

The Arena



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"All who love the martyrs, raise up a divine and worthy hymn, honoring the most wise Katherine, for she preached Christ in the arena"

Kontakion to Saint Katherine

The Newsletter of
SAINT KATHERINE THE GREAT
MARTYR MISSION
ORTHODOX CHURCH OF
AMERICA

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PASTOR'S COLUMN

The following is the letter of Metropolitan Jonah on the occasion of the beginning of the liturgical year last month. It places emphasis on our need as Christians to offer our talents to the building up of Christ's body. Due to its release after the September Arena was prepared, it was not possible to publish it then.

To the Venerable Hierarchs, Reverend Clergy, Monastics and Faithful of the Orthodox Church in America,

The Lord said:

The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." Luke 4:18f.

Dearly Beloved in Christ: The Blessing of the Lord be upon you!

As we celebrate the Church's New Year, we meditate on the Gospel for this day, where the Lord went to Nazareth and was handed the Scriptures, and read the above. He then said, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

The question we have to ask ourselves is, How is this fulfilled in my life? How have I entered into the Lord's ministry, preaching the good news to the poor, healing the

brokenhearted, giving liberty to captives, and so forth? Am I even paying attention to this?

Our Church has many challenges before it, financial, legal, organizational. But we must remember that, as important as these things are, as critical as they may be the life of our Church at this time, they can quickly become distractions from the one thing needful: to keep focused on Jesus Christ and the ministries which He has given us as a means of participation in His own ministry. While we might have budget challenges, there is nothing that can prevent us from preaching the Gospel, consoling those alone and abandoned, and setting at liberty those held captive by their sins.

We have been "recreated in Christ for good works." Let us do that work, not because we expect a paycheck or recognition for doing it, but because it is the very nature of who we are as Christians: to manifest the Kingdom by showing love for our neighbor. Let us recover our spiritual sight, in Christ by the Spirit, so that we may know that the Spirit of the Lord is upon us, and has anointed us to do the Lord's will.

Each one of us has been anointed by the Lord do the works of God -- in chrismation. We don't have to wait for a program or a department to do them. In whatever walk of life, no matter who we are, we are called to enter into the Lord's labors. So let us put aside all distraction, keeping all things in their proper perspective, with our attention and focus firmly on Jesus Christ. We then might just find that our distractions and crises are not so big as we thought they were and that we have been given everything that we need to resolve them, if we indeed can maintain our awareness of Christ, striving for the fulfillment of His will.

With love in Christ,

+JONAH

Archbishop of Washington

Metropolitan of All America and Canada

1 PARISH AND LOCAL EVENTS

From the Treasurer: You may now leave any pledge cards and reimbursement requests in the file folder under Collins/Finance. I would also be happy to print a summary of pledge amounts to date for anyone interested (before the end of the tax year sneaks up). Please let me know if you are interested, leave a note in my box or send an email to collinshouse5@yahoo.com. We have a very giving congregation. Thanks for your support.

Ali Collins

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS:

- Oct. 1** Studies in Orthodoxy (The Rise of Sunday Worship) @ 7pm
- Oct. 4** Divine Liturgy 9:30am
- Oct. 5** Eve of St. Thomas: Great Vespers, Orthros, and Divine Liturgy at St. Thomas Antiochian Church, Snohomish @ 5pm

- Oct. 8** Bible Study (Schmemmann's *Our Father*) @ 7pm
- Oct. 10** Catechesis (Why We Worship) @ 10am
- Oct. 11** Divine Liturgy 9:30am
- Oct. 14-16** Diocesan Assembly in Santa Rosa, California
(no Studies in Orthodoxy)
- Oct. 18** Divine Liturgy 9:30am
- Oct. 21** Parish Council meeting @ 7pm
- Oct. 22** Bible Study (Schmemmann's *Our Father*) @ 7pm
- Oct. 24** Catechesis (The Sanctification of the World) @ 10am
- Oct. 25** Divine Liturgy 9:30am
- Oct. 26** Great Martyr Demetrios
Divine Liturgy at St. Demetrios Greek Church (TBA)
- Oct. 29** Studies in Orthodoxy (Origins of the Resurrectional Vigil) @ 7pm

**SAVE THE DATE FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL
IOCC ANNUAL PAN ORTHODOX VESPERS, DINNER AND PROGRAM
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2009**

Do you want to meet Orthodox Christians in the Seattle area? Do you want to serve those in need around the world? Do you like eating food from around the world? If yes, then please plan to attend the **Third Annual Orthodox Taste of Seattle** on Sunday, October 18, 2009, at the Saint Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church located at 2100 Boyer Avenue East in Seattle, Washington (206 325-4347). Pan Orthodox Vespers begin at 5:00 p.m. with a dinner, program and folk dance performance to follow. The dinner will consist of a wide variety of Greek, Mediterranean, and Slavic small plates and appetizers. All proceeds from this event will allow International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) to continue serving those in need around the world. For more information and to make prepaid reservations, please go to www.iocc.org/seattle or contact your local IOCC representatives: Emily Stchur.

Please plan to attend this special event to give thanks for all that has been bestowed upon us and to help our brothers and sisters in need. IOCC was founded in 1992 as the official humanitarian aid agency of the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in Americas (SCOBA) and has implemented over \$300 million in relief and development programs in 33 countries around the world.

CATECHETICAL CHALLENGES (Our Catechumens can answer them. Can you?)

