

Go therefore and make disciples of  
all nations . . . .  
Mt 28:19



Allez, faites de toutes les nations  
des disciples . . . .  
Mt 28:19

# CANADIAN ORTHODOX MESSENGER

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## The Apostles' fast

It may seem to many to be a theological mystery as to why the Orthodox Church has a fast, ranging from a few days to up to five weeks, before the feast of Sts Peter and Paul on June 29 (July 12 Old Calendar). This fast can be longer than the Dormition Fast, which itself is only two weeks long. Is this fast to imply that the commemoration of the Apostles is more important than our understanding of what happened to the Theotokos at death and consequently what will happen to us and our bodies at the General Resurrection? Certainly not!

Then why do we have such a fast? There are a few feeble explanations for the Apostles' Fast floating about. For example, some say the fast was to counteract the festivities surrounding the pagan feast of the summer solstice on June 21. Another possible offering is that the fast was to discipline the soldiers in the armies during the early Christian centuries. Perhaps the most preposterous rationale was that this fast was put in place to make up for the lack of effort during the Great Fast

before Pascha. These propositions all sound like grounds to scrap the fast!

The reason for the existence of the Apostles' fast can be found in our own Orthodox heritage. Biblical scholars discuss the possibility that there was a great rift between the Apostles Peter and Paul, and often have elaborate theories of how far this altercation went.



Apostle Peter and Apostle Paul

Although there is no need to speculate about animosities between these two saints, it is clear that they had their disagreements.

In Galatians 2:11, St Paul describes how he opposed Cephas (St Peter) "to his face." The problem behind the conflict was the circumcision party, a group of followers of Christ who were convinced that Gentile converts to Christianity had to become Jews, and thus had to follow Jewish practices, such as circumcision, Mosaic dietary laws, and avoidance of eating with Gentiles. St Paul continues:

For before certain men came from

James, he [Peter] ate with the Gentiles; but when they came he drew back and separated himself, fearing the circumcision party . . . I said to Cephas before them all 'If you, though a Jew, live like a

*continued, next page . . .*

**Apostles' fast**, *continued from p.1:*

Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews? (Gal.2:12,14b)

Although the Letter to the Galatians does not contain St Peter's response to St Paul's affront, the Book of the Acts of the Apostles does. Chapter 10 describes a strange vision revealed to St. Peter:

And he [Peter] became hungry and desired something to eat; but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance and saw the heaven opened and something descending like a great sheet let down by four corners upon the earth. In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him, 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat.' But Peter said, 'No, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean' And the voice came to him again a second time, 'What God has cleansed, you must not call common.' (Acts 10:10-15)

The story continues, showing how the Apostle Peter agrees to meet with the centurion Cornelius, a Gentile, after this unusual vision. St Peter explains to the centurion:

You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit any one of another nation: but God has shown me that I should not call any human being common or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without objection. (Acts 10:28b-29a)

Thus the issue is resolved in St Peter's mind, and he is no longer at odds with St Paul.

The iconography of our Church also offers some important information. The icon of the feast of Sts Peter and Paul depicts the two saints either approaching each other in preparation to embrace, or holding up a model-sized church, obviously symbolizing the Church Itself.

With these factors in mind, it appears that the feast is not only to commemorate the wonders of the Apostles Peter and Paul, but also to celebrate their ultimate love for each other and how they support the Church. In other words, the feast of these saints is to embrace unity in the Church. And considering our dire need for Church unity, we should be fasting and praying for this all year round!

Thus, far from being an antiquated and quirky bit of baggage, the fast of Sts Peter and Paul, leading up to such a significant feast, is not only rich in theology, it is also practical and very relevant to every age, including our own. Let us keep the fast, and celebrate the feast with joy!—*Esther Gloria Juce, Winnipeg, graduate of St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary*

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*Our father among the saints*

## Apostle Peter

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St Peter is a wonderfully human apostle. Warm, eager, devoted, at times rushing and bold, his life bears the precious intimacy of face-to-face discipleship, having spent the better part of the three years of Jesus' public ministry close to our Lord. He is a working man, a bit rough of speech and manner. A man with a family. He chops off an ear on the Lord's behalf on the eve of His imprisonment. He denies Him three times later that dark night. Then his lowest moment is turned to glorify the Lord as he sets the model of repentance for ages of the Church to come: icons depict him with reddened eyes sore from weeping, for it is said that even though he knew the Lord forgave him his denial, he chose to rise every night at midnight to repent before Him, as a reminder to walk carefully in his days to come. Then shortly thereafter, he speaks and 3,000 are converted at once, a testament to the grace of the Holy Spirit descending on him at Pentecost (Acts 2:41). A new Peter, imbued with power from on high.

Clearly we must place St Peter near the centre of activities surrounding the ministry of Christ. Mention is made of him in the Scriptures nearly 200 times. We learn many facts of his life story. He is from Bethsaida in Galilee, a son of Jonas, of the tribe of Simeon; he is married, has a mother-in-law who became sick; he has a fishing business with his brother, Andrew, and with James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

Oddly, he seems like someone we know. Or is it that we see ourselves in him? A burst of enthusiasm brings him out of the boat to walk upon the water, and then the Lord has to catch and save him, as He catches us all so often! Well might we imagine Peter's burst of love and gratitude as he was saved from those depths! Misguided human kindness and failure to understand where things are going prompt him to comment "be it far from thee, Lord!" regarding the Lord's coming sacrifice (Matt 16:22). He is rebuked. And we are reminded how many times we think we "have God cased." He is lovingly restored in the Lord in the intimate exchange at the lakeshore breakfast. "Do you love me?"—his declaration of "Yes, Lord" voiding his previous "I do not know him." And we are reminded how the Lord forgives us and forgets our sins, and brings things around in a full circle of healing in our own lives. In the warmth of restoration, St Peter is instructed to feed the Lord's sheep. Trusted again. His life becomes the continuing unfolding of the Gospel, St Peter the first to recognize and confess Christ, "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," the first to enter the empty tomb; the one to whom the Lord appears (Luke 24:34); now first to receive the commission of love, and finally, to set the way of perpetual repentance for us.

In the days following the Lord's resurrection it is known that St Peter presided over the election of an apostle to take the place of Judas, that he was called the Apostle to the Jews, that he was imprisoned for the faith and twice loosed by an angel, that many miracles were performed by the Lord's power through his hand and prayer, that he founded the church in Antioch, wrote epistles as an aged apostle, and concluded his earthly life after serving the Church in Rome, where he was crucified in the last years of Nero's reign. His end was foretold by the Lord, that in old age he would stretch forth his hands and be led where he did not want to go—to the cross (John 21:18). And so he was crucified in the upside down manner he chose, to symbolize Adam fallen from his first state, the upright beam—the Word—upon which his humanness was crucified, the cross piece representing man's nature, and the nail representing conversion and the repentance of man.<sup>1</sup>

The Orthodox Church has always given him a place of high honor, joining him with St Paul in a single commemoration (June 29/July 12). The two of them as apostles to the Jews and to the Gentiles are shown holding the Church between them, or depicted lovingly greeting each other. A tropar of their feast has us celebrating and addressing the two apostles with a single breath: "Rejoice, Apostle Peter, so closely linked with your Teacher, Christ our God; rejoice, O most beloved Paul, preacher of the faith and teacher to the universe. O you two Holy Ones, because of your high position and rank, pray to Christ God that He may save our souls." In the Slavic Bible, St Peter's epistles appear shortly after Acts, followed by the epistles of St Paul.<sup>2</sup>

The Church asks us to pay great due respect to both of these apostles, giving them the title "Princes of the Apostles." St Peter is not singled out as the Principal Apostle in his own right. Even the concept of "Petros" as the rock on which the Church would be built, is interpreted by the Orthodox to mean "upon the rock of your confession."<sup>3</sup> St Peter (Cephas) had only confessed Christ as the Son of God moments before Jesus spoke these words.<sup>4</sup> He is one of the twelve, with a unique commission to the salvation of the Jews, just as St Paul ministered to the Gentiles, working synergistically with the power of the Lord and with his fellow apostles and brethren.

