OVERCAME evil by goodness. Christ undertook the defence of those who put Him to death; eager to gather them into His net, annulling the charge, and pleading their ignorance. Made sport of their drunken frenzy, He submitted without bitterness. He suffered their drunkenness, and His love for mankind called them to repentance. What more could He do?"

Saint Amphilochius of Iconium, 339 - C.400 A.D.

"THAT A GREAT EARTHQUAKE took place at the Resurrection of the Lord (and also while He lay dying upon the Cross), signifies that earthly hearts must first be shaken to repentance through faith in His Passion and Resurrection, stirred up by a most salutary fear."

Venerable Bede of Jarrow, 672 - 735 A.D.

"AND THE EARTH did quake and the rocks were rent (Matt. 27:51). Oh, what a terrible rebuke to man! Lifeless nature recognised Him whom men were not able to recognise. The whole of mute creation trembled and stood up in protest in its own way and with its own language. The mute earth quakes - that is its language. The rocks are rent - that is their language. The sun withholds its light - that is its language. The whole of creation protests in its own way, for the whole creation is obedient, as Adam was once in Paradise. How it is that irrational creation knew Him and was obedient to Him we do not know. It is some sort of inner instinct of creation, which came to it by the word of God by which it was made. This instinct of irrational creation is of greater worth than human understanding, darkened by sin. Of all that exists, nothing is more blind than the human understanding when darkened by sin. For it not only does not see that which it was created to see, but sees that which is contrary to being, contrary to God, contrary to truth. These are degrees of blindness beyond blindness, and numbers below zero. This is man lower than creation. For while the priests of God in Jerusalem did not recognise their God, the storms and the winds recognised Him, the seas and the rivers, the earth, the rock, the stars, the sun, and even the demons. Let man be ashamed! The earth quaked, the rocks were rent, the sun was darkened both from wrath and from grief. All nature grieved at the Passion of the Son of God, which Passion rejoiced the priests of Jerusalem. Protest, grief - and fear. All creation was affrighted at the death of Him Who had called it out of nothing into being and to rejoice in its being, as though it wanted to say: 'With whom do we now remain, and who will uphold us, now the Almighty has given up the ghost?' Oh, my brethren, let us be shamed by this protest, this grief and this fear of mute creation, and let us cry out in repentance to the Conqueror: 'Forgive us, O compassionate Lord, forgive us; for indeed, whenever we sin and offend Thee, we know not what we are doing.'"

Saint Nicolas Velimirovic, + 1956A.D.

AN EASTER MESSAGE

of the

Right Reverend NIKON, Bishop of Florida

"We celebrate the death of death, the destruction of Hades, the beginning of an everlasting life. "
(From the seventh ode of the Paschal Canon)

"Let no one be fearful of Death, for the death of the Saviour hath set us free. "
(From the Catechetical Homily of Saint John Chrysostom)

DURING this most festive and brilliant night of our salvation, we constantly sing the holy hymn to God, Who has risen from dead, our Saviour: "Christ is risen from the dead, by death hath He trampled down death, and on those in the graves hath He bestowed life."

And truly, this night contains salvation for all faithful children of the Church of Christ, and especially for those who sing this holy song not only with their lips, but also with their spirits, having a firm confidence in the victory of life over death.

"Christ is risen from the dead..." - this is a historical reality, a fact which we know to be absolutely true, from the four Gospels, from the Acts and the Epistles of the Apostles, from the lives of Saints and, in short, from the history of the entire Christian Church, which clearly testifies that 2000 years ago, Christ the Saviour indeed rose from the dead. This testimony is supported, likewise, by the negative scientific criticism, inasmuch as we see that scientific criticism has been trying hard for two thousand years, with the full force of its knowledge, to disprove the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and has had no success whatsoever.

Nevertheless, the historical fact of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ is accepted by our mind only if it has been received beforehand by the highest faculty of our spirit, which is faith. And, if our faith has died, then the mind too, in spite of reality, will reject this fact, and will assume that it does not exist.

Furthermore, our holy hymn is not limited merely to giving testimony regarding the past, but extends its thought upon the present and into the future. "By death trampling down death" - not for Himself did the Saviour, Who has Risen from the dead, conquer death, but rather for me and for all who are living on earth today.

Before the coming of Christ the Saviour, death had been, for everybody, a descent into hades. But after Christ the Saviour had "shattered the everlasting bars that held fast those that were fettered" (*heirmos of Ode Six*) by His rising from the dead, "there is no death, O Lord, for us, Thy servants, that have departed from the body, and come unto Thee, O God, but rather a translation from things sorrowful unto things better and most delightful, and unto repose and joy" (*From the prayers during Vespers on the Sunday of Pentecost*).