1. Alexander Schmemmann was an American Orthodox Theologian of the twentieth century, and taught in his famous book *For the Life of the World* that man, as the image of God, could become fully human only through a life of glorifying and giving thanks to God. What epistle of Saint Paul provided the biblical basis for this teaching?
2. On what day of the week was the revelation recorded by Saint John in the final book of the Bible given to him?
3. What was the name of the fourth-century female pilgrim who travelled to Jerusalem and later recorded her experience there of the Resurrectional Vigil served on the eve of every Lord's Day?

Dear parishioners,

We have embarked on a serious effort to acquire property for use as a holy place of worship for our parish, perhaps permanently and certainly for many years. We, as members of the parish, can contribute to this task in no better way than to fervently pray to our Lord Jesus Christ that He bestow his favor and guidance upon us, and to ask the Lady Theotokos and all the Saints to intercede for us that we may succeed in doing the will of God.

Fr. Mancantelli of Billings, Montana was kind enough to recommend this prayer rule. If possible, please add it to your daily rule of prayer and bring it to the attention of others who might be willing to support us in this manner. Regardless of the outcome of the property search, this prayer will help us all fulfill our primary mission of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in love to the world, beginning here on the East Side.

Glenn Rebne (Property Search Committee)

Prayer for Repentance and Church Growth

Please offer this prayer each morning at 10 AM (or as close to that hour as you can):

Lord Jesus Christ our God, Thou didst promise that when two or three are gathered together in Thy name, Thou Thyself wouldst be in their midst. We call out to Thee with one voice, one mind and one heart, asking for the communion of Thy Most Holy Spirit, a converted heart which burns with love for God and our neighbor, and the growth of our parish.

Give us the grace to help our parish grow to establish Thy peace and righteousness upon the earth. Show us when and how to speak to, to pray, and to love Thy lost sheep, and bring them into the safety of Thy fold. We ask this through the prayers of our Most Pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and the Holy Great-martyr Katherine, patroness and protector of our holy parish.

For Thou, O Christ our God, art worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing; and we praise Thee, together with Thy Father, Who is from everlasting, and Thy Most Holy, Good, and Life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

READINGS AND RAMBLINGS

****This is a new column designed to present your contributions. As the title suggests, this column will contain everything from suggested reading and book reviews to topics of personal and communal interest. In short, this column is what we, the parishioners of St. Katherine Mission, want it to be. **Please email submissions to Emily Lorelli – ekslorelli@gmail.com.******

For They Shall Be Comforted – by Molly Sabourin

When he walked through our Church's entrance, I gripped my kids a little tighter. Glen did not hang back like the others, waiting for the liturgy's conclusion to ask for a dollar, a bus pass, or the canned food and bottled water kept next door for distributing to those in need. "Again?" I thought, cringing, as he made a beeline toward the front and center of the sanctuary, hoarsely whispering random greetings along the way.

Not intimidated by the length or sobriety of the service, Glen cannon balled into an unknown experience while the rest of us stared on dumbfounded, waiting for somebody, anybody, to blow the whistle. Wandering into the choir, he sang boldly his own renditions of "Holy God" and the "Cherubic Hymn". From there he would make the rounds, kissing saints like long lost companions before moving back to his front row vantage point where he would plant his feet and raise his eyes toward heaven.

It was right in the middle of Lent, those weeks with Glen, right when I needed to be concentrating most on my penitence. The pre-sanctified Liturgies on Friday evenings have always been a particular favorite of mine. "Let my prayer arise," we sing on bended knee, "in Thy sight as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice." Of the handful of people in attendance, Glen would inevitably be one, always disheveled with the lingering odor of stale alcohol following close behind. We gasped as he fumbled up the stairs to venerate Christ and the Theotokos, whose icon stared down at us austerely from altar doors.

My heart raced with the inappropriateness of everything Glen said, did, and did not do. When the rest of us knelt, he sprawled out flat, face down, like a bear skin rug. It didn't seem fair that he could waltz in and ruin this for me, who had followed the Church's guidelines with dedication. His tears and undecipherable mumblings were distracting me from mourning my sins and from reveling in the pleasantness of God's soothing grace.

It took awhile for me to actually notice he was gone. After four consecutive weeks of Glenn-free Sundays, however, we began to theorize on his absence. But having no address or phone number to work with, we were stuck with those theories instead of answers. It did seem puzzling, why he would come so regularly and so passionately, and then just disappear. I prayed for Glen and let it go. He became legendary to us who remembered him, and fodder for many an amusing anecdote.

Truth be told, I was thankful for Glen's absence. I could breath again in Church, not having to fret over his unpredictable responses to the hymns, litanies, and

Scripture readings. I felt relief at getting back to our uninterrupted and orderly worship - much like Simon the Pharisee must have felt when that filthy harlot finally packed up her empty perfume bottle, peeled her grimy fingers off his houseguest, and meandered out his door and into the street.

"So how do you go about teaching your children to be compassionate?" asked an attendee of a lecture I was giving on being Orthodox in a non-Orthodox society.

At the time I answered, "Just by talking about it, consistently, by stressing that in our home, guests are to be treated with respect."

But now I'm wondering if maybe I'm *not* doing enough. I've been concerned since then that my kids might be *hearing* more from me about our commitment to practicing nondiscriminatory benevolence than they are witnessing firsthand by way of example. We've made room in our lives for friends, for the Church, for our relatives. We've felt the warmth of our efforts being appreciated and reciprocated. It's been awhile, however, since I've extended myself to someone outside of my familiar bubble.