<sup>1</sup> *Acts of Peter*, written not later than 200 A.D. in Greek contains a paraphrase of Peter's martyrdom; the work is attributed to Linus.

<sup>2</sup> The actual order in the Slavic Bible after the four Gospels and Acts is: James, Peter, John, and Jude, followed by Romans.

<sup>3</sup> The scholarly debate over the Greek words *petros* (rock, masculine), *petra* (stone, feminine) and *homologia* (confession, feminine) has proven of interest to some, but it is clearly St Peter's confession of faith that is central to the Orthodox understanding rather than the man himself.

<sup>4</sup> Foundation and stones are used figuratively in Scripture many times over. In keeping with this, an early Christian work, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, also draws a similar analogy in reference to the Christian Church: "The square white stones, fitting at their joints, these are the apostles, bishops, teachers and deacons marching in accordance with the holiness of God, having acted virtuously and decently as bishops, teachers, and ministers on behalf of the chosen of God." (Chapter 13:1)

For some reason the person of St Peter has attracted unique and unusual attention over the centuries, being the subject of theological interpretations that have held sway in various parts of Christendom, mainly in the West. As we shall see, the Orthodox Fathers addressed these issues quite definitely; hence, they have remained non-issues in the history of the Eastern Church.

The first interpretation was the glorification of St Peter above the other apostles, with developing claims of hierarchical infallibility to which the western church was subject. The *person* of St Peter (the rock, the keys) rather than his confession of faith was the focus, and *he* became the first, with others to follow "apostolically" from *him*. This in turn, brought a backlash during the time of the Protestant Reformation, in the form of the Galatians Controversy, utilized to address vital issues in the church of its day, but using the interpreted differences between Sts Peter and Paul in Galatians, the "putting down" of St Peter by Paul, in their face to face "confrontation" over the keeping of Jewish laws. Based largely on Galatians 2, its purpose was to emphasize St Paul's words concerning justification by faith, a spurning of "works" and an attempt to emphasize the apostolic role invested in the people rather than in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. "...Of all of the commentaries of the Epistle to the Galatians, a great number were produced in the century of the Reformation."<sup>5</sup> A key theological pivot for change was in place for those seeking change.

What about the Orthodox understanding? First, St Peter's place is with the others, not exalted. Second, there has never been a theory of infallibility of eastern bishops or patriarchs. Third, the Church Fathers' interpretation of Galatians does not sunder the relationship of the two chief Apostles but indicates their mutual love, humility and onemindedness.

For the writing of his nearly 500-page work on Galatians, *Tolkovanie: Poslanie Sv. Apostola Pavla K Galatam* published in 1893, Theophan of Vysha<sup>6</sup> had access to the Fathers and was proficient in Greek. He cites *verbatim* various Church Fathers in his writing. A lengthy passage of St John Chrysostom on Galatians 2:11 has also been published in the new *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians)*, 1999.

For the Orthodox Fathers, the foundational examination of Galatians begins at Galatians 1:18: St  
*continued, next page . . .*

<sup>5</sup> See Bietenholz, P.G. "*Simulatio*: Erasme et les interprétations controversées de Galates 2:11–14." Colloque international sur Erasme, Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance, Université de Tours, July 2, 1986 [trans. "*Simulatio*: Erasmus and the Disputed Interpretations of Galatians 2:11–14], p.5

<sup>6</sup> We know him today as St Theophan the Recluse.

**Apostle Peter**, *continued from p.3:*

Paul's visit to Jerusalem. Theophan uses the word *soglyadati* in Russian, meaning to venerate, to look upon, visit; and gives the corresponding Greek word, *isorisai*. The passage in translation reads "Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to venerate Peter, and abode with him fifteen days."<sup>7</sup>

The emphasis is on the respect and honor contained in the passage. St Paul went, St Theophan says, as one goes to visit a holy man. St. John Chrysostom comments on the humility of Paul, who having already overcome so many hardships and struggles (podvigs) by the power of the Lord, came "to venerate Peter, he said, not to look at (itheiv) but to gaze upon, as we hear of those who visit a great and famous city...today, travellers take journeys for profit; but this blessed one travelled, not to learn something or to correct a particular sin of his, but solely for this: to venerate Peter and to honour him with his presence."<sup>8</sup> For the Fathers, honour, mutual love and respect is the starting place.

Given the strong language of Galatians, at face value one might assume that the two Apostles were at loggerheads with each other.<sup>9</sup> Words like "withstood him to the face." (Gal.2: 11)... "If thou being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Gal. 2:14) But did they actually disagree? The *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* quotes St John Chrysostom: "Many of those who read this passage of the letter superficially believe that Paul rebuked the hypocrisy of Peter. But it is not so—it is not so, far from it! For we shall find that there was here a deep though hidden understanding between Paul and Peter for the good of those who listen."<sup>10</sup>

Between these two pillars of the Church there is, rather, an artful playing out of the great question of the keeping of the law. Through Sts Peter and Paul, it would be settled once and for all. "And so Paul rebukes and Peter voluntarily gives way" and by keeping silent, concedes to St Paul, establishing the way of the Church for Jew and Gentile.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, Paul speaks what is actually in the heart of Peter, and Peter shows the greater humility by suffering "the rebuke" in silence. Theodoret adds that Peter had in mind

<sup>7</sup> The King James Version simply puts it as "to see" but both St John Chrysostom from the Greek and Theophan from the Slavic emphasize the meaning "to venerate; to visit."

<sup>8</sup> Theophan as cited above, p. 107.

<sup>9</sup> And concerning St James the First Bishop, Theophan does not allow that James sanctioned those of the circumcision who visited the Galatians (who supposedly "came from James" and upheld the Jewish keeping of the laws). Theophan says they may have come from the region constituting James' eparchial authority, but it does not follow that they were sent by James. "And in no way whatever [*nekak nil' zya*] are we to conclude that they were one spirit with James." (169)

<sup>10</sup> Edwards, Mark J., *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, Vol. 8, Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999, with introductory comments by Metropolitan Theodosius and others. Bietenholz refers to Chrysostom's treatment of the Antiochean passage as surpassing Jerome "by the insistence and elegance of his treatment." (p. 8)

<sup>11</sup> See Theophan, pp. 174–178.

the benefit of the listeners, and so is content with (concedes to) the words of Paul.<sup>12</sup> Jerome also fully supports this, referring to the whole exchange as "*simulatio*."<sup>13</sup> Thus was their mutual love preserved while critical theological doctrine was being carefully worked out for the good of all.

Does artfulness in the Christian Church surprise us? Not if it is for edification, as a prudent means of encouraging the weak. St Paul himself declares "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews...to them that are without law, as one without law...that I might gain them that are without law." (1 Cor 9: 20-21.) St Paul as a Roman would have known the way of the polemicist, to address an issue indirectly. He would also have known that the argument of a point of law must be a personal fight, even if it is a simulated one. And we are reminded of the confessors of Mount Athos, who from desire to encourage their disciples to confess difficult sins, pretend to fall asleep during the confession, declaring their fatigue but asking the penitent to keep going. And upon the disciple's mustering courage and speaking, the father revives, and joyfully absolves him, comforting him with a strong hint that others had done worse and found grace!

St Peter is a man who truly loved God, and one who allowed himself to be mightily used by God. We see the Lord meeting him with love in all of its forms—tender, hard, guiding, lifting, restoring. And we know what He so intimately did for St Peter, He will do for us also, if we choose the repentant way of St Peter.