This great truth appears to contradict facts. For I know that I have to die, and probably, before my death, I shall suffer the agonies which we notice in most of those who are dying. At the same time, the holy hymn testifies that after the Rising from the dead of Jesus Christ, death does not exist for me any longer, and the Holy Church insists on supporting the same fact with force and assurance, in the words: "We

celebrate the death of death,... and the beginning of (a different and) everlasting life." The same thought is forcefully expressed by Saint John Chrysostom in his Paschal sermon, which comprises an integral part of the Easter services: "Let no one be fearful of Death, for the death of the Saviour hath set us free. He hath quenched Death by being subdued by Death." The holy hymn, furthermore, does not limit itself to the fate of the living, but extends its promises toward all the dead, beginning with the First man... "and on those in the graves hath He bestowed life." To the lone human intellect, standing by itself, there are apparently even more contradictions in this assertion. Where are these "who are in the graves?" Is it not true that their bodies have long ago turned into dust, and have been mixed up, many times, with all of the elements of the world? So, how was life granted to them? It is plain that this truth is inaccessible to our intellect, which literally crawls on the ground as it has torn itself same time, this truth can be explained so clearly that it will become obvious, if only our intellect be enlightened by beneficial faith.

It should be noted that, in general, the whole life of intelligent and free beings is based on faith, and is impossible without it. But, in different spheres of life, we find, different shades and aspects of faith. Men are frequently satisfied with faith which is distorted and even false, as for instance in communism, whose adherents believe in various phantasms, thinking them realities and accepting lies in place of truth. Some are satisfied with a faith which is conditional and limited, as for instance faith in arts and sciences, and others are satisfied with a faith taken in small doses, as in human relations, but wherever there is life, there must invariably be faith. In our religion, faith must be the true, beneficial kind which is called the faith which saves, without which faith it is impossible to please God.

How can we apply, by faith, the reality of the victory over death to the living and the dead, through the Rising from the dead of Jesus Christ?

The fact itself, of the Rising from the dead of Jesus Christ, refers to the past, and our faith must extend itself into the future. In another hymn from the Paschal canon, we hear that this sacred and supremely festive night of salvation is truly the forerunner of the bright-beaming day of the Resurrection (*3rd hymn, Seventh Ode*). The physical law of death, so far, has not been abolished, and it still works in the world. I know that I have to die, but being united, through His Holy Church, with Christ, Who has risen from the dead, I know also that the death which I must face is not the final end of life, but only a temporary phenomenon, which transfers me into the highest province of life which has been opened by Christ God for all who believe in Him, and which grants me hope of complete resurrection - not only of my spirit, but likewise of the body.

It is the day of Resurrection, let us be radiant, O
ye peoples;
Pascha, the Lord's Pascha; for Christ God hath
brought us
from death unto life,
and from earth unto Heaven,
as we sing the triumphant hymn.
(*heirmos, Ode One*)

I am so sure of myself because I have many proven facts, the most true in the world, and more certain than death itself, and they are the reason why death is conquered. Our Lord Jesus Christ, before His suffering on the Cross and Rising from the dead, told His disciples, and in detail, what significance His death and rising from the dead would have for us. He supported His words with deeds. The Lord showed that He truly rules over the laws of existence and can command them at will, an act which is impossible to us mortal men. He made a promise, that He would rise from the dead, would ascend to heaven, and would send to His disciples a Comforter, "Who proceedeth from the Father," Who would instruct them in every truth, and would establish His Church on earth so that She would exist until the end of time, firm in truth and faith, - a link connecting us with Him. All of this has been fulfilled and is being fulfilled. Furthermore, He promised that at the end of a period of time, He will come again to earth, as an all-righteous Judge. Then, by the power of His Divinity, He will abolish the physical law of death, and will introduce a new law of life, by which all of the bodies of those who have previously died will rise from the dead. The good and the bad, who are mixed together at present, will be divided, and will come forth: "those who have done good into the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil into the resurrection of judgment" (John 5:29). All of this will be accomplished not by the forces of nature and not by conquests of the human mind, but by the power of the omnipotent God.

Something similar to that which will happen then, we find both in nature and in our spirit, when it is enlightened by faith. In nature, we have the coming of Spring, when under the action of life-giving rays of the sun, we witness the revival of life. The natural elements of the world are opening their treasures. The elements of the earth, of oceans, of rivers and of the air, combine themselves and grow sweet smelling flowers, fragrant fruit, grass and leaves, and they arise. All of this happens each year in accordance with the laws, as is said, of nature. What can prevent the All-powerful Creator of the ages from illuminating the world with a new brilliancy of His Divinity, and to command the elements of the world to return the particles of my body, which may be located somewhere in the deep recesses of the earth, or on the bottom of the oceans, or floating somewhere in the inter-planetary spaces, -to command them to become united with their root, my immortal soul, in order that I should come forth before Him, my Creator and Saviour, freed from the laws of death which have been acting in me?