It's still a challenge for me to accept that sacrificial love must include an element of discomfort for it to be genuine and, most importantly, Christ like. I used to feel it was my obligation, as a Christian, to temper my good will with moral judgements on what I considered to be appropriate and inappropriate behavior. I justified, in the back of my mind, withholding empathy, companionship and financial resources from those

whose life choices I deemed questionable, offensive or destructive lest my acts of service be misconstrued as "acceptance" of certain unrighteous vices or habits. There was this line separating "Christian" from clearly "non-Christian" I dared not cross. Getting my hands messy in the mire of others' complicated burdens seemed awfully dangerous.

My conversion to Orthodoxy, however, has introduced me to a whole new level of discipleship through the lives of the saints who play a prominent role in the Church's history and teachings. Their "all or nothing" approach to faith and self-denial has slowly simplified for me what once seemed riddled with complexities. What exact percentage of my total time and patience should I offer (no questions asked - think, Good Samaritan) to a struggling neighbor - an acquaintance crippled by sin, just as I have been crippled by sin and am in need of mercy?

Well, let's see... have I yet laid aside royalty for poverty? Has my unconditional love landed me in prison, in a concentration camp? Have I faced death for the

I don't doubt that God will provide for me opportunities to feed the hungry, to nourish the physically, emotionally and spiritually famished. It's not a question of where or when but rather, how will I overcome these damning prejudices and assumptions in order to embrace with *all* my heart and soul Christ's commandment to love my neighbor as myself?

sake another? Have I gone without *anything* I've wanted, have I been rejected, have I smiled and made eye contact inviting a conversation to take place or a relationship to form that might possibly delay my dinner plans or infringe upon my revered coziness? H—m-m, it appears as if I am certainly in no danger of "over doing" it and, in fact, I've been lax in stretching myself for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven . How do I raise compassionate children? I must first begin by praying for the strength to demolish my own protective boundaries that keep me "safe" from what is troublesome and demanding.

He who gives alms in imitation of God does not discriminate between the wicked and the virtuous, the just and the unjust, when providing for men's bodily need, wrote St. Maximos the Confessor (First Century on Love no. 24). *There is your brother naked and crying!* said St. Gregory of Nyssa, *and you stand confused over your choice of floor covering."*

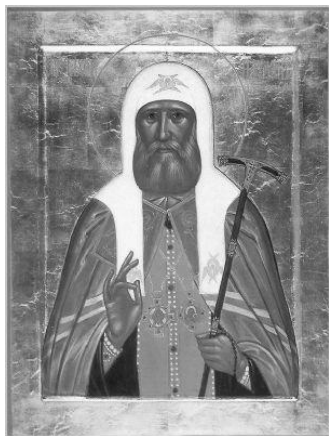
I don't doubt that God will provide for me opportunities to feed the hungry, to nourish the physically, emotionally and spiritually famished. It's not a question of where or when but rather, how will I overcome these damning prejudices and assumptions in order to embrace with *all* my heart and soul Christ's commandment to love my neighbor as myself? Oh boy, I am trembling in anticipation of the answer I know is coming ("Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them," Mark 11:24). Just by voicing and acknowledging these faulty thought patterns, this stubborn mindset that is holding me back, I've already begun down a path, a salvific and arduous and joyous path fraught with wisdom-garnering trials and surprises.

If God so loves the world, every single person in it, than I must also. If the Scriptures tell us, *Judge not, that you be not judged* (Matthew 7:1), I'd best make entreating the Lord for self-control and humility a top priority. If Christ cares so deeply for the broken hearted than by all means I should be weeping with those who weep and seizing hope, irrational hope, in even the direst of circumstances.

Haven't I, too, experienced the despair of being enslaved to my egotistical whims and lust for pleasure? Am I not just as pathetic, if not more so, for having deemed myself, me a fumbling, forgetful, fair weather follower of Christ, an adjudicator qualified to summarize the motives and intentions of my peers? Would it be better at the Great and Final Judgement to have my lifetime's worth of choices reveal that I was overly cautious or fearlessly bold when it came to tending to the wounds of those I pass who have been beaten, who are bruised and lying helpless by the side of the road? Letting go of restraint is, in this case, better.

"Blessed are those who mourn," promised Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. Blessed are they who have lived through the horrors of their own bad decisions and carry the consequences of their transgressions like a ball and chain. Blessed are they who throw off all inhibitions, forging bloodstained through the crowd, for the unbiased hem of Christ's garment. Blessed are we reeking of liquor, ravaged of purity, and steeped in the shame of spiritual arrogance, but who weep bitter tears of regret. For we shall indeed be comforted by Him in whose image every one of us was created.

This essay was featured in the Summer, 2009 issue of *The Handmaiden*.



THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS – October 9: Glorification of St. Tikhon, Apostle to America

St Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and Apostle to America was born as Vasily Ivanovich Belavin on January 19, 1865 into the family of Ioann Belavin, a rural priest of the Toropetz district of the Pskov diocese. His childhood and adolescence were spent in the village in direct contact with peasants and their labor. From his early years he displayed a particular religious disposition, love for the Church as well as rare meekness and humility.

When Vasily was still a boy, his father had a revelation about each of his children. One night, when he and his three sons slept in the hayloft, he suddenly woke up and roused them. He had seen his dead mother in a dream, who foretold to him his imminent death, and the fate of his three sons. She said that one would be unfortunate throughout his entire life, another would die young, while the third, Vasily, would be a great man. The prophecy of the dead woman proved to be entirely accurate in regard to all three brothers.