*St Peter, Apostle of the Lord, pray for us!*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 177. Also, "Jerome scrutinizes Paul's narrative and finds in it a key word: *simulatio*. Paul, no less than Peter, dissimulated . . . Paul understood perfectly what Peter was doing, and even while approving it, pretended to censure him in order to reassure his sheep who were of Gentile origin. Both of them were blameless, each following the needs of his mission." Bietenholz, p. 3

<sup>13</sup> Augustine, a Western Church Father, not proficient in Greek, took a dissimilar stand, and it is this stand that was adopted in the West (Luther, Lefevre of Etaples, etc.). Extrapolated, it came to mean "since Peter was mistaken, there was no reason to think his successors . . . were exempt from errors." Bietenholz, p. 10. Augustine's understanding of the exchange between Sts Peter and Paul is also contained in the *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture* (see pp. 25–29). However, the editors of the *Commentary* remark on ". . . the defects entailed by his lack of Greek and his indifference to the works of other authors." (p. xviii–xix) Bietenholz, in examining Erasmus' stand in reference to Antioch says: "Erasmus finds that Augustine judges Peter too severely. One should distinguish between the dissimulation of Peter, who was afraid of hurting his brethren, and that of the other Jewish Christians, who imitated him not through altruism but from weakness. It was about them and not Peter, that Paul said that 'they did not walk straight according to the Gospel.' Thus with the term *kategnosmenos* Paul meant to say that Peter was reprimanded (*reprehensus*) by those who did not know how to judge his motives. Wrongly does the Vulgate translate *reprehensibilis* and Augustine thus concludes that Peter was reprehensible in Paul's eyes." (p. 8) There is also the question of the phrase *kata prosopon* which some have rendered not "face to face" but "on the surface, in appearance." Erasmus believed it to mean "in plain view," for how could Paul achieve his purpose by declaring to his readers that he had resisted Peter only in appearance? The *simulatio* would have been undone! (paraphrase of Bietenholz, p. 7)

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## Des «Maintes formes» de la sainteté Et de leur essentielle unité

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—par le Métropolitain Emilianos Timiadis,  
Patriarcat Oecuménique de Constantinople

[Préface du livre par le Père Denis Guillaume,  
*Les gloires du Carmel*, Diaconie Apostolique, Rome, 1990.]

«L'unité de la foi ne doit pas être confondue avec son uniformité.» C'est là une vérité qu'on répète souvent de nos jours, et ce principe devrait trouver son application également au niveau de la vie spirituelle et de la sainteté. Chacun est un être à part, chaque personne humaine est unique et exceptionnelle. Par suite, chaque saint garde son identité, sa physionomie propre, dans sa recherche de la perfection.

Si la communauté des Douze n'avait *qu'un cœur et qu'une âme* (Ac 4,32), chaque apôtre néanmoins a manifesté son attachement au Maître de façon particulière, dans la variété multiforme de la vie en Christ. Et chaque évangéliste nous a transmis le message du Verbe avec la nuance qui lui était propre, sans trahir l'essentiel.

Nous sommes bien loin du nivellement spirituel que le repli sur soi d'une partie de la chrétienté pourrait imposer à l'autre. Si nos Églises veulent redevenir «un cœur et une âme», des formes différentes de sainteté ne devraient plus être conçues comme un danger pour la vraie foi, mais comme un enrichissement mutuel, pour la louange universelle de Celui qui est la source de toute sainteté.

Ces réflexions nous viennent à propos de l'important ouvrage d'hymnographie que nous offre l'archidiaconé Denis. Car, en chacun des offices qu'il a composés, pour le saint d'Assise comme pour ceux du Carmel, il a su intégrer les traits caractéristiques de ces âmes consacrées au Christ. Dans un ensemble harmonieux, les hymnes du Père Denis Guillaume nous invitent à monter ensemble vers le même ciel, de la façon originale que nous suggère momentanément l'expérience d'amour divin particulière à tel ou tel saint, et nous inspirent de glorifier Dieu pour le service que «ses» saints ont rendu à l'Église universelle, au-delà des frontières de leur Église d'origine.

Car, en définitive, c'est dans le même cadre que la sainteté authentique a été vécue, en Orient comme en Occident : un cadre ascétique fait d'oubli de soi, d'abnégation, d'humilité, de renoncement au monde pour une consécration totale au Christ, une marche continue vers la transfiguration personnelle, vers la «théosis» ou divinisation de l'être humain. Oui, le saint est tel, objectivement, quelle que soit l'Église locale dont il était membre sur la terre.

à suivre p. 6 . . .

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## The Multiple forms of sainthood And their essential unity

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—by Metropolitan Emilianos Timiadis,  
Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople

[Preface to the book by Father Denis Guillaume,  
*Les gloires du Carmel*, Diaconie Apostolique, Rome, 1990.]

“Unity of faith must not be confused with uniformity.” This is a truism which one often hears nowadays and this principle should also find its application with respect to the spiritual life and to sainthood. Every human person is a separate being, each is unique and exceptional. As a consequence, every saint retains his or her identity, his or her countenance, in the search for perfection.

If the community of the Twelve was “of one heart and one soul” (Acts 4:32), each Apostle nonetheless manifested his attachment to the Master in a particular fashion, in the multiform variety of the life in Christ. And each Evangelist transmitted to us the message of the Word of God with the nuance proper to him, without betraying the essential.

We are very far from the spiritual levelling that the introspection of one branch of Christendom would lead it to impose on other branches. If our Churches desire to become once again “of one heart and one soul,” then different forms of holiness should be perceived, not as a danger to the true faith, but as mutual enrichment, for the universal praise of Him who is the Source of all holiness.

These reflections are inspired by the important work of hymnography realised by Archdeacon Denis [now Priest Denis (Guillaume)]. In each office which he has composed, for the saint of Assisi as for those of Carmel, he has successfully integrated the features characteristic of these hearts devoted to Christ. In a harmonious whole, the hymns of Father Denis Guillaume invite us to rise together towards the same Heaven, in the original manner which the experience of divine love particular to this or that saint suggests to us, and which inspires to us to glorify God for the service which “His” saints rendered to the universal Church, beyond the limits of their Church of origin.

In the final analysis, it is within the same framework that authentic holiness is lived, in the East as in the West: an ascetic framework which consists of self-effacement, abnegation, humility, renunciation of the world, in a total dedication to Christ, and in continuous progress towards personal transfiguration, towards the “theosis”

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Parallèlement, on trouve dans nos Églises, à toutes les époques, même après leur séparation, ces êtres étonnants que sont les saints : êtres inhabituels, hors série, êtres au comportement étrange, qu'on pourrait qualifier d'«idiorythmiques», c'est-à-dire vivant à leur rythme propre, qui n'est pas celui du monde, mais celui de Dieu.

Si les saints sont étrangers au monde, il peut se faire également que les saints d'une Église paraissent étrangers à l'autre, comme l'expression de deux «mondes» culturels ou cultuels différents. On a parfois tendance à exagérer de telles différences. Ceux qui se mettent à l'affût en trouveront toujours, autant qu'ils le souhaitent. Derrière le pluralisme spirituel, ils veulent voir la frontière immuable de nos divisions, le mur de séparation entre Orient et Occident. Certains gestes et comportements sont absolutisés et deviennent les normes distinctives de deux styles de vie spirituelle, de deux piétés incompatibles, irréconciliables.

Une telle attitude, s'arrêtant de manière excessive à l'aspect extérieur de la piété, sans regarder au cœur de la spiritualité, engendre la méfiance envers tout ce qui est senti comme différent, comme étranger. La seule apparence d'un François d'Assise ou d'une Thérèse d'Avila met mal à l'aise certains orthodoxes, pour des raisons culturelles qui n'ont rien à voir avec la sainteté.

Et pourtant, Dieu nous parle, en notre temps, à travers ces différentes expressions de la sainteté, comme il nous a parlé par les prophètes, à *maintes reprises et sous maintes formes* (He 1,1). Ce n'est pas en effet de la même façon qu'il est apparu à tous : autre fut la vision d'Abraham, autre celle de Moïse, autre celle d'Élie. Dieu a «multiplié les visions», selon l'expression d'Osée (12,11) et *pris les semblances révélées aux prophètes*. Commentant l'épître aux Hébreux, Théodoret de Cyr écrit : «Ce n'est pas que la nature divine soit multiforme. Les prophètes ne voyaient pas cette ineffable nature, mais seulement les formes dont se servait le Dieu invisible. Chaque prophète gérait une partie du programme divin» (PG 82, 677).