Christ God is the "High Priest of future blessings" (Heb. 9:11), and our Easter joy, - joy about the future. This joy about the future, if only we do not doubt that it will come, even in our private life is just as vivid and bright as rejoicing about the present. Let us picture in our mind a very poor man, wasting away from starvation, and a mother who is deep in sorrow because her son has disappeared without a trace. And suddenly they receive the glad tidings that the poor man is going to receive riches, while the son has been located. Let us suppose that both still must wait for a long time, before their hardships will end physically. But how they will rejoice! How delighted they will be! The poor man will become rich in his mind, and all other people about him will be of the same opinion, even though, so far, he still remains a poor man. The mother, in her mind, will be a possessor of her son, and her companions will rejoice with her, even though, so far, she is alone in the same way as before.

The Holy Church of Christ gives Her children not only the assurance that the blessings which are promised them will come without fail, but also, during this brilliant night of our salvation, She makes it possible for Her children, in a certain initial degree, and in a spirit of sweet and touching feeling, to experience that happiness which has been promised by Christ God in His everlasting kingdom. "Grant that we partake of Thee fully in the unwaning day of Thy Kingdom," - so ends the Paschal canon.

There, under the new conditions of existence, we shall receive from Thee, our Saviour and God, full and perfect joy. But here too, among earthly sorrows, while Thou sendest us, through Thy Church, the rays of Thy grace, Thou givest spirit to our wretched life, and dost transform it. And we, who believe in Thy rising from the dead, and who are perfectly sure that all of Thy promises are true, rejoice and are delighted in Thy Church and with faith, and we exclaim:

*"Christ is risen from the dead,
by death hath He trampled down death,
and on those in the graves
hath He bestowed life."*

Bishop NIKON

*Reprinted, with slight textual corrections,
from "The Orthodox Life," March - April, 1950.*

Bishop, later Archbishop, Nikon became the second-ranking hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad and was a candidate for the Metropolitanate in 1964, when in fact the Blessed and Ever-Memorable Metropolitan Philaret was elected. Archbishop Nikon is perhaps remembered by some of the older members of the congregation in this country, because in the late sixties he visited Archbishop Nikodem and the British Diocese, bringing with him the Wonder-working Kursk Root Icon of the Mother of God, which he personally took to parishes and missions throughout the country.

ORTHODOX ST PETERSBURG

ON A VISIT to St Petersburg in September, I bought a large print of a new icon of all the saints of that city and its surrounding area. I was astonished at the number of faces and at how important many of them are. Many, of course, are New Martyrs of the Communist period (especially the 1930s), but others represent earlier eras. St Petersburg is not usually thought of as an Orthodox holy place in the way Moscow and Kiev are, but it struck me how wrong this prejudice was. I had not visited the city since 1997, and in 2003 many changes had taken place to strengthen its claim to be a great centre of pilgrimage.

THE KAZAN ICON

The most important churches in St Petersburg are the Trinity Cathedral of the Saint Alexander Nevski Lavra and the Kazan Cathedral. The latter was famously the main Soviet museum of atheism, and in 1997 was still only partly used as a church. Now it is almost fully restored and has received back the miraculous Kazan Icon (an old copy of the lost original in Kazan) kept until recently in the Saint Vladimir-the-Prince church, which somehow remained open through the darkest days.

When services are not in progress, there is always a long line of people waiting to venerate the icon, which is kept (as in pre-revolutionary days) on the iconostas itself. After kissing the icon and asking the help of the city's protectress, a pilgrimage to the other holy places can begin.

THE ROYAL MARTYRS

Even greater changes have taken place at the Fortress of Saints Peter and Paul, the cathedral of which is the burial place of all the Russian Emperors and Empresses from Peter I onwards (Peter II is the only exception). In the large chapel of the Great Martyr Catherine, at the back of the Cathedral, is the nearly completed resting place of the Tsar-Martyr Nicolas and his Family themselves, brought here from Ekaterinburg in 1998. Their bones, with the exception of the martyred Tsarevich and one of the Princesses - whose remains have not been found - lie beneath a single marble monument.

There is, of course, some controversy about the authenticity of these relics, which this account is not the place to enter into. I can only give my non-expert opinion. The relics are recognised by the respected head of the Russian Imperial House, Prince Nicolas Romanovich, and practically all its members, by relatives in other European Royal Houses, and by most serious historians. I agree with them, especially after the experience of praying before this, the Royal Martyrs' last resting place.

It should be added that the burial cathedral is a not a functioning church but a state monument, though many memorial services are held there. Next to it is the Mausoleum of the Grand Princes (built at the beginning of the twentieth century) in which the bodies of the Grand Prince Vladimir Kirillovich and his parents have recently been re-interred.

To the south of St Petersburg, at Tsarskoye Selo, is another shrine to the New Royal Martyrs; one less controversial. In the Alexander Palace the private rooms of the Imperial Family have now been restored and re-opened. To visit these rooms, though they do not form a holy place in the conventional sense, is an intensely moving experience. Furniture, pictures, icons, small possessions have been returned. Here is the room where Kerensky burst in on the family; here rooms decorated to the taste of the Empress. Truly, tragic history come to life.

SAINT JOHN OF CRONSTADT

St Petersburg's most celebrated saint is of course Saint John of Cronstadt. He was buried in the Convent he founded in the city and this place was one of the first to be reopened when Communism collapsed. It is a flourishing place of pilgrimage.