From 1878 to 1883, Vasily studied at the Pskov Theological Seminary. The modest seminarian was tender and affectionate by nature. He was fair-haired and tall of stature. His fellow students liked and respected him for his piety, brilliant progress in studies, and constant readiness to help comrades, who often turned to him for explanations of lessons, especially for help in drawing up and correcting numerous compositions. Vasily was called "bishop" and "patriarch" by his classmates.

In 1888, at the age of 23, Vasily Belavin graduated from the St Petersburg Theological Academy as a layman, and returned to the Pskov Seminary as an instructor of Moral and Dogmatic Theology. The whole seminary and the town of Pskov became very fond of him. He led an austere and chaste life, and in 1891, when he turned 26, he took monastic vows. Nearly the whole town gathered for the ceremony. He embarked on this new way of life consciously and deliberately, desiring to dedicate himself entirely to the service of the Church. The meek and humble young man was given the name Tikhon in honor of St Tikhon of Zadonsk.

He was transferred from the Pskov Seminary to the Kholm Theological Seminary in 1892, and was raised to the rank of archimandrite. Archimandrite Tikhon was consecrated Bishop of Lublin on October 19, 1897, and returned to Kholm for a year as Vicar Bishop of the Kholm Diocese. Bishop Tikhon zealously devoted his energy to the establishment of the new vicariate. His attractive moral make-up won the general affection, of not only the Russian population, but also of the Lithuanians and Poles. On September 14, 1898, Bishop Tikhon was made Bishop of the Aleutians and Alaska. As head of the Orthodox Church in America, Bishop Tikhon was a zealous laborer in the Lord's vineyard.

He did much to promote the spread of Orthodoxy, and to improve his vast diocese. He reorganized the diocesan structure, and changed its name from "Diocese of the Aleutians and Alaska" to "Diocese of the Aleutians and North America" in 1900. Both clergy and laity loved their archpastor, and held him in such esteem that the Americans made Archbishop Tikhon an honorary citizen of

the United States.

On May 22, 1901, he blessed the cornerstone for St Nicholas Cathedral in New York, and was also involved in establishing other churches. On November 9, 1902, he consecrated the church of St Nicholas in Brooklyn for the Syrian Orthodox immigrants. Two weeks later, he consecrated St Nicholas Cathedral in NY.

In 1905, the American Mission was made an Archdiocese, and St Tikhon was elevated to the rank of Archbishop. He had two vicar bishops: Bishop Innocent (Pustynsky) in Alaska, and St Raphael (Hawaweeny) in Brooklyn to assist him in administering his large, ethnically diverse diocese. In June of 1905, St Tikhon gave his blessing for the establishment of St Tikhon's Monastery.

In 1907, he returned to Russia, and was appointed to Yaroslavl, where he quickly won the affection of his flock. They came to love him as a friendly, communicative, and wise archpastor. He spoke simply to his subordinates, never resorting to a peremptory or overbearing tone. When he had to reprimand someone, he did so in a good-natured, sometimes joking manner, which encouraged the person to correct his mistakes.

When St Tikhon was transferred to Lithuania on December 22, 1913, the people of Yaroslavl voted him an honorary citizen of their town. After his transfer to Vilnius, he did much in terms of material support for various charitable institutions. There too, his generous soul and love of people clearly manifested themselves. World War I broke out when His Eminence was in Vilnius. He spared no effort to help the poor residents of the Vilnius region who were left without a roof over their heads or means of subsistence as a result of the war with the Germans, and who flocked to their archpastor in droves.

After the February Revolution and formation of a new Synod, St Tikhon became one of its members. On June 21, 1917, the Moscow Diocesan Congress of clergy and laity elected him as their ruling bishop. He was a zealous and educated archpastor, widely known even outside his country.

On August 15, 1917, a local council was opened in Moscow, and Archbishop Tikhon was raised to the dignity of Metropolitan, and then elected as chairman of the council. The council had as its aim to restore the life of Russian Orthodox Church on strictly canonical principles, and its primary concern was the restoration of the Patriarchate. All council members would select three candidates, and then a lot would reveal the will of God. The council members chose three candidates: Archbishop Anthony of Kharkov, the wisest, Archbishop Arseny of Novgorod, the strictest, and Metropolitan Tikhon of Moscow, the kindest of the Russian hierarchs.

On November 5, following the Divine Liturgy and a Molieben in the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, a monk removed one of the three ballots from the ballot box, which stood before the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God. Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev announced Metropolitan Tikhon as the newly elected Patriarch. St Tikhon did not change after becoming the primate of the Russian Orthodox Church. In accepting the will of the council, Patriarch Tikhon referred to the scroll that the Prophet Ezekiel had to eat, on which was written, "Lamentations, mourning, and woe." He foresaw that his ministry would be filled with affliction and tears, but through all his suffering, he remained the same accessible, unassuming, and kindly person.

All who met St Tikhon were surprised by his accessibility, simplicity and modesty. His gentle disposition did not prevent him from showing firmness in Church matters, however, particularly when he had to defend the Church from her enemies. He bore a very heavy cross. He had to administer and direct the Church amidst wholesale church disorganization, without auxiliary administrative bodies, in conditions of internal schisms and upheavals by various adherents of the Living Church, renovationists, and autocephalists.