Dans la conscience de l'Église indivise des premiers siècles, les divergences doctrinales ne conditionnent pas la véritable spiritualité. C'est ainsi qu'elle accepte Isaac le Syrien, d'obédience nestorienne, Narsès d'Édesse, Macaire l'Égyptien, de tendance messalianiste, et tant d'autres grands ascètes renommés pour leur sainteté et leurs charismes. Répandus à travers le monde, leurs écrits sont devenus lecture spirituelle, aliment des âmes.

Ceux qui ont écrit l'histoire des Pères du désert et les vies des saints ne se sont pas arrêtés aux petites

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or the deification of the human being. Yes, the saint is such, objectively, whatever local Church he or she belonged to while on earth.

One finds in our Churches, in parallel and at all times, even after their separation, these astonishing beings that are the saints: unusual, incomparable, persons of peculiar behaviour, which we could qualify as "idiorythmic," that is, living according to their own rhythm, which is not that of this world, but that of God.

If saints are strangers to the world, it can also appear that the saints of one Church appear foreign to another, like the expression of two different cultural or ritual "worlds." One tends sometimes to exaggerate such differences. Those who are on the look-out will always find differences, as many as they wish. Within spiritual pluralism, they wish to see the immutable boundary of our divisions, the wall of separation between East and West. Certain gestures and behaviours are absolutised and become the distinctive standards of two spiritual life styles, of two incompatible and irreconcilable forms of piety.

Such an attitude, which focuses excessively on the external features of piety, without looking at the heart of the spiritual life, engenders suspicion of all that is felt to be different or foreign. The mere appearance of a Francis of Assisi or of a Theresa of Avila greatly disturbs certain Orthodox, for cultural reasons which have nothing to do with holiness.

And yet, God speaks to us, in our time, through these different expressions of holiness, as He spoke to us through

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humaines. Ils ont mis le doigt sur l'essentiel : l'amour divin, qui consume le cœur et les pensées, en sorte qu'on ne vit plus pour soi-même, mais pour le Christ. C'est sous cet angle que nous devons voir la sainteté, qu'elle soit d'Orient ou d'Occident. Le dépassement de la condition humaine, le cheminement par la voie étroite, la croissance spirituelle, la fidélité à l'amour divin, la disponibilité à suivre le Seigneur en portant sa croix, voilà ce qui caractérise en tout lieu la sainteté, qu'il s'agisse d'un ascète du Mont Athos ou d'une carmélite.

C'est pourquoi nous nous réjouissons de l'œuvre accomplie par l'archidiacre Denis, car il a mis le doigt sur l'essentiel, en dépassant les frontières d'une Église déterminée, de façon à rendre acceptable aux autres Églises le message de sainteté qu'il exprime en ses hymnes. Dans un langage adapté au mystère de l'office liturgique, il a su se servir des données hagiographiques pour nourrir notre méditation, il a su choisir dans la vie et l'œuvre des saints ce qui pouvait nous aider à glorifier le Seigneur.

Il nous rend un autre service : il entreprend d'initier les catholiques qui vont lire et chanter ces offices au langage hiératique de l'Église orthodoxe, à l'expression poétique de son culte, comme aussi il aide les lecteurs orthodoxes à découvrir de l'intérieur, par l'approche du cœur, certaines grandes figures de la spiritualité occidentale. C'est là une contribution concrète au rapprochement de nos Églises sœurs, dans le contexte de leur dialogue théologique, une invitation à mettre en commun notre louange, sur la terre comme au ciel.

*The souls of the Saints, O Lord, have You drawn to Yourself, and they flow to You like gentle rivers.*

*The minds of the Saints attached themselves to You, O Lord, and are drawn to You, our Light and our Joy.*

*The hearts of Your Saints were confirmed in Your love, O Lord, and even in sleep they could not forget You, for sweet is the grace of the Holy Spirit.*

—St Silouan the Athonite

*O Seigneur, Vous attirez les âmes des saints,  
Et comme une douce rivière elles coulent vers Vous.*

*Les esprits des saints se sont attachés à Vous, O Seigneur,  
Notre joie et notre lumière,  
Et Vous les attirez vers Vous.*

*Les cœurs de Vos saints sont confirmés dans Votre Amour,  
O Seigneur,  
Et même pendant le sommeil ils ne peuvent Vous oublier,  
Car douce est la Grâce du Saint Esprit.*

—St Silouan de la Sainte Montagne

the prophets, "at various times and in various ways" (Heb 1:1). He did not in effect appear to all in the same way: the visions of Abraham, of Moses and of Elijah were all different. God "multiplied visions," according to the expression in Hosea (12:10) and gave "symbols through the witness of the prophets." Commenting on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Theodoret of Cyr writes: "It is not that divine nature is multiform. The prophets did not see this ineffable nature, but only the appearances utilised by the invisible God. Each prophet managed part of the divine programme" (PG 82, 677).

In the conscience of the undivided Church of the first centuries, doctrinal divergences did not condition true spirituality. Thus the Church accepted Isaac the Syrian, a Nestorian, Narsus of Edessa and Macarius the Egyptian of Messianist tendency, and many other great ascetes renowned for their holiness and their charisma. Their writings, spread throughout the world, became spiritual reading, food for the soul.

Those who wrote to the history of the Fathers of the Desert and the lives of the saints were not deterred by human pettiness. They put the finger on the essential: divine love, which consumes the heart and the mind, such that one does not live for oneself, but for Christ. It is in this context that we must see holiness, Eastern or Western. Surpassing of the human condition, progressing by the narrow path, spiritual growth, fidelity to divine love, disposition to follow the Lord carrying one's cross: these are the characteristics of holiness everywhere, the ascete of Mount Athos or the Carmelite nun.

This is why we are delighted by the work accomplished by Archdeacon Denis, because it puts its finger on the essential, going beyond the limits of any Church in particular, in order to render acceptable to other Churches the message of holiness which he expresses in his hymns. In language adapted to the mystery of liturgical offices, he makes use of hagiographic material to nourish our meditation, he has chosen in the lives and works of the saints that which helps us to glorify the Lord.

He renders another service: he contributes to initiating Catholics who will read and sing these offices to the hieratic language of the Orthodox Church, to the poetic expression of her worship, as also he helps Orthodox readers discover from the inside, by approaching the heart, certain great figures of Western spirituality. This is a concrete contribution to the drawing together of our sister Churches, in the context of their theological dialogue, an invitation to unite our praise on earth as in Heaven.—translated by Paul Ladouceur, Rawdon QC

## Enthusiastic students Enjoy icon course In Edmonton

From January 7 through 18, 2002 St Herman of Alaska parish in Edmonton, Alberta hosted an iconography course taught by Hieromonk Vladimir of Valamo, Finland. Fr Vladimir, formerly a St Herman's parishioner by the name of Bill Lysack and a 1995 graduate of St Vladimir's Seminary in New York, has been studying iconography at the monastery in Valamo for the past few years where he was also recently tonsured a monk and ordained a deacon and then a priest. St Herman's is, in fact, his home parish and the parish was overjoyed to have him back even for a brief time.

Fr Vladimir taught a beginner's course to his faithful students from as far away as Yorkton and Battleford, Saskatchewan. The youngest student was 15, the oldest—well, we cannot say. Students who attended the class were Moira Metrunec (Yorkton); Olga Maybuck (Battleford); and Anna Belzile, Cara Miketon, Dianne Storheim, Gordon Miketon, and Patricia Schaplowsky from St Herman's parish, Edmonton. The students met daily in the basement of St Herman's, beginning and ending each day with prayer: Matins or Hours in the morning and Vespers in the evening.