In the last two years there has been an even more extraordinary development. On Cronstadt Island (actually Kotlin - Cronstadt is the town only) St John's apartment has come into church hands. It was discovered that furniture of his still existed (owned by descendants of his niece, who lived in Moscow). The rooms have been restored, not as a church, but to look as close to their original state as possible. All this is organised by the re-founded Leushino Sisterhood, which, although their Convent founded by the great Mother Taisia has vanished under a hydroelectric scheme, has reoccupied its Podvorie (metochion) in St Petersburg. They maintain and allow access to the

apartment and always insist on singing an akathist to Saint John whenever visitors arrive. The saint's loving presence is so strong there, that pilgrims, and even curious visitors, often openly weep.

A few weeks after my visit, on the saint's second feastday (19th October/1st November) a very old nun presented the Sisters with a precious relic - a holy water brush used by him. This too will be kept in the flat.

In 1997, there were no functioning churches in Cronstadt, though there had been six before the Revolution, but now all is changed for the better. The formerly ruined Vladimir Icon church has been beautifully restored and is very active, and there are hopes that the huge Saint Sophia Naval Cathedral will also become a place of worship again (it is still a concert hall). At the site of Saint John's own Saint Andrew Cathedral the statue of Lenin, still there in 1997, has vanished and a moving monument placed on the site of the church's altar.

The marking of sites of vanished churches is now very common all over the city. Sometimes this is done with a stone cross and inscription (as in the case of Saint Andrew's), sometimes with a small chapel where candles can be lighted, sometimes with a larger chapel possessing its own altar and occasionally with the complete rebuilding of the lost church - always exactly reproducing the original, however unfashionable the style!

All this work is giving the city a much more Orthodox "look" than it had in 1997, and this impression is heightened by the appearance of icons in restaurants, shopping arcades and other public places, and the frequency of collecting boxes in banks and hotels requesting donations for the rebuilding or restoration of some local church or monastery. Very slowly, but surely, believers are finding the self-confidence to work towards making St Petersburg an Orthodox city once again.

SMOLENSKOYE CEMETERY

If Saint John of Cronstadt is the city's most famous saint, Xenia the Blessed is surely its most beloved. Saint Xenia's shrine-mausoleum, in the Smolenskoye Cemetery, was restored as soon as political changes allowed and is as always crowded with pilgrims attending the afternoon services with their continuous reading of names of the living and dead.

Not far away can be found the graves of two other, later, Fools-for-Christ. As yet their resting places are only marked by simple crosses with a tray for offering candles. Almost next to them is a stone commemorating the martyrdom of about forty priests buried alive in a pit in the cemetery during the early communist persecutions. Their deaths were witnessed and recorded by a man who managed to hide himself while the terrible atrocity took place.

EMPEROR PAUL I

In the centre of St Petersburg stands the huge red-brick Mikhailovsky Castle, the city palace built by Paul I to his own design. Restoration of the state rooms is still in progress but the pilgrim should join a tour of the places connected with the unjustly assassinated Emperor. One is shown the beautiful chapel, dedicated, as is the whole palace, to the Archangel Michael, and the route which the murderers followed. Finally,

the room (it was turned into a chapel in the nineteenth century and hopefully will be again) where the murder of the Emperor took place. Russians are once again showing a great interest in the life and significance of the Emperor Paul, judging by the number of books on sale concerning him.

NOVODEVICHY CONVENT

Finally I want to describe a recently re-established place of pilgrimage, which is quite hidden from the city streets. The Novodevichy Convent of the Resurrection, planned by Elizabeth Petrovna, but not built until the nineteenth century, was for long (until St John of Cronstadt's foundation) the only women's monastery in the capital. Before the Revolution it contained about 300 nuns and the buildings were very extensive, with several large churches. Now a start has been made to rebuild monastic life here, under the young and active Abbess Sofiya. She has patiently re-acquired most of the old monastic property and gathered a small community of about twelve nuns around her. She is full of faith and optimism for the future. The first church to be restored is the beautiful Byzantine style Kazan Icon Cathedral of 1910 - now fully frescoed in traditional style. Inside we find the object of this pilgrimage - a portion of the relics of the New Hieromartyr Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky). He is one of the only Russian New Martyrs of the communist period whose body was returned from exile for proper burial. Abbess Sofiya allowed the major part of his relics to be taken to Moscow and generously retained only a small part - though she kept the vestments he was buried in. This is indeed a sacred spot where one can venerate one of the greatest of the Russian Hieromartyrs.

I visited the Convent on the feast of the Dedication of the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem (13th/26th September). It is the local custom to sing the services of Pascha on this day - the main feast of the Convent -and this seemed to symbolise the holy place - and by extension a whole city, visibly rising from death and darkness.