The situation was complicated by external circumstances: the change of the political system, by the accession to power of the godless regime, by hunger, and civil war. This was a time when Church property was being confiscated, when clergy were subjected to court trials and persecutions, and Christ's Church endured repression. News of this came to the Patriarch from all ends of Russia. His exceptionally high moral and religious authority helped him to unite the scattered and enfeebled flock. At a crucial time for the church, his unblemished name was a bright beacon pointing the way to the truth of Orthodoxy. In his messages, he called on people to fulfill the commandments of Christ, and to attain spiritual rebirth through repentance. His irrefutable life was an example to all.

In order to save thousands of lives and to improve the general position of the church, the Patriarch took measures to prevent clergy from making purely political statements. On September 25, 1919, when the civil war was at its height, he issued a message to the clergy urging them to stay away from political struggle.

The summer of 1921 brought a severe famine to the Volga region. In August, Patriarch Tikhon issued a message to the Russian people and to the people of the world, calling them to help famine victims. He gave his blessing for voluntary donations of church valuables, which were not directly used in liturgical services. However, on February 23, 1922, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee published a decree making all valuables subject to confiscation.

According to the 73rd Apostolic Canon, such actions were regarded as sacrilege, and the Patriarch could not approve such total confiscation, especially since many doubted that the valuables would be used to combat famine. This forcible confiscation aroused popular indignation everywhere. Nearly two thousand trials were staged all over Russia, and more than ten thousand believers were shot. The Patriarch's message was viewed as sabotage, for which he was imprisoned from April 1922 until June 1923.

His Holiness, Patriarch Tikhon did much on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church during the crucial time of the so-called Renovationist schism. When Renovationist priests and hierarchs repented and returned to the church, they were met with tenderness and love by St Tikhon. This, however, did not represent any deviation from his strictly Orthodox policy. "I ask you to believe me

He showed himself to be a faithful servant and custodian of the undistorted precepts of the true Orthodox Church. He was the living embodiment of Orthodoxy, which was unconsciously recognized even by enemies of the church, who called its members "Tikhonites."

that I will not come to agreement or make concessions which could lead to the loss of the purity and strength of Orthodoxy," the Patriarch said in 1924.

Being a good pastor, who devoted himself entirely to the church's cause, he called upon the clergy to do the same: "Devote all your energy to preaching the word of God and the truth of Christ, especially today, when unbelief and atheism are audaciously attacking the Church of Christ. May the God of peace and love be with all of you!"

It was extremely painful and hard for the Patriarch's loving, responsive heart to endure all the Church's misfortunes. Upheavals in and outside the church, the Renovatianist schism, his primatial labors, his concern for the organization and tranquility of Church life, sleepless nights and heavy thoughts, his confinement that lasted more than a year, the spiteful and wicked baiting of his enemies, and the unrelenting criticism sometimes even from the Orthodox, combined to undermine his strength and health.

In 1924, Patriarch Tikhon began to feel unwell. He checked into a hospital, but would leave it on Sundays and Feast Days in order to conduct services. On Sunday, April 5, 1925, he served his last Liturgy, and died two days later. On March 25/April 7, 1925 the Patriarch received Metropolitan Peter and had a long talk with him. In the evening, the Patriarch slept a little, then he woke up and asked what time it was. When he was told it was 11:45 P.M., he made the Sign of the Cross twice and said, "Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee." He did not have time to cross himself a third time.

Almost a million people came to say farewell to the Patriarch. The large cathedral of the Donskoy Monastery in Moscow could not contain the crowd, which overflowed the monastery property into the square and adjacent streets. St Tikhon, the eleventh Patriarch of Moscow, was primate of the Russian Church for seven and a half years.

On September 26/October 9, 1989, the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church glorified Patriarch Tikhon and numbered him among the saints. For nearly seventy years, St Tikhon's relics were believed lost, but in February 1992, they were discovered in a concealed place in the Donskoy Monastery.

It would be difficult to imagine the Russian Orthodox Church without Patriarch Tikhon during those years. He did so much for the Church and for the strengthening of the Faith itself during those difficult years of trial. Perhaps the saint's own words can best sum up his life: "May God teach every one of us to strive for His truth, and for the good of the Holy Church, rather than something for our own sake."



Love Without Limits

Written by the Very Rev. John Breck

Archimandrite Lev Gillet, who signed many of his books "A Monk of the Eastern Church," was one of the great Orthodox spiritual guides of the last century. His biography, written by his longtime friend Mme. Elisabeth Behr-Sigel, has been translated into English and offers invaluable insight into the life of Fr Lev, as well as of the circumstances surrounding the growth of Orthodox Christianity in Western Europe, especially following the Russian Revolution.

*In 1990, St. Vladimir's Seminary published two essays of Fr Lev in a volume titled **Serve the Lord With Gladness**. The first, "Our Life in the Liturgy," is a simple and highly accessible introduction to the Orthodox Divine Liturgy or Eucharistic service. The second, "Be My Priest," is a profound meditation on the significance of the priesthood, which appeals to both ordained clergy and others who make up the "universal priesthood" of baptized believers.*

*In this series of webpage columns dedicated to "Life in Christ," we will be offering occasional translations of chapters from another of Fr Lev's books, **Amour Sans Limites (Love Without Limits)**, published in 1971 by "Éditions de Chevetogne," a Roman Catholic monastery in Belgium (where the monks celebrate both Western and Byzantine rites). It is difficult to render Fr Lev's lyrical French into English, but we hope that these efforts will provide readers with something of the spiritual richness and profound theological insight that characterized this humble monk, who was truly a modern Father of the Church.*

"To You, Whoever You May Be"

Whoever you are, whatever you may be, says the Lord of Love, my hand is resting upon you at this very moment. By this gesture, I am letting you know that I love you and that I call you for my own.