The students were given an overview of the history of icons and their meaning through slides and studying the parish's icons, as well as pictures of icons in books. The students then prepared their panels in the traditional way using a mixture of gelatin and chalk, applying several layers to a board, and then sanding it until it is ready to be painted on. Drawing exercises were given again and again until the students were ready to draw their model icon. Drawings were finally approved and transferred to the panels and the students began their long battle with "le petit lac"—a puddle of paint, basically. If you master "le petit lac" you are a happy iconographer. We all soon appreciated why hand-painted icons can be so pricey. Much blood, sweat, and tears go into them—at least that's what went into ours.

The final day the icons were completed and blessed during a service of thanksgiving. Each student was the first to venerate his or her own icon and, although imperfect, the icons will be treasured in our prayer corners for the rest of our lives.

Father Vladimir taught a similar course in Little Rock, Arkansas before finally returning to New Valamo Monastery in Finland.—*Dianne Storheim, Edmonton*



*Above, Fr Vladimir teaching. Below, Patricia and Olga hard at work.*



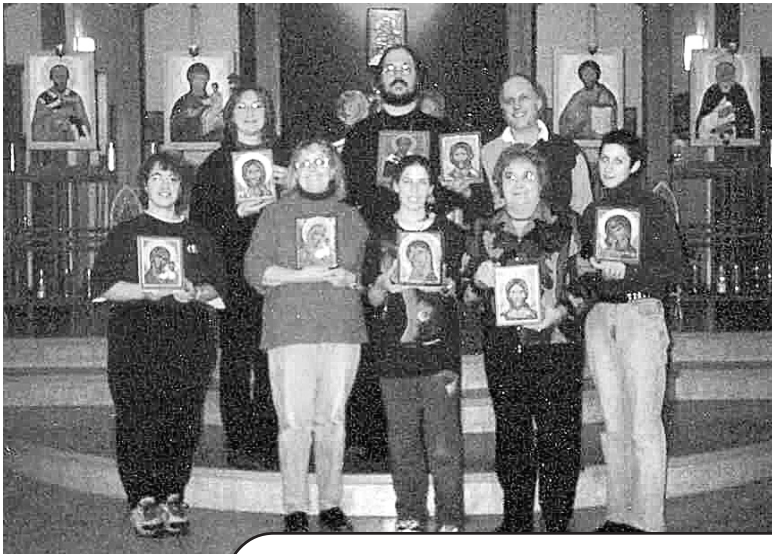
*Fr Vladimir, right, demonstrating some techniques to Moira.*



*Patricia Schaplowsky, below, working on her icon of Christ.*







*Every day of the course began and ended with prayer, above.*

*To the left are the course participants.*

- l to r, front row:*
- Moira Metrunec,*
- Dianne*
- Storheim, Cara*
- Miketon, Olga*
- Maybuck, Anna*
- Belzile; l to r,*
- back row:*
- Patricia*
- Schaplowsky, Fr*
- Vladimir,*
- Gordon Miketon.*

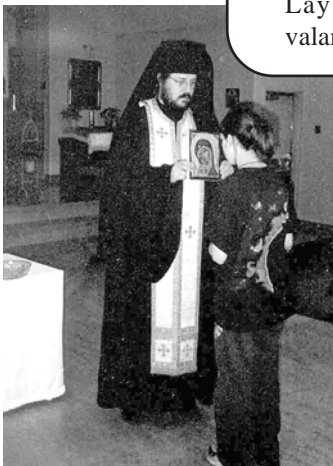
### **More icon-painting opportunities**

It is possible to study icon painting with Fr Vladimir at the Valamo Lay Academy in Finland, August 12 – 25, 2002!

This course has been designed for beginners and those knowing the basics of Orthodox Icon Painting. The programme of tuition contains lectures on the history and theology of icons and the various aspects of the Orthodox faith, tradition and culture. Two-thirds of the course is practical painting and related skills such as preparation of panels, drawing, tempera technique, theory of colours, calligraphy, etc. Each student is expected to complete one icon with the instructor. Iconographer Fr. Vladimir from Valamo Monastery teaches practical painting. Fees for this course are \$630.00 for a single hotel room or \$550.00 for a single guest room; fees include lessons, room, breakfast and one other meal daily. Cost of materials excluded.

If this is too short notice for this year, look forward to next year! On request of many people, Fr Vladimir has been arranging various other courses in English through the Lay Academy, including courses on cassock making and liturgical embroidery. As well, next year, Fr Vladimir will teach a three week introductory iconography course in August, from the 11 to 31, 2003. Plan your airfare now! Watch the *Canadian Orthodox Messenger* and the *Orthodox Church* for details.

For more information or registration, please contact the Valamo Lay Academy at 79850 Uusi Valamo, Finland, or by e-mail: [valamon.kansanopisto@valamo.fi](mailto:valamon.kansanopisto@valamo.fi).



*The icons made by the students, right, ready to be blessed.*

*Cara Miketon, left, venerates her icon at the service of blessing.*



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## New deacon ordained For Hamilton area

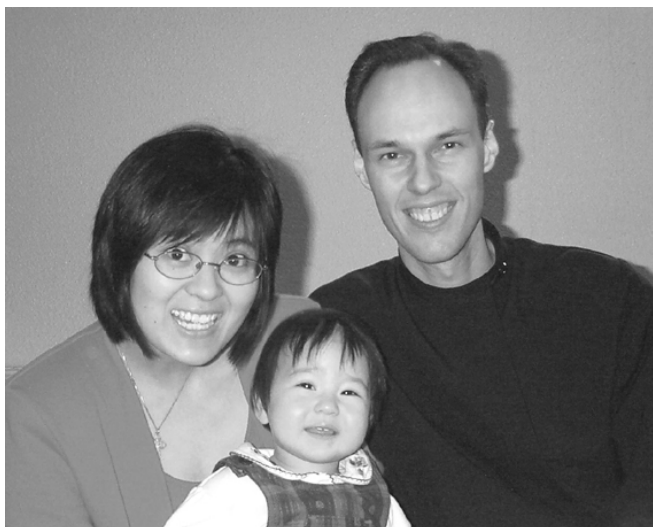
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As the most recent Archdiocesan Council came to an end on Meatfare Sunday, a new beginning was also inaugurated. At the hand of His Grace Bishop Seraphim, at the Sign of the Theotokos parish in Montréal, Subdeacon Geoffrey Korz of Hamilton, Ontario, was ordained to the Holy Diaconate.

Born and raised in Hamilton, Ontario as an Anglican, Deacon Geoffrey graduated from McMaster University in political science, and later earned postgraduate degrees in theology and education at McMaster Divinity College and Canisius College, Buffalo, New York, respectively. He served as an elected public school trustee in Hamilton from 1988 to 1997. He worked in advertising, and later as a special assistant at the Ontario Legislature, before completing teacher's college. He currently serves as the head of the Department of Religion at St John's College in Brantford, Ontario.

Matushka Linda was born in Hong Kong, where she was raised until the age of four. She immigrated to Canada with her family, settling in Toronto, and later Hamilton. Matushka and much of her family converted from Chinese traditional religious beliefs to Roman Catholicism in 1980. She studied Biochemistry and Medicine at McMaster University, and currently works as a pediatric anaesthesiologist at McMaster Children's Hospital.

Father Deacon Geoffrey and Matushka Linda were married in 1994, yet even then, both felt called to seek out the fullness of Christian truth in the Orthodox Church, which they were in the process of discovering. They were



*Matushka Linda, baby Sophia, and Deacon Geoffrey Korz*

received into the Orthodox Church in 1997. In 2001, they were blessed with their first daughter, Sophia Anastasia.

Deacon Geoffrey has worked since 1998 as the co-ordinator of the Orthodox Christian Fellowship at McMaster University, and was later blessed by His Grace Bishop Seraphim to found the Domestic Chapel of All Saints of North America, a mission station serving weekly and festal Reader Services for a small number of Orthodox faithful and inquirers. The mission has been blessed with a visiting priest, Hieromonk Luke (Majoros), to serve Liturgy on a number of occasions, including the full Holy Week services in 2001.