*John M. Harwood,
13th/26th November, 2003 Saint John Chrysostom*

Adapted from

"THE HOUSE OF GOD AND THE CHURCH SERVICES"

By the Priest N. R. Antonov

Continuation

§ 85. The Hierarchal Liturgy. This also consists of three parts, but it is distinguished from a priestly Liturgy by being more festive and more prolonged. As he enters the church, the Bishop is met by the assembly of the clergy and with the Cross, and a candle is placed before him. He is vested in his episcopal mantia, and taking his staff he proceeds to the soleas to venerate the icons. One of the priests gives him the Cross to kiss as he starts out, and the chanters sing "It is truly meet to call thee blessed..."

When he has venerated the icons, the hierarch turns to the people, and while holding his staff for the first time he blesses the people with the hierarchal blessing. In festive gladness at seeing their pastor, leader and guide, on behalf of the people, the chanters

sing, "*Ton despotin keh arkhieria imon, Kyrie, filatte, is polla eti despota,*" the Greek for the prayer: "Our master and hierarch, O Lord, do Thou safeguard for many years." Often in the rest of the service, this prayer will be repeated using only the final phrase: "*Is polla eti, despota.*"

From the soleas, the bishop goes to the centre of the church, and stands on the dais that has been prepared for him there. Then he takes off the mantia, and stands in his simple clothes (cassock and rason), thus recalling the Saviour, Who at the beginning of His earthly life appeared in humility, simplicity and abasement. Then the vesting of the Bishop begins, during which they chant a hymn in honour of the Theotokos or one of the dogmatic theotokions or some other hymn specially appointed for the day. As the choir chants, the protodeacon intones the prayers which are used at the vesting of a priest for the first vestments, which correspond to the priestly vestments, and then those which are appointed for the hierarchal vestments. When the Bishop is fully vested, the trikirion and dikirion (three and two branched candle holders) are placed in his hands. As this is done the protodeacon exclaims from the soleas, the Gospel words: "Let thy light so shine before men, that they see thy good works and glorify our Father, which is in heaven, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen" (see Matt. 5:16). With the candles the Bishop blesses the people on all four sides, and the faithful bow as he does so, while the choir sings the "*Ton despotin.*"

Then the Hours are begun, during which the Bishop sits, standing only for the Alleluias, the Trisagion, the Lord's Prayer and the "More Honourable." The usual exclamation at the end of each Hour, "Through the prayer of our holy fathers...", is replaced by "Through the prayers of our holy master, O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us." The priest and the reader stand in the centre of the church, and the priest makes the exclamations. The Bishop remains silent.

During the reading of the Hours, they bring a basin and towel from the sanctuary, and the Bishop washes his hands. If there is someone who is to be ordained as a priest or deacon, or one who is going to be made a reader, he usually serves at the washing of the Bishop's hands, to indicate that all the clergy and church servers are subordinate to the order of the episcopate. During the Hours, the deacons cense the church. Towards the end of the Hours, all the clergy come out from the sanctuary through the side doors, and the Bishop reads the silent prayers before the Liturgy. The senior priest then returns to the altar and opens the Royal Gates, and thereupon begins the Liturgy with the usual exclamation. The Great Litany and the antiphons follow as usual. The Bishop stands in the centre, surrounded by the clergy. He represents the Saviour, and the priests His Apostles. During the chanting of "O Only-Begotten Son," all the clergy return to the sanctuary through the side doors and the Bishop remains in the centre of the church alone. Then the Little Entrance is made. The whole assembly of the clergy come out from the altar again, through the north door, bringing with them the Gospel Book, and servers with candles, the trikirion, the dikirion, and the liturgical fans. They stand in order around the Bishop. After the Bishop has kissed the Gospel Book, they slowly process back towards the sanctuary, accompanied by the majestic chanting of "O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ." The Bishop enters the sanctuary and venerates the Holy Table, and the clergy enter through the Royal Gates. The Bishop censes the Holy Table, the sanctuary, iconostas and the people. During this censuring, like the Angels, three children from the

sanctuary sing the " *Is polla eti despota.*" (The children who chant these words are known as the *Ispollatchiks* (!) - Fr Antonov says this, but it seems to be a practice which has happily been abandoned, and the "*Is polla*" is now sung by the choir). Then follows the chanting of the troparia and kontakia, and the protodeacon makes his usual exclamation, "O Lord, save the pious," to which he may add a "Many Years" for the Synod, the Bishop and the civil authorities. When the clergy have chanted the last kontakion, for the first time the Bishop makes an exclamation, "For holy art Thou, O our God," and we begin the Thrice-Holy Hymn. The clergy and the choir alternate in chanting the Trisagion (Fr Antonov introduces his *ispollatchiks* again!). During the chanting of the Trisagion, the Bishop comes out onto the soleas with the Cross and trikirion, and looking upon the worshippers, those who believe in the Lord, as a spiritual vineyard, as God's garden, He addresses the Heavenly Vinetender with the words: "Look down from heaven, O God, and behold, and visit this vine, which Thou hast planted with Thy right hand, and establish it." Then the Liturgy follows its usual course, the reading of the Apostle, the Gospel, the litanies, until we come to the Great Entrance. During this, the deacon and the priest make the usual commemorations of the ecclesiastical and civil authorities, and these are repeated by the hierarch.