I have never ceased loving you, speaking to you, or calling you. Sometimes it was in silence and solitude. Sometimes it was there, where others were gathered in my name.

Often you did not hear this call, because you were not listening. At other times you perceived it, but in a way that was vague and confused. Occasionally you were at the point of responding with acceptance. And sometimes you gave me that response without any lasting commitment. You were deeply moved to hear me. You recoiled from the decision to follow me.

Never thereafter did you finally submit, totally and exclusively, to the calling of Love.

Do you wish to become someone other than you have been, someone other than you are? Do you wish to be someone who lives for others, and first of all for that Other and with that Other who calls all things into being? Do you wish to be a brother to all, a brother to the entire world?

Yet now, once again, I come to you. I want to speak to you once more. I want you wholly for myself. Let me repeat: Love desires you, totally and exclusively.

I will speak to you in secret, confidentially, intimately. I will place my mouth close to your ear. Hear, then, what my lips want to speak to you in hushed tones – what they want to murmur to you.

I am your Lord, the Lord of Love. Do you want to enter into the life of Love?

This is not an invitation to some realm of tepid tenderness. It is a calling to enter into the burning flame of Love. There alone is true conversion: conversion to incandescent Love.

Do you wish to become someone other than you have been, someone other than you are? Do you wish to be someone who lives for others, and first of all for that Other and with that Other who calls all things into being? Do you wish to be a brother to all, a brother to the entire world?

Then hear what my Love speaks to you.

My child, you have never known who you really are. You do not yet know yourself. I mean, you have never really known yourself to be the object of my Love. As a result, you have never known who you are in me, or all the potential within yourself.

Awake from this sleep and its bad dreams! In certain moments of truth, you see nothing in yourself but failures and defeats, set-backs, corruption, and perhaps even crimes. But none of that is really of you. It is not your true “me,” the most profound expression of your true self.

Beneath and behind all that, deeper than all your sin, transgressions and lacks, my eyes are upon you. I see you, and I love you. It is you that I love. It's not the evil you do – the evil that we can neither ignore nor deny nor lessen (is black actually white?). But underneath it all, at a greater depth, I see something else that is still very much alive.

The masks you wear, the disguises you adopt might well hide you from the eyes of others – and even from your own eyes. But they cannot hide you from me. I pursue you even there where no one has ever pursued you before.

Your deceptive expression, your feverish quest for excitement, your hard and avaricious heart – all of that I separate from you. I cut it away and cast it far off from you.

Hear me. No one truly understands you. But I understand you. I can speak about you such wonderful, marvelous things! I can say these things about you. Not about the “you” that the powers of darkness have so often led astray, but about the “you” who is as I desire you to be, the “you” who dwells in my thoughts as the object of my love. I can say these things about the “you” who can still be what I want you to be, and to be so *visibly*.

Become visibly, then, what you already are in my mind. Be the ultimate reality of yourself. Realize all the potential I have placed within you.

No man or woman is capable of realizing any inner beauty that is not equally present within you. There is no divine gift toward which you cannot aspire. Indeed,

you will receive all those gifts together, if you truly love, with me and in me.

Whatever you may have done in the past, I will set you free, I will loose your bonds. And if I loose your bonds, who can prevent you from rising up and walking?



THE ORTHODOX FAITH

An excerpt from Fr. Hopko's *The Orthodox Faith: Doctrine, Volume II*

The Symbol of Faith: Son of God

... the only-begotten Son of God ...

Jesus is one with God as His only-begotten Son. This is the gospel proclamation formulated by the holy fathers of the Nicene Council in the following way:

... and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages: Light of Light. True God of True God. Begotten not made. Of one essence with the Father. Through whom all things were made ...

These lines speak about the **Son of God**, also called the **Word** or **Logos** of God, before his birth in human flesh from the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem.

There is but one eternal Son of God. He is called the **Only-begotten**, which means the only one born of God the Father. **Begotten** as a word simply means born or generated.

The Son of God is born from the Father "before all ages"; that is, before creation, before the commencement of time. Time has its beginning in creation. God exists before time, in an eternally timeless existence without beginning or end.

Eternity as a word does not mean endless time. It means the condition of no time at all -- no past or future, just a constant present. For God there is no past or future. For God, all is **now**.

In the eternal "now" of God, before the creation of the world, God the Father gave birth to his only-begotten Son in what can only be termed an eternal, timeless, always presently-existing generation. This means that although the Son is "begotten of the Father" and comes forth from the Father, his coming forth is eternal. Thus, there never was a "time" when there was no Son of God. This is specifically what the heretic Arius taught. It is the doctrine formally condemned by the first ecumenical council.

Although born of the Father and having his origin in Him, the only-begotten Son always existed, or rather more accurately always "exists" as uncreated, eternal and divine. Thus, the Gospel of St. John says:

In the beginning was the Word [the Logos-Son], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (Jn 1:1)

As the eternally-born of God and always existing with the Father in the "timeless generation," the Son is truly "Light of Light, True God of True God." For God is Light and what is born of Him must be Light. And God is True God, and what is born of

Him must be True God.