With the prayers of the faithful across the diocese, Deacon Geoffrey and Matushka Linda hope that the Lord may bless these early efforts with further growth, for the blessing of Orthodox and traditionally non-Orthodox people in the Hamilton area whose first language is English or other tongues not commonly used in Orthodox parishes in Canada.

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## Archdiocesan Council Meets in Montreal

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The Spring 2002 meeting of the Archdiocesan Council was held at The Sign of the Theotokos Church, Montréal, March 8 –9. In addition to the warm hospitality of the people of The Sign, the Council also enjoyed, on the second day of the meeting, a lovely luncheon break with participants in the pan-Orthodox retreat of the Orthodox Women of Montréal organization.

With regard to the meeting itself, clearly the format is beginning to evolve in what appears to be a very productive way: not only was the unit structure (consultations held separately in the Administrative, Programming, and Communications Units, with resulting reports later to the Council as a whole) continued from Fall, 2001; but also, in the interest of accountability, the meeting began with a careful questioning and reporting on what had been accomplished by both individual persons and units as a whole since the previous meeting.

In his report to Council, the Bishop noted that although he thinks that the sense of direction of the diocese could be clearer, nevertheless by God's grace we are very different from what we were 15 years ago, since we are now in open communion and communication with all the other canonical bishops of Canada.

The good news from the Treasurer's Report for 2001 revealed the fact that income nicely exceeded expenses for the year. His budget for 2002 was passed unanimously.

The Fall 2002 meeting of Council will be held in Calgary, Alberta, October 25 – 27.

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*Our father among the blessed*

## Archbishop Arseny

*“the Canadian Chrysostom”*

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—by Priest John Hainsworth, Victoria BC

This short history of an extraordinary man will have been entirely successful if by the end the reader is entirely disappointed, because it will have inspired an interest in getting to know about a man about whom we know only a little at this point.

Archbishop Arseny’s life was writ large with historic places and historic people. He worked tirelessly for the Church side by side with at least three of the major saints of North America—Tikhon, Raphael, Alexis—as well as with the many martyrs and confessors of Russia during the beginning of the Revolution. In addition to being a key figure in a formative time of North American history, his life of 79 years took in the birth of modernity, the Russian revolution, the reformation of the Metropolia, the First and then Second World Wars, and so much more. The Archbishop also left an indelible mark on Orthodox life in Canada, where he is fondly, even passionately remembered to this day.

In short, Arseny’s life was such that we can learn as much or more about our history generally as we can about him specifically. And yet, his Vita remains unwritten, uncollected. There have been obituaries and memorial articles but still more needs to be done to gather the fragments of his extraordinary life and contribution to the church in North America. What follows therefore is only a modest beginning, and is heavily indebted to others in our church for whom the memory of this great man of God still shines brightly and deeply.

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### His early life

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Archbishop Arseny was born Andrew Lvovich Chahovtsov on March 10, 1866 in the region of Kharkiv, South Russia. By his own description he was “born into the poor family of a village Church Reader,” and as a young boy worked as a shepherd tending “the flocks of the unspeaking sheep of my father and did not dare to dream of becoming the pastor of a flock with speech.” Arseny’s natural intellectual abilities were noticed early, and his family had decided, “in view of my alertness and love for school,” to send him to “the city, in the commercial branch, in order that I could stand on my own feet

more quickly to help them with their large family.” However, at an unknown age, his father died leaving him one of “five little orphans,” and as he was the eldest he was sent immediately to a school for clergy children where “eleven years of happy school life flew by.” He was then admitted to the Kharkiv Theological Seminary, graduating with some distinction in 1887 and being ordained Deacon and then Priest in the same year.

One of the least known aspects of his early life is his family life. At some point in the Kharkiv seminary he married and then had one child, a boy named Dionysius, but nothing about his wife is known or about the village parish he served in while a married priest, nor about his child. In any case, however happy Arseny’s life was, it was not to last. As he describes: “Ominous clouds gathered over my happiness, a storm broke out, the thunder roared, and of my happiness remained only broken pieces.... From the hands of God’s design I accepted the heavy lot of a widower priest in the prime of life.”

Neither the date of his wife’s death nor its cause is known with certainty, and what happened to him afterwards is still a mystery. We know that he received the monastic tonsure sometime between 1890 and 1900 (both dates are given by different sources), and according to his own account he did not enter that refuge without great struggle. Between his wife’s death and his tonsuring, Arseny spent time searching for direction and consolation. The story is fascinating both for what it tells us about what he did after his wife’s death, and for how it reveals the personality of Arseny himself, and it is only to be found in his *Elevation Speech*:

From happy and cheerful I became a rebellious man.... And, O God! what kind of storms did not wrack my frail ship.... But in this frightful desert of my life, the Lord did not abandon me. I see oases. Here I am—in the coffin nailed before its time; here I am—entangled in iron chains; here I am—with a bag on my back going from monastery to monastery bringing my pain and looking for consolation. I see myself concelebrating at God’s Altar with that godly man of the Russian lands, Father John of Kronstadt; I see myself in midst of the elders of Valaam monastery, surrounded by tales of the lives of the hermits.

Of course, this raises more questions than answers. What did he mean by “in the coffin nailed before its time” or “entangled in iron chains”? And what was his meeting with Fr John of Kronstadt like, and what did the great saint say to him? The remarkable quality of this speech shines through in the drama and feeling of its

presentation, but it is made more remarkable by the fact that it was spoken to a group of bishops, clergy and laity at his elevation to the episcopacy in Winnipeg. Certainly it is a remarkable bishop who would relate such a story of his past in such a public arena and at such an occasion.

But having been led to his monastic refuge, Arseny was soon made Igumen (Abbot) of the Kuriansk Monastery in 1900. He did not stay long, however. Within two years he left for America. At this time Bishop Tikhon was recruiting priests and lay workers for service in the Orthodox New World, and Father Arseny, being a natural preacher and fluent in many lesser Russian dialects was ideal for the call.

In Arseny's words, "I accepted from the hand of God the fate of a preacher. The right hand of God transported me to the side of the New World—America." What is interesting is that he saw himself as accepting the "fate of a preacher," a description which gives us an insight into how he saw his role as a missionary in America, which was as a preacher, a sower of the Gospel.

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### Early work in America

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Little is known of his first assignments when he arrived, except that by his own recollection he worked in parishes in Troy, Mayfield, and Simpson in the Eastern United States. Curiously, his work with the returning Ukrainian Catholics is not mentioned in any of the memorial articles and accounts of his life. Only he mentions this vital aspect of his early ministry, and in very passionate terms: "The Stamp of my apostolate are the believers in Troy, Mayfield, Simpson, and the brethren scattered in many places—which I brought back into the folds of the Orthodox Church."

The Ukrainian Catholic return to Orthodoxy, as led by St Alexis Toth at the turn of the century, was a very contemporary issue when Arseny arrived, and Father Arseny would have certainly worked closely with St Alexis. In fact, in 1902, St Alexis himself received "the parish of St John the Baptist in Mayfield, Pennsylvania" and thus must have passed its care directly to Arseny. It is clear therefore that Arseny's role in the return of this church was significant, although history has so far remained silent about the extent of this role.

However, working side by side with St Alexis Toth, Father Arseny nevertheless had another dream for the Church in North America, and it was one which he was to realize just three years after his arrival on the continent, and one which was to win him a lasting name in the New World.

With the blessing of then Metropolitan Tikhon, in May, 1906, Arseny founded St Tikhon's Monastery and Orphan's Home in rural northeastern Pennsylvania. The story of his labours and feats of fund-raising are well documented in the literature of the day. Indeed, on the day of the monastery's consecration, Bishop Raphael claimed that it was impossible "to pass by in silence those exemplary labors, struggles, works and endeavors, which were applied in an untiring way, always hoping in the blessing of God, of the respected Mayfield Rector, Fr Igumen Arseny, for the realization of this glorious act—the founding of this Holy Monastery." Father Arseny was named Superior of the new monastery with the rank of Igumen, an honour for which Father Alexander Hotovitsky, an eyewitness, claimed was met with cries of "Meetly Worthy!"