We should note that before the reading of the Gospel and before the offering of the Holy Gifts, the Bishop takes off his omophorion to indicate the humility and submissiveness of the Saviour, because this sacred ministry is in reality an act of our Saviour Himself, Who is Himself, through the ministry of the clergy, the One Who offers and the One Who is offered.

Later in the service, after the prayer for the living and the departed which follows the consecration, after the words, "Each and every one," the protodeacon makes a prolonged commemoration of the Synod, the Bishop who is serving, the civil authorities, the clergy and all the faithful.

The Royal Gates are left wide open during a Bishop's Liturgy until the Communion Hymn. This represents the fact that, when the Son of God dwelt among men, He was seen of them, and Heaven, which is represented by the sanctuary, was open to the earthborn. The rest of the Liturgy is as usual.

It is during a hierarchal Liturgy that ordinations to the diaconate and the priesthood are made, which we shall consider under the Mystery of the Priesthood.

Usually after the Liturgy the Bishop blesses the people. The Hierarchal Liturgy, when compared with the usual one, is seen to preserve many references to antiquity and thus helps explain questions about the historical development of the Liturgy.

...to be continued with "The Times When the Component Parts of the Liturgy Appeared, and its Historical Development "

THE COMING MONTH

THIS YEAR, March leads us through the remainder of Great Lent, through Passion Week, to Pascha itself. In the space that we have available in this little magazine, it is extremely hard to give any meaningful impression of the services of this period. One can find an excellent survey of the lenten and Passion Week services in the introduction of the Faber "Lenten Triodion." Entitled "The Meaning of the Great Fast," this introduction was written by the then Archimandrite Kallistos (Ware), now the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Diokleia. For a background understanding of the various commemorations, their development and their significance, we would refer our readers to this excellent study. For a spiritual taste of the services, we can only urge readers to attend the services, repeating the Gospel words that we hear on the first Sunday of the Fast, "Come and see." These words were first addressed by the Saviour to the two disciples of John who followed Him. They were then taken up by Philip when he told Nathanael about the Saviour, and we cannot do better than take them up and repeat them again: Come and see.

This year, the Great Feast of the Annunciation falls on Holy and Great Wednesday, which means that the service of the feast will be chanted with that of the Wednesday. Normally at Brookwood, on the first three days of Passion Week, we read the four Gospels during the Hours. This year, because Annunciation is the dedication festival of the Convent in Willesden, we shall join the sisters there for their celebration on Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning. This will make it impossible to read the Gospels completely and to keep our usual order, but we shall keep Monday as usual. On Tuesday we shall serve the Hours and Presanctified Liturgy rather earlier than usual, and then join the Sisters for the Vigil in London. On the feastday itself, although it falls in Holy Week, the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom is appointed, joined to Vespers, and for that we shall also be at the Convent. We will return for Little Compline in the evening, with the Mysterion of Holy Unction, and then try to complete the week according to the normal schedule.

Because it usually falls in Lent or Passion Week, the Great Feast of the Annunciation is normally only observed for one or two days, but it is in fact one of the most important celebrations of the year. Saint Athanasius the Great (fourth century) tells us that it is the first in rank of all the feasts and is to be especially honoured. This is because it is the day on which Our Lord Jesus Christ was incarnate. In ancient times, it was sometimes called the Conception of Christ, or the Annunciation of Christ. Gradually it came to be called the Annunciation of the Angel to Mary, and then, as late as the seventh century, the Annunciation of the All-holy Theotokos, its present title. The theological content of the festival has not changed, but the change in its title, which was perhaps a reaction to some heretical concepts which sought to demean the role of the Mother of God in the Incarnation, has perhaps induced a shift in the popular understanding of the feast's significance, and the fact that it celebrates the incarnation of the Word of God is perhaps lost on some. This, even though the troparion of the feast proclaims the Incarnation very clearly and unambiguously with the words: "*The Son of God becometh the Virgin's Son.*"

Although, despite its fundamental significance for Christian believers, the feast is such a short one - and this year being in Holy Week it is kept for only one day, - yet it, as it were, finds ways to spread itself. The fifth Saturday in Lent is that of the Laudation of the Mother of God, and during its Mattins the Akathist Hymn is chanted. This celebration is closely linked to the Annunciation, as is the chanting of the Akathist Hymn on the first four Friday evenings in Lent in Greek churches. So the grace of the Annunciation, of the Incarnation of the Word of God, lightens the whole of Lent.

Regarding the Akathist, the first five portions of this extended hymn are specifically dedicated to the Annunciation, and another six concentrate on the events surrounding the Nativity and the Infancy of our Saviour. Although, like the Annunciation itself, addressed to the Virgin, the Akathist Hymn is an ode of praise to the Incarnation. Each of the praises addressed to her refers to the All-holy one in relation to her Son or with reference to the ministry that she has received from Him, the God become incarnate in her womb.