We know from the created order of things that what is born must be essentially the same as what gives birth. If one comes from the very being of another, one must be the very same thing. He cannot be essentially different. Thus, men give birth to men, and birds to birds, fish to fish, flowers to flowers.

If God, then, in the super-abundant fullness and perfection of His divine being gives birth to a Son, the Son must be the same as the Father in all things -- except, of course, in the fact of his being the Son.

Thus, if the Father is divinely and eternally perfect, true, wise, good, loving, and all of the things that we know God is: "ineffable, inconceivable, invisible, ever-existing and eternally the same" (to quote this text of the Liturgy once more), then the Son must be all of these things as well. To think that what is born of God must be less than God, says one saint of the Church, is to dishonor to God.

The Son is "begotten not made, of one essence with the Father." "Begotten not made" may also be put "born and not created." Everything which exists besides God is created by Him: all things visible and invisible. But the Son of God is not a creature. He was not created by God or made by Him. He was born, begotten, generated from the very being and nature of the Father. It belongs to the very nature of God-to God as God -- according to divine revelation as understood by the Orthodox, that God is an eternal Father by nature, and that He should always have with Him his eternal, uncreated Son.

It belongs to the very nature of God that He should be such a being if He is truly and perfectly divine. It belongs to God's very divine nature that He should not be eternally alone in his divinity, but that His very being as Love and Goodness should naturally "overflow itself" and "reproduce itself" in the generation of a divine Son: the "Son of His Love" as the Apostle Paul has called him (*Col 1:13, inaccurately translated in English*).

Thus, there is an abyss drawn between the created and the uncreated, between God and everything else which God has made out of nothing. The Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, is not created. He was not made out of nothing. He was eternally begotten from the divine being of the Father. He belongs "on the side of God."

Having been born and not made, the Son of God is what God is. The expression of **one essence** simply means this: what God the Father is, so also -- is the Son of God. **Essence** is from the Latin word *esse* which means **to be**. The essence of a thing answers the question **What is it?** What the Father is, the Son is. The Father is divine, the Son is divine. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated. The Father is God and the Son is God. This is what men confess when they say "the only-begotten Son of God ... of one essence with the Father."

Being always with the Father, the Son is also one life, one will, one power and one action with Him. Whatever the Father is, the Son is; and so whatever the Father does, the Son does as well. The original act of God outside of His divine existence is the act of creation. The Father is creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. And in the act of creation, as -- we confess in the Symbol of Faith, the Son is the one by **whom all things were made**.

The Symbol of Faith stresses that it is "for us men and for our salvation" that the Son of God has come. This is the most critical biblical doctrine, that "God so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"

The Son acts in creation as the one who accomplishes the Father's will. The divine act of creation-and, indeed, every action toward the world in revelation, salvation, and glorification -- is willed by the Father and accomplished by the Son (we will speak of the Holy Spirit below) in one identical divine action. Thus, we have the **Genesis** account of God creating through His divine word ("God said..."), and in the Gospel of St. John the following specific revelation:

He [the Word-Son] was in the beginning with God [the Father]; all things were made through [or by] him and without him was not anything made that was made" (Jn 1:2-3).

This is the exact doctrine of the Apostle Paul as well:

... in him [the Son] all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers-all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things and in him all things hold together (Col 1:16-17).

Thus, the eternal Son of God is confessed as the one "by whom all things were made." (Heb 1: 2; 2:10; Rom I 1 : 36)

The Symbol of Faith continues: ... Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man ...

The divine Son of God was born in human flesh for the salvation of the world. This is the central doctrine of the Orthodox Christian Faith; the entire life of Christians is built upon this fact.

The Symbol of Faith stresses that it is "for us men and for our salvation" that the Son of God has come. This is the most critical biblical doctrine, that "God so loved the world that He gave his only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (*Jn 3:16, quoted at each Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom at the center of the eucharistic prayer*).

Because of his perfect love, God sent forth his Son into the world. God knew in the very act of creation that to have a world at all would require the incarnation of his Son in human flesh. Incarnation as a word means "enfleshment" in the sense of taking on the wholeness of human nature, body and soul.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as the only-begotten Son of the Father. And from his fullness have we all received grace upon grace" (Jn 1:14-16).

... came down from heaven ...

The affirmation that the Son has "come down from heaven and was incarnate" does not mean that the Son is located somewhere "up there" in the universe and

then descended onto the planet earth. That He came "down from heaven" is the Biblical way of saying that the Son of God came from the totally "other" divine existence of God, outside the bounds and limits of all space and time located within the created, physical universe. In general we must remember again the symbolical character of all of our words and affirmations about God.

The affirmation that the Son came "down from heaven" also should not be interpreted in the sense that before the incarnation the Son of God was totally absent from the world. The Son was always "in the world" for the "world was made through Him" (*Jn 1:10*). He was always present in the world for He is personally the life and the light of man (*1 Jn 4*).

As "created in the image and likeness of God," every man -- just by being a man -- is already a reflection of the divine Son, who is Himself the uncreated image of God (*Col 1:15* ; *Heb 1:3*). Thus, the Son, or Word, or Image, or Radiance of God, as He is called in Scriptures, was always "in the world" by being always present in every of his "created images," not only as their creator, but also as the one whose very being all creatures are made to share and to reflect. Thus, in his incarnation, the Son comes personally to the world and becomes Himself a man. But even before the incarnation He was always in the world by the presence and power of his creative actions in his creatures, particularly in man.