It is indeed a remarkable moment in history to contemplate: Metropolitan Tikhon, Bishop Raphael, and Father Alexis Toth processing together to the new monastery built by Father Arseny and concelebrating there. One eyewitness claimed, "Even though I had seen in Russia festive multitudes headed by Hierarchs, with thousands of vestments, the procession here was more impressive. This moment cannot be repeated! This feeling cannot be expressed! I could not expect anything more from this procession!" Even Father Arseny's voice, claims the same witness, "was stopping, because of choking with tears."

Arseny in fact was elated "that all this took place here, in a foreign land, where yet we are so little known," exclaiming, "O Mother! O Holy Orthodox Church! Come and see! Behold your children who have come to glorify the Lord Whom you glorified!" Such it seems was Arseny's vision, the firm establishment of the Orthodox Church in North America, and it is one which he states many times in his description of the founding of the monastery to be the source of his great joy at the event.

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### His first missionary work in Canada

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Yet, in his speech of 1926 at his elevation to the rank of Bishop, Arseny says nothing of the founding of the monastery, but passes on, for reasons unknown, from his duties as pastor of Mayfield to his reassignment as Rector of Holy Trinity Cathedral in Winnipeg and rural Dean and Administrator of the Canadian parishes. He was assigned to Canada in 1908 by Metropolitan Platon who had just replaced Tikhon, and soon after arriving, Arseny applied his enormous energies to the building up of the Church there.

From almost the moment he arrived in Canada, the Canadians loved him. He was fluent in Ukrainian and also in many of the Russian dialects, and so was able to preach in the native dialect of many parishes across the country. "It was in Canada," says the *Tikhonaire*, "that his rare missionary talents increased and bore fruit." Again his efforts were concentrated on receiving the Ukrainian Catholics back into the Church, as well as welcoming the many Bukovinians and Galicians immigrating *en masse* at that time. Arseny's efforts in Canada were tireless, as he himself describes: "Through the depths of virgin forests, through the limitless prairies of wide Canada, I started searching for those who had gone astray, strengthening the faith of the weak, and instructing the growing generation with the light of the true teaching."

His greatest tool was his preaching. It was in Canada that he gained the affectionate title, "the Canadian Chrysostom" for his extraordinary preaching talents. He became famous for his sermons, which being published in an Orthodox journal of the day, *The Canadian Field*, eventually were read in Russia by Czar Nicolas II. The Russian Emperor was so taken with his sermons that "in order to thank him for this 'food for the soul' (as he referred to the articles written by Archimandrite Arseny)—bestowed on him a gold pectoral cross, sent directly to him by His Majesty's offices."

However, almost as suddenly as he came, Arseny left Canada for Russia in 1910, only two years after taking up his new post. The Canadians were beside themselves, as one contemporary recalls: "In 1910, with the departure from Canada of this Chrysostom-Missionary, many, many people were dispersed, in grief and with regret, in various directions." No one could guess, however, that he would return some sixteen years later, after serving as a preacher and pastor in the very trenches of the Bolshevik revolution; and that in returning, he would accomplish much more, though it would be nearly at the cost of his life.

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### Russia, revolution, and Serbia

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When Arseny left Canada for Russia in 1910, he could not have guessed what his life would be like. From his own account, he returned "with the title of missionary-preacher, then, as the director of a school for missionary-priests." Conjecturing from this statement, it would seem that Father Arseny's success and experience both as a missionary and preacher in Canada worked to have him recalled to Russia to teach other future Orthodox missionaries. One wonders also if it was not

Patriarch Tikhon himself who called him back, knowing his reputation and abilities. In any case, little is known about his departure or his activities, although some stories are recorded, but without reference to sources. The *Tikhonaire* claims that he was "assigned as Superior and Director of the Grigoriev-Bizyukovsky Monastery . . . in the Kherson District (Crimea) of Southern Russia." It also claims that "while he was there, the revolution broke out and seeing the terrible sufferings and terrors being inflicted on the Church of Christ and His Faithful, Archimandrite Arseny joined the White Armies."

An account of his service in the White Army is given by Arseny himself in his usual descriptive style: "as a missionary preacher, under the whistling of the bombs, the explosion of shrapnel, I comforted the soldiers, and wished to give my life for my brothers." There is a story given by *The Tikhonaire* which claims Arseny was captured at one point by the Bolsheviks "and sentenced to be shot, along with several others, on the following morning." According to the story, Arseny spent the night praying and preparing for sure death, but in the morning, "shortly before he was to be shot, a detachment of German soldiers appeared and rescued the condemned men." After this miraculous escape, Arseny fled to Serbia and in 1920 entered a monastery there and settled down, thinking "that the book of my life was written up and ready to be closed."

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### Return to Canada

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The Canadians, however, would add more pages. Having received news that Father Arseny was still alive, they petitioned Metropolitan Platon with some insistence that he be returned to them as Bishop. Platon complied, and in 1926 letters were sent to Belgrade to arrange his consecration. On June 6<sup>th</sup> 1926, Father Arseny was consecrated as Bishop of Winnipeg, Auxiliary of the North American Archdiocese. Bishop Arseny's response to this was typical of him: "I am coming. My heart is ready. O my God! Ready!" He traveled to New York for a meeting with the Metropolitan, then spent a short time visiting his beloved St Tikhon's Monastery and then arrived in Winnipeg to take up residence at his new cathedra.

However, by all accounts, Bishop Arseny had come back to a very different Orthodox Canada than that he had left 16 years earlier. The so-called "Living Church" had risen since the Revolution and was causing great trouble, as were various Ukrainian nationalist groups. According to Archimandrite Tereshchenko "a whole book could be written, outlining in it all that Vladyka Arseny suffered in Canada after his return, but it would be a

*continued, next page . . .*

catalogue of horrors. His Eminence had to wage war against the ‘ill weeds’ on several fronts, and it was difficult at times to distinguish who was one of ours, and who was on the other side.”

Still Arseny pressed on, traversing the vast country, preaching, founding monasteries in Sifton and Bluffton, Manitoba, and throughout Alberta. He even traveled as far as Vancouver, British Columbia, where he concelebrated with Metropolitan Platon in the consecration of a new Holy Resurrection Church there on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1929. He was very active in directing the Church, frequently convening clergy assemblies and sobors, and although he was a strong leader and a passionate defender of Orthodoxy, he was known to be unusually ecumenical both in his relationship with other sometimes non-canonical Orthodox churches, and with other Christian confessions. Nevertheless, as an Orthodox Bishop, Arseny was an unwilling figurehead in the politics of his day.

Thus, while he was convening a clergy assembly at the home of a priest in Kenora, Saskatchewan, “a band of hooligans, still calling themselves ‘Christians,’ armed with stones and wooden stakes, broke the windows and doors and shot through them into the house where Vladyka Arseny and a gathering of clergy had assembled to celebrate the Divine Liturgy the next morning.”

Arseny was badly wounded in the leg, getting lead poisoning from the bullet, and it was this, and not any lack of desire to continue, that forced him to retire from active service in Canada. According to a Church Directory of 1936, he was re-assigned briefly to Detroit and Cleveland, retiring to St Tikhon’s Monastery after only ten years of service in Canada, leaving a legacy which remains in the Canadian diocese to this day. The Archbishop remained a Canadian citizen until he died.

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### **Active retirement—St Tikhon’s Seminary**

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Bishop Arseny was elevated to the rank of Archbishop for his tireless work, and he was expected to retire quietly from Church life. However, he soon after astonished just about everybody by applying to the Holy Synod for the blessing to establish St Tikhon’s Pastoral School (later Seminary), which he did in record time in the Fall of 1938. The opening of the School was another feat of tireless labour and ingenuity on Archbishop Arseny’s part, and the speed and apparent surety with which he accomplished it were nearly miraculous. Typically, he was loved by the students who, according to *The Tikhonaire*, “each year . . . on his birthday and name’s day, would honor him with bouquets of flowers.”