Another important celebration for our own community is the day of the Martyrdom of St Edward, 18th/31st March. Because this always falls in Lent, we keep as our principle feast the day of his Enshrinement in September, and this year will be the twentieth anniversary of that event. But the day of the Martyrdom we also celebrate with a Vigil and with the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts. For these services we bring out the sacred relics of the King and Martyr, so that the faithful may venerate them.

Among the Saints in March, we have:

The Venerable Gerald (10th/23rd) was a disciple of St Colman of Lindisfarne. The latter found himself unable to accept the decisions of the Council of Whitby, at which Roman rather than Celtic usages and the Roman calendar were adopted. He therefore resigned his see, and went with those monks who were of one mind with him to Ireland. The monks that followed St Colman comprised all the Irish that had earlier been with him and some thirty of the English. They settled on the island of Innis-Boffin, but after some time, St Colman found it expedient to divide the community into two according to their nationality, because the English complained that the Irish fathers were lazy. Surprisingly the English monks settled on the Irish mainland, and Saint Gerald became their abbot. He brought the monks under his care to spiritual perfection and his monastic house was said to have produced a hundred saints. The Elder himself died in A.D.732. Before his death, his community had accepted the Roman usages and the Roman calculation of Easter which they had earlier (wrongly) refused to do. The life of this saint and of his monastic Elder seem to sound a resonance with things which trouble the Orthodox Church in our own day: disputes about calendars, about church usages, and ethnic quarrels and misunderstandings. Yet, although Sts Colman and Gerald followed what in retrospect we can now see was the wrong course - (because the Roman usages and paschal ion at that time were the ones accepted by the Universal Church), - one sees how this must have been done out of an innocent love for the tradition they had received, and how their struggles were nonetheless accepted by the merciful God, and they are both numbered among the Saints.

On 12th/25th March, we celebrate Saint Gregory the Great the Pope of Rome and Apostle of the English. Because our community at Brookwood was founded from an English-language mission dedicated to him in London, we have his icon on our iconostas and commemorate him in our daily dismissals, although the original mission parish no longer exists. On the same day as this saint who has such great significance for the Christians in this country, we also commemorate the Venerable Theophanes of Sigriane. He was born in Constantinople in A.D. 760, and his parents were rich, renowned and God-fearing. However, Theophanes was orphaned when he was still a child, and the Emperor Constantine Copronymos, who is generally not renowned for his good works, took charge of Theophanes' education. In his youth, he was married to Megalo, the young daughter of a certain patrician called Leo, but as his heart aspired to the monastic life, Theophanes agreed with his young bride that they should live together as brother and sister. In 780, he distributed his wealth to the needy and to the churches and monasteries, and both he and his wife took up the monastic life. His wife joined a Convent on the Princes' Islands in the sea of Marmara, and although he corresponded with her to give her encouragement in her struggles Theophanes never saw Megalo in this life again. He founded a monastery on the island of Calonymos, where he had family estates, but he refused to be abbot of the monastery. Finding an experienced elder for this purpose, he went to live in solitude and earned his daily bread by copying the sacred books. After some years, the fathers of his monastery besought him to become their abbot, but he feared this would disturb his spiritual stillness, and instead he settled on Mount Sigriane, where he founded a second monastery. He became renowned as a chosen vessel of grace and was blessed with the gift of spiritual counsel, and so disciples gathered around him and his monastery itself became renowned. In 787 A.D. he attended the Second Council of Nicaea, where he defended the veneration of the holy icons. Although he was poorly and shabbily dressed, he impressed the Council with his erudition and his profound knowledge of the Scriptures. On his return to his monastic enclosure, he was stricken with a severe and long-lasting illness, but he did not pray that he might be cured but rather than he might be given patience to bear it. When in 815, the impious Emperor Leo the Armenian resumed the persecution of the Orthodox and reintroduced Iconoclasm, Theophanes was summoned to the Imperial City. He was taken by force and his monastery was burned to the ground. He refused to meet the Emperor, and this increased the latter's wrath against him. The saint was incarcerated in the Monastery of Sts Sergius and Bacchus, and when under interrogation he refused to compromise his Orthodox Faith, he was imprisoned in a dungeon in the Palace of Eleutherius. He spent two years there, and was then sent in exile to the island of Samothrace. Because his already weak health had been broken by his ill-treatment and sufferings, foreknowing his end he died 23 days after arriving at his place of exile, on 12th March, 818 A.D. His tomb immediately became a source of miracles and healings. Among the other writings of the Saint which have come down to us there is a Chronicle covering the years 285 to 813.

The New Martyr Malachias of Rhodes (16th/29th) was the son of a priest. At the age of twenty-two he left his home travelled for some time around the Greek Islands and the Peloponnese. He then set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, but on the way he was falsely accused of having insulted Mohammed, and was dragged before the authorities. They tried to persuade him to renounce his Christian Faith and become

a Moslem. When he refused he was flogged, and then they pierced his ankles, passed a rope through the wounds and tried him to a frenzied horse, so that he was dragged about by the beast. Then before he had died, they cut him free and spitted him so that they might kill him by roasting him over a fire. Thus the courageous one suffered terrible torments. He received his martyr's crown on 29th September, A.D.1500, but the Patriarch Germanus I of Jerusalem (1537-79) appointed that his feast should be kept on 16th March.