In addition to this, it is also Orthodox doctrine that the manifestation of God to the saints of the Old Testament, the so-called **theophanies** (which means divine **manifestations**), were manifestations of the Father, by, through and in his Son or Logos. Thus, for example, the manifestations to Moses, Elias or Isaiah are mediated by God's divine and uncreated Son.

It is the Orthodox teaching as well that the Word of God which came to the Old Testament prophets and saints, and the very words of the Old Testament Law of Moses, which are called in Hebrew the "words" and not as we say in English, the "commandments", are also revelations of God by his Son, the Divine Word. Thus, for example, we have Old Testamental witness to the revelation of God's Word, such as that of the Prophet Isaiah, in almost the same personalistic form as is found in the Christian gospel:

*For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I propose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it (*Isa 55:10-11*).*

Thus, before His personal birth of the Virgin Mary as the man Jesus, the divine Son and Word of God was in the world by His presence and action in creation, particularly in man. He was present and active; also in the theophanies to the Old Testament saints; and in the words of the law and the prophets, both oral and scriptural.

HYMNOGRAPHY: OCTOBER

October 4: Hieromartyr Hierotheus the Bishop of Athens

Troparion - Tone 1

We the faithful all praise Hierótheus, the disciple of Paul,
Hierarch of Athens,
the world's teacher and a preacher of the Faith,
who revealed to us Christ's Mysteries
and poured forth streams of godly doctrine.
His life was well-pleasing to God, who is greatly greatly merciful.

Kontakion - Tone 8

Hierarch of Athens, we praise you for you have instructed us in awesome and
ineffable things,
and you were revealed to be a divinely-inspired writer of hymns.
Pray that we be delivered from every kind of sin, so that we may cry to you:
"Rejoice, divinely-wise Father Hierótheus."

October 6: Holy, Glorious Apostle Thomas

Troparion - Tone 2

You were a disciple of Christ
And a member of the divine college of Apostles.
Having been weak in faith you doubted the Resurrection of Christ.
But by feeling the wounds you believed in His all-pure passion:
Pray now to Him, O all-praised Thomas to grant us peace and great mercy.

Kontakion - Tone 4

Thomas, the faithful servant and disciple of Christ,
Filled with divine grace, cried out from the depth of his love:
You are my Lord and my God!

October 11: Apostle Philip of the Seventy

Troparion - Tone 3

Filled with divine grace,
you served God the Word as a deacon of the Church, O Apostle Philip.
By the working of miracles and by signs from God
you enlightened the multitudes of Samaria.
O blessed one, entreat Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

Kontakion - Tone 4

Podoben: "Today You have shown forth..."
Inspired by the All-Holy Spirit,
you enlightened the entire world by your teachings and resplendent miracles,
Apostle Philip, sacred initiate.

October 18: Apostle and Evangelist Luke

Troparion - Tone 5

Let us praise with sacred songs the holy Apostle Luke,
the recorder of the joyous Gospel of Christ
and the scribe of the Acts of the Apostles,
for his writings are a testimony of the Church of Christ:
He is the physician of human weaknesses and infirmities.
He heals the wounds of our souls,
and constantly intercedes for our salvation!

Kontakion - Tone 2

Let us praise the godly Luke:
he is the true preacher of piety,
the orator of ineffable mysteries
and the star of the Church;
for the Word, Who alone knows the hearts of men,
chose him, together with wise Paul, to be a teacher of the gentiles!

October 25: Martyrs Marcian and Martyrius

Troparion - Tone 3

In holy zeal you dispelled the error of Arius
and proclaimed the Trinity, one in essence.
Holy martyrs Marcian and Martyrius,
unshaken bulwarks of Orthodoxy,
entreat Christ our God to grant us His great mercy.

Kontakion - Tone 4

Podoben: "As You were voluntarily raised..."
From your youth you were good athletes, wise Marcian and Martyrius,
vanquishing the Arian heretics;
you kept the faith perfect by following in the footsteps of your bishop and teacher
Paul,
therefore, you are worthy to be with him in eternal life,
as respected defenders of the Holy Trinity.

October 26: Holy, Glorious Demetrius the Myrrhgusher of Thessalonica

Troparion - Tone 3

The world has found you to be a great defense against tribulation
and a vanquisher of heathens, O Passion-bearer.
As you bolstered the courage of Nestor,
who then humbled the arrogance of Lyaios in battle,
Holy Demetrius, entreat Christ God to grant us great mercy.

Kontakion - Tone 2

God, who has given you invincible might,
has tinged the Church with streams of your blood, Demetrius!
He pre-serves your city from harm,
for you are its foundation!

PARISHIONERS' NAME DAYS – OCTOBER

October 6: St. Innocent of Moscow and Alaska (Ben Meals)

October 12: St. Martin the Merciful the Bishop of Tours (Glen Rebne)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Note: If you wish to have someone included on our parish prayer list for remembrance during the divine services, please notify Fr. John before the end of the month. This list will in most cases be cleared at the beginning of each month.

Please include the following people, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox, in whatever prayers you can offer. Each of them is in special need this month for our common intercessions before God.

Living

Patricia
Flore
Allan Simeon
Deborah Maria
James Demetrius
Bp. Nikolai
Robert Gregory
Eugenia
Bistra
Sarah
Allan
Antonio

Departed

ND Gordon

Catechetical Challenge Answers:

1. Romans (chapter 1, verse 21)
2. "The Lord's Day" (Sunday)
3. Egeria