Archbishop Arseny, in the years following his retirement, was never idle. We hear of his visiting local parishes, blessing altars, such as that of St Nicholas Church in Olyphant, Pennsylvania, on December 19, 1940, or traveling to assemblies and special occasions. Finally, on October 4, 1945, at the age of 79, he died in Moses Taylor Hospital in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The funeral and interment took place on October 9 at St Tikhon’s Monastery attended by Their Graces, Archbishop Vitaly, Bishop Alexy, Bishop Makaray, and Bishop Leonty, and more than fifty priests, hieromonks and deacons, as well as students and friends.

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### **A life of love and humble service**

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So much remains to be said about this remarkable man. It is obvious that his contribution to the Orthodox Church in America and Canada was memorable and foundational. He shared as passionately the same missionary vision as the great saints and Fathers of Orthodoxy with whom he worked.

He was capable of being all things to all people. He was a married priest, a widower, a father, a parish priest, a monk, an Igumen, a Dean and Rector, a traveling preacher, a prisoner, a Bishop, a founder of monasteries and pastoral schools and orphanages. He walked in the company of great men and women of the faith in every part of his life, and in every country he lived. He was a learned man, an eloquent man, and a humble man.

Indeed, he was most of all humble. If he has remained in the background, if his extraordinary life and contribution to the Church have gone unsung it is because his accomplishments were never for their own sake, but for the Church, in which he knew he was only a servant. His was not a zeal for self-advancement, it was a genuine zeal for the Kingdom of God, for the Gospel, and it is significant that he is best remembered as a master homilist, as a Canadian Chrysostom.

His was a life of service, of sacrifice, of love for the Church. In a word, his was a life lived in response: response to the call of priesthood, response to the call of the North American mission, response to the call of God wherever it would lead. And we hear his response, even on the eve of his return as Bishop to Canada,

“I am coming. My heart is ready. O my God! Ready!”



***Blessed Archbishop Arseny, pray for us,  
your Canadian children!***

## Pastoral Notes

On 10 Feb 02 **Subdeacon Alexei Kalioujnyi** was ordained to the Holy Diaconate at Christ the Saviour Sobor, Toronto, to which he is attached.

Effective 19 Feb 02 **Priest Lambros Kamperidis** was released from the Archdiocese of Canada to the Greek Metropolia of Toronto, under the omophor of Archbishop Sotirios.

Effective 21 Feb 02 **Priest John Bartholomew** was released from the Archdiocese of Canada to the Diocese of New York and New Jersey, under the omophor of Archbishop Peter.

On 28 Feb 02 **Archpriest Vaso Rajak** was received into the Archdiocese of Canada and attached to Christ the Saviour Sobor, Toronto, as chaplain.

On 10 Mar 02 **Subdeacon Geoffrey Korz** was ordained to the Holy Diaconate at The Sign of the Theotokos Church, Montreal. He is attached to Christ the Saviour Sobor, Toronto.

### *Pascha 2002 Holy Synod Awards:*

Awarded the *Palitsa* are **Archpriest Andrew Morbey, Archpriest Nikolai Nikolaev, and Igumen Gregory (Papazian)**.

Elevated to *Archpriest* is **Priest Larry Reinheimer**.

Elevated to *Protodeacon* are **Deacon Andrew Piasta and Deacon Raphael Cole**.

Elevated to the status of *Sobor* are the churches of **Holy Resurrection, Vancouver; Holy Resurrection, Saskatoon; and St Herman of Alaska, Edmonton**.

### *Pascha 2002 Diocesan Awards:*

Awarded the *Purple Kamilavka* are **Priests James Griggs, Vasil Kolega, Rodion Luciuk, James McLuckie, and John Polson**.

Awarded the *Purple Skoufia* are **Priests John Ayoub, Gregory Nimijejan, and Miroslaw Wojtiuk**.

Awarded the *Nabedrennik* are **Priest Phillip Eriksson and Hieromonk Luc (Majoros)**.

Awarded the *Double Orar* is **Deacon Michael Schaplowsky**.

## Bishop Seraphim's Visitation Itinerary May – August 2002

5 May	Holy Pascha, Annunciation/St Nicholas Cathedral, Ottawa
16 May	Graduation, Toronto Greek Orthodox Academy
18 May	Convocation, St Vladimir's Seminary
23 – 27 May	St Tikhon's pilgrimage
1 Jun	Diocesan picnic, Fair Haven
2 Jun	Christ the Saviour Sobor, Toronto
13 Jun	Holy Ascension, Annunciation/St St Nicholas Cathedral, Ottawa
15 Jun	Serbian church consecration, Mississauga ON
16 – 23 Jun	Manitoba deanery
16 Jun	St Nicholas, Narol MB
23 Jun	Holy Trinity, Winnipeg MB
11 – 14 Jul	Sts Peter and Paul, Montreal
20 – 26 Jul	13 <sup>th</sup> All-American Council, Orlando FL
28 Jul – 12 Aug	Alberta deanery
28 Jul	St Barbara's, Edmonton
2 Aug	St Elias, Pakan AB
9 Aug	St Herman of Alaska, Edmonton
23 Aug – 1 Sep	Saskatchewan deanery
25 Aug	Holy Assumption, Rhein, SK
28 Aug	Holy Assumption, Stenen, SK

## NOTICE

The monk-subdeacon Andrei (Brennan), who previously had voluntarily come to our Archdiocese of Canada in Toronto, also voluntarily departed soon thereafter. Thus there is no connection between the Archdiocese of Canada and Andrei Brennan, who now presents himself as a bishop. He is, to our knowledge, in no canonical communion of the Orthodox Church.

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*From the Bishop's desk:*

## **Metropolitan Theodosius To retire at 13<sup>th</sup> AAC**

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At the last meeting of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Orthodox Church in America, the bishops were surprised and saddened to hear our beloved Metropolitan Theodosius announce that his physicians were telling him strongly that, in order to reduce stress, and to decrease the risk of more strokes, he ought to retire. We are told that, when Patriarch Aleksy II was told of this by His Beatitude, he said that Metropolitan Theodosius is a very strong and brave man. And so he is. To have led the Church through so many difficulties over the last twenty-five years has taken a great deal of strength, strength given by God.

He is a man beloved of many, a man who, from his love of God, has shown this love in numerous ways. He is so personable. He treats all people, of all ages, equally as human beings. He has, often anonymously, met the practical needs of many, many people in many countries.

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## **Women's retreat near Calgary**

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Mother Raphaela of the Holy Myrrhbearers Monastery in Otego NY will be the guest speaker at an Orthodox women's retreat to be held 27 -29, 2002 at a retreat centre west of Calgary. Registration deadline is June 30<sup>th</sup>. Contact Myra Reinheimer, (phone # 403-938-4929, email: reinhm@hotmail.com) for information or registration forms.

He has inherited a practical and loving way of living the Orthodox life, and he has demonstrated it concretely. He has been a man who prays, and he has shared his love of icons and relics with the whole of our Church. His words constantly reflect the inheritance of his episcopal predecessors, including the famous "measure seven times and cut once," which was likely said not only by bishops, but also by his family.

As this retirement comes at the 13<sup>th</sup> All-American Council in July, it will be necessary to elect a new Metropolitan for our Church. Please pray for the delegates, and for the bishops who have the final say, that God's choice will be made clear, and that all will hear and obey His Will. And pray mostly for our retiring Metropolitan, that God will keep him and his experience with us for a long time still; and let us not hesitate now to invite him into our diocese for celebrations, especially those marking his own historic presence with us in Canada. It is he, after all, who set the diocese on its present and growing course. Let us remember to be grateful, and to give glory to God for all things.

*†Seraphim*

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## **A Reminder**

The Archdiocesan Council wishes to remind parishes and individual persons in the Archdiocese of Canada that any donations given for OCA special appeals (missions, seminaries, charity) should be forwarded to the Treasurer of the Archdiocese, and not to Syosset NY. This is the only way that donors will receive tax receipts acceptable to Revenue Canada.

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