The Venerable Fathers Jonas and Mark of Pskov (29th March/11th April): Saint Jonas was a priest ill-treated by the Germans, and left from there and settled near Pskov in a cave. This was the beginning, in 1477 A.D., of the renowned Pskov-Caves Monastery. Jonas lived only another three years, but his prayers and labours undoubtedly sanctified that place which he had found as a refuge from the cruelty of the Germans, and the monastery there flourished. Saint Mark was the first there to organise the monastic life, and although little is known about his life, after his repose he was laid to rest by St Jonas.

NEWS SECTION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEANERY: On the weekend of 31st January and 1st February, Fr Alexis visited the Saints Felix and Edmund Parish in Felixstowe, Suffolk, enjoying the hospitality of its pastor, Father Andrew

Phillips and his matushka, Sabine. It was good to see that an already very beautiful church had in the last year been adorned with more icons and church furnishings, making it even more beautiful.

The Saint Boniface Mission in Ryde, Isle of Wight, is also making strides in adorning their chapel. Through the good efforts of The Carpenter, Elaine Waterhouse, they now have an almost complete iconostas, and the sanctuary has been furnished with new hangings. What started as a redundant Protestant funeral chapel is now very much an Orthodox place of divine worship.

BROOKWOOD NEWS

BLESSING OF FLAMBARDS RESTAURANT, CHERTSEY: On the Friday of Cheesefare Week, 20th February, we were invited to bless the new "Flambards" restaurant at the Crown Hotel in Chertsey. This was arranged through the good offices of Robin and Mary Haigh, at whose riverside home we bless the waters at Theophany. The restaurant blessing was attended by Mr John Young, the chairman and managing director of Youngs Brewery plc, who had asked whether the restaurant could be blessed and kindly made a generous donation to our building fund. The brotherhood presented Mr Young, who fifty years ago had lived in Pirbright, with an icon of St Edward the Martyr. The managers of the restaurant, Mr and Mrs A. C. O'Brien, then kindly treated us to a dinner on the house. (A tip for Orthodox eaters: the restaurant has an extensive fish menu, not much good in Great Lent, but extremely useful after Pascha!).

FUNDRAISING: Since our last issue and the brief mention about the Building Fund we have been sent donations totalling £4,830, and we would like to thank all of you who have responded so readily. The earlier the money comes the more helpful it is to us, because it will decrease any loan that we have to take up, and will perhaps help convince the loaners that in time we can reasonably expect to raise the monies.

To help our fundraising campaign the estimable Mrs Mary O'Brien, a member of the St John the Baptist Parish in Washington DC, writes: "I have arranged to prepare the meals after the two Liturgies on 5th week of Lent, as Benefit Meals for St Edward Brotherhood building project. This is the closest I could get to St Edward's Day and is also my name day so thought that was perfect. Fr. Victor (Potapov) has asked me to write a paragraph for the March Parish Life to explain what the fund-raising is about."

We would also like to thank the family of the late John Sowell, who have asked that donations be sent to the Building Fund rather than flowers for his funeral. May he find mercy for this kindness.

ANNIVERSARIES: 2004 is the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Brookwood Cemetery and the twentieth anniversary of the reception of the sacred relics of St Edward the Martyr here in 1984. To celebrate the former, the Brookwood Cemetery Society is arranging another Open Day in the autumn (more details later). For our part, having to make some urgently necessary renovations to the turret, and thus having to hire scaffolding, we have undertaken to go the whole hog and are redecorating the whole exterior of the Old Mortuary Chapel to spruce it up for its 150th birthday.

NEW VESTMENTS: In the first week in Great Lent a complete set of blue priestly, diaconal and servers' vestments arrived from the Holy Nativity Convent, in Boston. These had been given in memory of Edwin and Joan Cam, and as a result of a donation from Madeline Antoniazzi. We also thank Mary O'Brien for sending them on to us from the Americas.

CORRECTION: In the "Points from Correspondence" section of the February issue, we listed the Ascension among the immovable feasts. Of course, it is one of those which depends on the date of Easter and so is a movable feast. Our thanks to Dr Michael McCall for pointing out this error.

PRACTICAL TIP

LAST MONTH, we mentioned the impropriety of prostrating during the Great Entrance of the Liturgy. Another example of excessive "piety" springs to mind. When one is being censed by the priest or deacon during the divine services, it is proper and reverent to bow your head slightly. There is no need to bow deeply at this point and touch the ground - (there are many other opportunities for doing that), - or to bow so low that we have your head between your knees. This is uncomfortably, ungainly and unnecessary! Also in a dark church like ours, it can be dangerous, because perhaps the clergyman censing does not see you.